

ABSTRACT

FORT KEOGH: CUTTING EDGE OF A CULTURE

By

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December 1983

Cantonment Tongue River (Fort Keogh) was started in earnest during the last few months of 1876, as a result of Lieutenant Colonel Custer's defeat at the Little Big Horn River. With Fort Keogh as a base, Colonel Nelson A. Miles subdued a vast area of Montana and opened it up to what we know today as American culture. This thesis tells of the early battles near the Post that won the peace, and the captured Indians who became an important element of Fort Keogh. The economy of eastern Montana was greatly enhanced by the efforts of the soldiers at Fort Keogh, as was the transportation near the Post, since the railroad followed the soldiers to the area. The major importance of Fort Keogh is not the great events of opening the West but the lives of its people and how they dealt with the frontier that they encountered; Fort Keogh had many of these people.

FORT KEOGH: CUTTING EDGE OF A CULTURE

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of History

California State University, Long Beach

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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BA, University of Southern California, 1977

December 1983

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PREFACE

Interest in the Army of the West is evident and much has been written on the topic. Among the volumes on the Army moving west are a great many with a general approach to the subject. These works give the reader an excellent view of the soldiers, Indians and pioneers who played the key roles in the Army's move West. Another critical part of the Western Army's story is covered in some reference works that have been produced. Of primary concern here are those dealing with military posts of the West. Dr. Robert W. Frazer's book entitled Forts of the West was the first to come to my attention. This book which in large part inspired this work also reveals the vast quantity of research yet to be done of a more specific nature in the area.

As my research deepened, I found that a closer look had been taken at the forts of the Northwest. Herbert M. Hart's contribution entitled Old Forts of the Northwest sketched a brief history of Fort Keogh as well as many other posts. The story along with the pictures, both old and new, further spurred my interest in Fort Keogh. Two other fine general treatments of old posts in the West were helpful. One by Don Miller and Stan Cohen entitled Military & Trading Posts of Montana put Fort Keogh in its geographic context and along with the other general works, gives the reader a good jumping off place to this thesis. The other entitled Military Posts of Montana, written by Michael Koury, is another fine example of a general work with much information.

I am indeed grateful for the invaluable assistance that was given to me by numerous individuals. Among those who helped me find my way through some unfamiliar places were Dale Floyd and Joseph Thomas from the National Archives. They opened up the vast research resources of the Archives without which a major part of this thesis could not have been written. Bob Clark, Debbie Marks and Lory Morrow of the Montana Historical Society assisted me in the other major portion of the research. They made valuable newspapers, photos and other primary material available thus giving me a balanced view of the Fort. For all the material that time and money would not allow me to see on location, Juanita Knox of California State University, Long Beach interlibrary loan made access possible.

Special thanks are due to two professors from California State University, Long Beach. Dr. Donald W. Peters, and Dr. David A. Williams who, while retired, offered their invaluable assistance in this undertaking.

Indispensable aid was received from Dr. Nicholas Hardeman, who helped select the topic, supplied research leads and recommended me to others who assisted. I must acknowledge, however, that any errors in this work are mine.

My wife Mary cannot be overlooked for the immense contribution she made in her encouragement of this effort. She also did a great deal of typing and editing. This was all done in addition to her many other duties.

CHAPTER I THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POST

Background

Colonel D. S. Stanley in 1873 led an expedition past the site that was to become Fort Keogh, Montana. He reported on the condition of the Indians about supply and ordnance. Due to these reported conditions Stanley recommended that a post be built at the mouth of the Tongue River, as it was located in the middle of the Indian country and could supply smaller posts in the area. Colonel Stanley's choice of a site was a good distance up the Yellowstone. The panic of 1873 ended what hope this idea might have had.¹

Plans were later made in Washington D.C. and the Northern Pacific Railroad that rails should be put in across Montana and the area further developed. Elements of the Army were sent into the area to make more maps and surveys of the region and these units found great promise in the eastern part of Montana and western Dakota. This area was the new home of the Sioux Indians who had been moved west from Minnesota by the advancing American civilization.

As the Army opened up the Northern Plains it found an ally in the Crow Indians. They had been pushed west by the Sioux and no love was lost between the two tribes. With Crow Indians for their only friends in this otherwise hostile area, the Army entered in a determined way.

After Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer and a large part of the Seventh Cavalry lost to the Sioux in June of 1876, the conditions were right for a post at the site that Colonel Stanley recommended.

Location was the major concern of the Army in the formation of a new post. General of the Army William Tecumseh Sherman ordered a cantonment to be established at the mouth of Tongue River.² Colonel Nelson Appleton Miles put this order dated August 28, 1876 into effect. Colonel Miles with most of the Fifth Infantry was in the field during most of the fall and winter in 1876, so he sent Lieutenant Colonel Joseph N. G. Whistler to select a location and start construction of a cantonment.³ Colonel Whistler selected a site in a stand of cottonwoods west of the Tongue River and just south of the Yellowstone River. The cantonment was thus afforded protection from the winter winds by the rugged hills located north of the Yellowstone River.⁴ This site situated at latitude 46 degrees 24' 30", longitude 104 degrees 22' 27", was 297 miles from Bismarck, Dakota Territory, the nearest railroad station,⁵ and placed the new post in the heart of

¹Bob Wright and Kathryn Wright, Territory of Treasures (Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1972), p. 61.

²Secretary of War, Reports (For each of the years from 1876 through 1879) Washington, Government Printing Office, 1876-1879, 1876-1877, p. 487.

³Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 77.

⁴Mark H. Brown, The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 290.

⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Report to higher headquarters regarding the location of the new post, April 1879.

Indian country.

In large part Colonel Miles' success against the hostile Indians was due to the location of the cantonment. It was the supply base from which he could act against bands of Indians in their favorite area. With Colonel Miles' logistical problems managed successfully, he was able to undermine the Indian morale and effectively clear the country of hostiles,⁶ as the United States government referred to Indians that resisted government control. Location, as mentioned before and logistics were the two main reasons for the effectiveness of the new post.

The supply of the new post was relatively inexpensive in that it was by rail and steamboat. In the fall of 1876 the Yellowstone was at a normal low. This created a need for use of the supply depot at Glendive Creek. Much wagon traffic was begun from Glendive to the new post, and later, when low water closed the Yellowstone, wagons hauled from farther down the waterway.⁷ Most needed supplies were shipped in during the high water season and Colonel Miles' troops were better supplied than General Crook's or others that had previously campaigned in the area.⁸

General Alfred Terry did not want to pursue the Indians that had defeated Colonel Custer. He also did not want any posts built in the area of the defeat.⁹ As commander of the Department of Dakota he feared his Department would lose many soldiers to the cold and to supply problems. Colonel Miles felt that a winter campaign was possible and General Sherman agreed. The hostile forces still ruled the country in late fall 1876 when General Terry returned to his Headquarters. As General Phillip Sheridan, Commander of the Division of Missouri, had directed, Terry left Colonel Miles and the Fifth Infantry behind to pursue the hostile forces.¹⁰

Colonel Miles stayed in the field and followed signs left by hostile Indians. Colonel Whistler moved to the mouth of the Tongue River and started constructing the cantonment; Lieutenant Colonel Elwell Stephen Otis of the Twenty-second Infantry helped to supply the operations. The cantonment that resulted would become Fort Keogh and exist for over three decades, defending the frontier and helping to prepare part of the United States Army for global conflicts that were to come. It was among the most important of "victory's bastions."¹¹

The cantonment that Colonel Whistler and his men built evolved into a full-blown post and had gone by several names in its early days. Among the names used on the Post Returns sent to General Terry's Headquarters at St. Paul, Minnesota were: Tongue River, Camp Crook, Tongue River Agency, Camp Merritt, Tongue River Cantonment and Fort Keogh. Fort Keogh first appeared on the Post Return dated October 1877 (see the appendix for a complete list of units at the Post compiled from these Returns). Before this it had been Cantonment at Tongue River. Other people of the time also

⁶Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 288.

⁷Secretary of War, *Reports 1876-1877*, p. 488.

⁸Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, p. 288.

⁹Virginia Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles* (Boston: 1962), (no publisher cited), p. 107.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, P. 108.

¹¹Frink and Barthelmess, *Photographer On An Army Mule*, p. 71.

called it New Post on the Yellowstone, Cantonment or Post Number One and Tongue River Barracks. The War Department on November 8, 1878 officially named it Fort Keogh.¹²

Fort Keogh was named for Captain Myles Walter Keogh, who was killed in the Custer disaster of June 1876. Captain Keogh was a product of the Irish potato blight and other related troubles of that time. As a young man Captain Keogh had dropped out of college to look for adventure. He fought in the Algerian campaign for France and with the Papal Army in a later conflict, before coming to the United States to take part in the Civil War.¹³ He received many commendations from different generals during the Civil War.¹⁴ Myles Keogh was brevet Lieutenant Colonel during the Civil War but following demobilization was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Fourth United States Cavalry. In November of 1866 as a captain he was given command of "I" Company, Seventh Cavalry, which he would lead until his death at the Little Big Horn in June of 1876.¹⁵ The Indians who knew the Yellowstone River as the Elk River called Fort Keogh the Elk River Fort.¹⁶ During the Fort's earliest days the troops called it by some unprintable choices as living conditions were extremely poor.

Construction

The log structures that preceded the frame buildings at this post were crudely constructed. They were built by digging trenches and placing logs vertically. Cracks were filled with mud. The roofs were also made of logs and the cracks filled with mud. Rain would cause the mud to run and the dismal vermin infested huts would become even less liveable.¹⁷ These construction means were necessary as logs were plentiful but tools were not. Supplies that were being moved were in large part for the campaign under way. Most of the troops were in the field a great deal of the time and those assigned to build the original structures spent much time in what was called the "pineries" cutting logs. The method used was the saw pit with one man in the pit and the other out, each handling one end of the rip saw.¹⁸ This old cantonment would stand for some years. In 1888, when the Twenty-second Infantry arrived at Fort Keogh, some of the old log huts still stood but were in the process of being demolished.¹⁹

Colonel Miles chose the site for the permanent Fort Keogh himself. From the old cantonment, Colonel Miles went about one mile west to higher ground. An area of about ninety square miles constituted the Reservation with the garrison located in the northeastern corner.²⁰ The garrison was laid out in accordance with War Department plans, with officers' quarters facing in toward a diamond shaped parade field and the sets of enlisted barracks facing the same diamond from the northeast and southeast. The headquarters at the northern tip and the Commander's quarters was located at the

¹²Michael Koury, *Military Posts of Montana* (Bellevue, Nebraska: The Old Army Press, 1970) , p. 42.

¹³Robert J. Ege, "Legend Was a Man Named Keogh," *Montana the Magazine of Western History*, 16 (Spring 1966): 28.

¹⁴*ibid.*, P. 30.

¹⁵*ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁶Frink and Barthelmeß, *Photographer on an Army Mule*, p. 78.

¹⁷Koury, *Military Posts of Montana*, p. 56.

¹⁸Don Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p.96.

¹⁹Frink and Barthelmeß, *Photographer on an Army Mule* (8th photo after p. 72).

²⁰*ibid.*, P. 77.

western tip of the diamond. Besides the twenty-one buildings that would face the diamond, the post was to have thirty-nine more according to the original plan.²¹

All did not go according to plan, tight money being the biggest reason. Anxious officers wanted the new quarters finished in a hurry so that families could be transported up river to join them. Some officers had their families join them and stay in the old log huts while others, on returning from the field and finding the new quarters not finished, used their own money to continue construction as the few civilian employees were ordered discharged. The officers requested that the government refund the \$189.44, so used.²² The government started construction in earnest in December of 1877 after this request for a refund was made.

With the "June rise" of water in 1877 came the steamboats with the material and crews totaling about five hundred persons, some of whom would go on to Fort Custer.²³ Captain Charles S. Heintzelman, the Army Quartermaster in charge of Fort Keogh's construction, arrived about June 25, 1877.²⁴ By early October of 1877 most of the necessary supplies had reached Fort Keogh. Since the majority of buildings were frame structures, nails were a big item. One hundred thirty-eight kegs of nails were on hand as were twenty-one bundles of window sash and eighteen boxes of glass. Boxes of drills, putty, and spikes indicate that the new fort would not consist of dark huts, but fine frame homes. The job was rushed with the use of such equipment as augers, screwdrivers, drills, jackscrew, triple pulley, counter shaft and pulley, gear wheels and various other pulleys.²⁵ Rough cut lumber was secured at the government sawmill near the Yellowstone River and all the fine finished lumber was shipped in on steamboat. This activity cost the government more than the \$200,000 that it had authorized for the construction of Fort Keogh and Fort Custer.

Among the major buildings were two cavalry barracks housing six troops at a cost of \$20,800, and two infantry barracks, which housed four companies costing \$10,000. Others were single company infantry barracks at \$3,000 total, commander's quarters at \$3,300, thirteen officers' quarters built as duplexes and quadraplexes at a cost of \$39,000, stables for cavalry at \$10,000, quartermaster storehouse at \$2,200, commissary warehouse at \$2,500, bake house at \$1,000, stables for trains, commander's office and granary each at a cost of \$2,000.²⁶ The Quartermaster, in reporting the cost of constructing Fort Keogh, indicated that \$51,130.90 was spent on material, \$74,192.81 on transportation and \$57,975.72 on labor for a total cost of \$183,300.43.²⁷ This amount is near the total authorized by the Congress for both Fort Keogh and Fort Custer. In spite of the over expenditure, not all required buildings were erected in 1877, but those constructed were quickly occupied by anxious soldiers and families who were tired of

²¹Historical Building (Montana Historical Society ,Microfilm Collection #325, 1963).

²²Washington, D.C., National Archives Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Various documents, May 23, 1877.

²³Richard Upton, *Fort Custer on the Big Horn 1877-1898* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1973), p. 29.

²⁴Washington, D.C., National Archives microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh). Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1876. (Hereafter referred to as Returns from U.S. Military Posts.)

²⁵Various documents, October 4, 1877, Record Group 393, National Archives.

²⁶Frink and Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule, p. 79.

²⁷"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

living at the rundown cantonment (see figure 1, Map of Fort Keogh).

A New Home

As the cantonment was being vacated, the Quartermaster had some trouble holding on to Army property. With a mind to doing a little private construction in the area, some people were taking lumber from the cantonment huts. Floors, windows, and door frames disappeared. A circular 13 dated November 9, 1877, tried to put an end to this.²⁸ Wives of the command spent months in anticipation of the move readying materials for various needed furnishings such as curtains. Although she was pleased with the move to the newly built fort, Captain Frank D. Baldwin's wife noted in her memoirs that the cottonwood used in the fireplace burned quickly and gave off little heat. Pine not sufficiently dry sparked a great deal with little heat emitted and with high foundations under the quarters, the cold winds would billow the carpets and create a chill in the homes. Banking the buildings with manure and dirt corrected this problem.²⁹

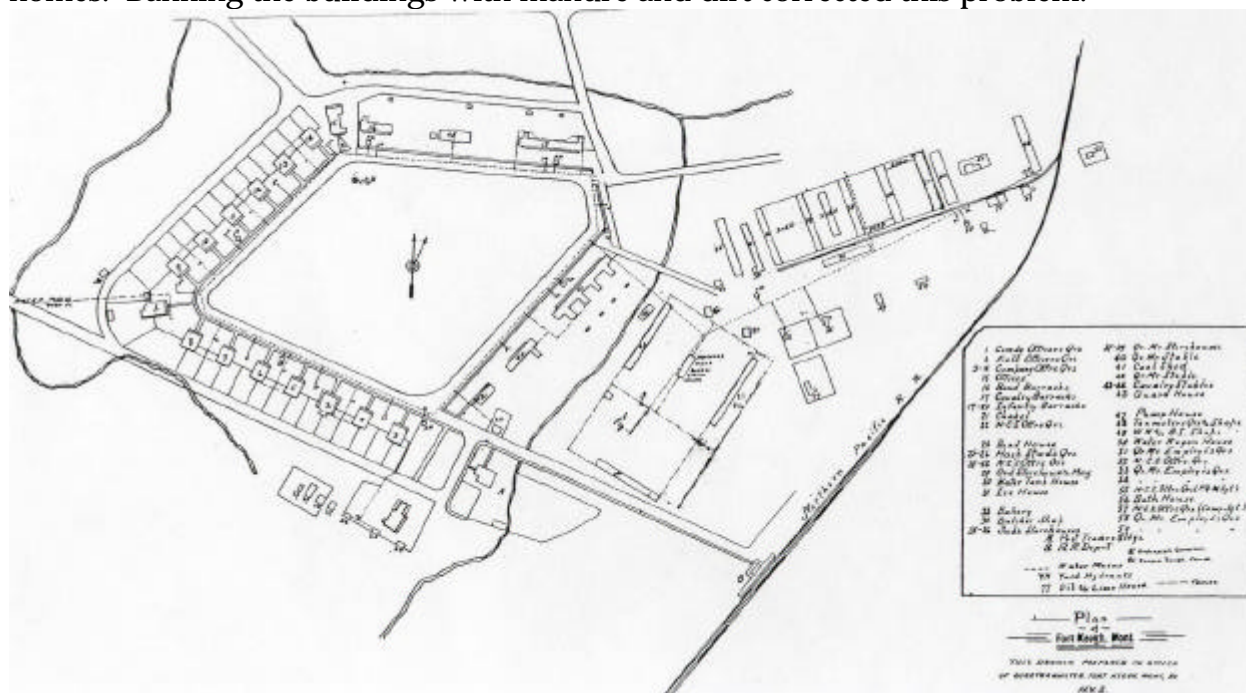


Figure 1. Map of Fort Keogh in 1901. (Courtesy of National Archives.)

The enlisted dependents had much different living quarters. About 490 feet southeast of the most easterly infantry barracks was located what the soldiers called "Tub Town." The name was applied because most of the enlisted wives were regular company laundresses helping with the family incomes.³⁰ "Tub town" had from forty-eight to sixty-five log buildings laid out on line. The distance between them was about thirty feet, and they were constructed about nine dwellings across and six deep. Each place

²⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 9, 1877.

²⁹Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, *The Frontier Years* (New York: Bramhall House, 1955), p. 127.

³⁰John I. White, "D. J. 'Kid' O'Malley . . . Montana's Cowboy Poet," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 17 (Summer 1967):62.

had a designated yard area.³¹ These quarters, as the Army referred to them, were made with cottonwood logs set on end and covered with earth roofs, as was the cantonment.³² The unmarried soldiers moved into the barracks when the buildings were finished. Company F and K of the Fifth Infantry moved in November 1877, but other companies, such as Company H, had to wait until May of 1878.³³

As Fort Keogh continued to take shape, different buildings were in various stages of construction. By the end of 1877 six barracks built to accommodate eleven companies were near completion. With almost all the Fifth Infantry and elements of the Eleventh and Twenty-second Infantry, plus elements of the Second and Seventh Cavalry, the quarters housed about fourteen companies.³⁴ The hospital was in partial use at the end of 1877 but was far from completed. Other buildings under construction late in 1877 were the guard house, bakery, six cavalry stables (two were completed), two quartermaster stables, two subsistence storehouses, one quartermaster storehouse, one granary, quartermaster office, adjutant office, and commander's office.³⁵ Other work areas under construction were an ordnance store, magazine of hewn pine and cottonwood logs covered with shingles, and an engine house and blacksmith / wheelwright shops.³⁶ Fort Keogh was one of the largest United States Army post then and for several years. In the view of the soldiers, it was the most livable Post in the West. Soon after the completion of most of the buildings in 1877, the Post had recreational facilities to suit many soldiers such as a fine library and billiard hall.³⁷ Due to the still active hostile forces, the soldiers did not get to spend as much time as they would have liked to on such recreation. The field called them forth to duty.

³¹Edward Maguin, First Lieutenant, Chief Engineer Dept. of Dakota 1878, Map drawn of Fort Keogh, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

³²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Undated report to the Department.

³³Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh), Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1876.

³⁴Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Undated report to the Department.

³⁵The last nine buildings were unpainted and on cottonwood posts as were many of the buildings at Fort Keogh.

³⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Undated report to the Department.

³⁷Koury, *Military Posts of Montana*, p. 59.

CHAPTER II CAMPAIGNS: THE ACTIVE PERIOD

The First Winter

Among the early jobs that the soldiers had to attend to were the further construction of the depot at Glendive Creek on the Yellowstone and the cantonment on the Tongue River. The Glendive Creek depot was used to bring supplies up the river for both construction and combat. Protecting its supply function caused a lot of escort duty which led to some contact with hostile Indians as did the campaigns that Miles was also conducting during the last half of 1876.³⁸

As commander of the Department of Dakota, General Alfred Terry assigned General Nelson Miles with his Fifth Infantry the task of patrolling the Yellowstone River to ensure that no hostile forces could cross and make their way into Canada after their defeat of Colonel Custer and the Seventh Cavalry.³⁹ In this task General Miles was greatly aided by Luther S. Kelly, better known as "Yellowstone Kelly". Kelly was unlike most other scouts in that he had a good formal education, was not loud and did not consume liquor, enjoy gambling or care for carousing.⁴⁰ Yellowstone Kelly was given other names by the troops at Fort Keogh. Among these names were "Kelly the Silent" and "Kelly the Sphinx."⁴¹ Both titles indicate that he did not talk or brag much. It is true he did not talk much with the average soldier, but he loved to talk if a person shared his interest. Yellowstone Kelly enjoyed history and read it when he could. He loved to discuss what he had read with others and would spend a great deal of time in the Post photographer's studio doing just that.⁴² While in the field Kelly also enjoyed listening to Colonel Miles tell about his Civil War adventures. Each man thought a great deal of the other.

Yellowstone Kelly loved nature and so was drawn to the wild country that was the Yellowstone valley of his time. Born in New York, Kelly, soon after doing his part in the Civil War, made his way west and because of his intelligence soon became adapted to the Yellowstone country. He was of immense help to General Miles and Miles made no secret of it. With regard to Miles' opinion of Yellowstone Kelly, one author wrote:

Miles found him kind, generous, "exceedingly enterprising, reliable, and fearless," and with a knowledge of the topography and nature of the upper Missouri and Yellowstone valleys that was "exceedingly valuable."⁴³

As another indication of Kelly's character, he only regarded one officer at Fort Keogh

³⁸"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C., October 1881.

³⁹Robert M. Utley, Frontier Regulars, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 269.

⁴⁰Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, The Frontier Years (New York: Bramhall House, 1955), p. 41.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 105.

with some awe, and this was Captain Eli Huggins of the Second Cavalry, because he read several foreign languages and could also speak some of the various Indian languages.⁴⁴

The association between Yellowstone Kelly and Fort Keogh began soon after the Battle of the Little Big Horn. When Kelly heard about this engagement, he arrived at General Miles' camp at what was to be Fort Keogh after sending his "calling card" which was a paw of a giant grizzly. General Miles then hired him as the chief scout.⁴⁵ Some days later, in late July of 1876, Kelly was off to the Milk River country learning what he could of some semihostile Sioux reported in that region.⁴⁶ The intelligence that Kelly returned with greatly enhanced the hopes for the success of General Miles' planned operation against hostile forces in that region.

With problems of military intelligence well in hand, Miles had the major ongoing concern of supply still to deal with. In July and August of 1876, the Indians were still situated in the Yellowstone valley in great numbers. On one occasion, July 29, Yellowstone Kelly and a few other scouts encountered an attack in progress by some Sioux. This attack was on a supply train traveling to the cantonment. While still some distance off, Kelly could hear the artillery. It was an overcast day as Kelly and the others topped the hills moving closer to the battle area. The supply train continued to move along as the Indians darted at the column. The soldiers would fire at will as they continued to escort the train.⁴⁷ As Kelly and the other scouts neared the troops, they came under fire from them. Owing to the poor visibility, the bullets had no effect, and when Kelly rose up and shouted to the non-commissioned officer in charge, the firing of the troops was stopped. Kelly then made his way to the head of the column where he reported.⁴⁸

Nearly a month later, on August 24, 1876, Miles reached the mouth of the Tongue River aboard the Far West steamboat and put a company ashore to protect this crossing. Captain Andrew G. Bennett was put in charge. Captain Edmund Rice was placed in command of a company at Glendive as well.⁴⁹ This was the last chance in 1876 that Miles could use the water transport because of the low rivers. In early September, Miles asked for fifteen hundred troops which was presumptuous due to his rank. General (brevet) Miles was able to assemble a force of 850 men with the Fifth Infantry and part of the Twenty-second Infantry under Lt. Col. Elwell S. Otis.

It was with this force that Miles would pursue the hostile forces under the leadership of Sitting Bull, Gall and other chiefs who remained defiant to government authority. The Sioux moved around the country at will and General Miles wanted to find them. The hostile forces were not spotted first by Miles' fine scout but by Private Cassidy who, while running dispatches from the embryonic Fort Keogh to Fort Buford, witnessed a

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 105.

⁴⁵Bob Wright and Kathryn Wright, Territory of Treasures (Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1972), p. 76.

⁴⁶Luther S. Kelly, "Yellowstone Kelly," Memoirs of Luther S. Kelly, ed. Milo M. Quaife (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), p. 149.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 155.

⁴⁸Ibid., P. 156.

⁴⁹Virginia Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles (Boston, 1962), P. 105.

large band of Sioux fording the Yellowstone. During daylight he watched and later made his way to tell Miles at the cantonment.⁵⁰ General Miles would soon learn from other sources that the Sioux were in the Yellowstone valley in force. On October 15, 1876, a supply train traveling between Glendive and the cantonment was attacked. This train, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Otis of the Twenty-second Infantry, had 86 wagons, 11 officers, and 185 enlisted men. The Indians numbered several hundred and the fight went on for 12 hours.⁵¹ Sitting Bull sent word to Colonel Otis telling him he must get off the road as it scared the buffalo, but the soldiers stayed on course holding their ground.⁵² After word reached the cantonment of this encounter, Miles ordered that preparation be made to move out in support of the supply train. On October 17 this was effected.⁵³ While Miles was enroute, some hostile forces attacked his camp but had little effect. Bullets passed through Miles' tent over his cot, but created no casualties. The Indians also failed in their main mission which was to stampede the horses, because the horses had been securely placed.⁵⁴

When contact was made between General Miles and Sitting Bull at Clear Creek, Montana, Miles asked to talk and after securing the area with artillery in a commanding position, Miles advanced to meet with Sitting Bull. Lieutenant Robert K. Bailey and five soldiers accompanied Miles. Johnny, "Big Leggins," Brughier a half-breed Sioux acted as interpreter. Brughier for some unknown reason mistranslated, which caused some suspicions.⁵⁵ Sitting Bull had braves moving around to gain advantage. Miles requested that this be halted; it was, and because Sitting Bull refused to surrender at the meeting, he was given fifteen more minutes to decide.⁵⁶ Sitting Bull's answer was a shot and this drew a remark from some soldiers, "That shot ends the talking; now for some fighting."⁵⁷

After a battle in which the hostile forces were driven from the field and forced to leave a great deal of equipment and supplies, Miles divided his command into three elements in an effort to catch the fleeing Indians. The element under Captain Frank D. Baldwin found Sitting Bull's band and forced him to sacrifice more equipment and some horses as he continued to flee north.⁵⁸ Other bands that had fled earlier with Sitting Bull, but had chosen a different course, surrendered to Miles. Thus Miles, with the cantonment as a base, was able to do part of the job that Colonel Custer and General Crook had failed to do.

In early November Miles again divided his command and went north in pursuit of Sitting Bull's band. Captain Simon Snyder made no contact with hostile forces and

⁵⁰ibid., p. 112.

⁵¹"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C., October 1881.

⁵²Secretary of War, Reports (for each of the years from 1876 through 1879) Washington, Government Printing Office, 1876-1879, 1876-1877, p. 490.

⁵³Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh), Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1876.

⁵⁴Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), p. 147.

⁵⁵Later in 1879, John Brughier was arrested at Fort Keogh for the murder of Mr. McGee in Dakota. Brughier claimed that McGee had attacked his brother. The townspeople of Miles City and General Miles supported Brughier and he was acquitted according to the Yellowstone Journal and Live Stock Reporter, Miles City, Montana, 1884-1891, 2 October, 1879.

⁵⁶Miles, *Serving the Republic*, p. 149.

⁵⁷ibid., p. 150.

⁵⁸ibid., p. 153.

returned to the Post; Miles had the same result with his force. Captain Baldwin made contact with the hostile forces at Bark Creek, Montana on December 7, 1876 and the Indians fled to Canada.⁵⁹

This winter campaigning took some preparation. Few tents were sent to the cantonment. The soldiers were forced to make do. This they did by cutting up wool blankets for underwear. Grain sacks were tied around their buffalo overshoes and their faces were protected with wool or fur.⁶⁰ As an overcoat, the soldiers wore buffalo coats produced by a Michigan company.⁶¹ Later these coats would be in demand among the civilian population as Army field jackets were during the Vietnam War era. Soldiers were sent to Company "Q" (the Guard House) for selling them. Besides what the soldier had on his back during the winter campaigns of 1876-1877, he had a blanket, shelter unit, pair of shoes, and a change of underwear. The normal rations and ammunition were also taken.⁶² The conditions encountered were varied. Captain Snyder's element faced temperatures ranging around ten below zero. Captain Baldwin's force, while returning from its encounter with Sitting Bull at Bark Creek, Montana, faced "minus forty degrees weather"; this was on December 23, 1876.⁶³

The success of Captain Baldwin's pursuit of Sitting Bull was not due solely to the ability of his Command to face hardship and move fast. Scout Joe Culbertson found Sitting Bull's band in the large unmapped country of northern Montana.⁶⁴ Some of the other scouts associated with the Post played important roles in the development of other areas in the West. Yellowstone Kelly became an officer and served in Alaska as well as other places. Johnny "Big Leggins" Brughier lived with Sitting Bull's band. "Liver-Eating" Johnson became a lawman and lived a long life, dying in Los Angeles. Joe Culbertson was a half-breed son of Alexander Culbertson, an Irishman involved in the fur trade. Another scout was George Boyd who had club feet, and as the story goes, this fact saved his life by confusing a Sioux hunting party. The Sioux did not know what to make of the trail that Boyd left.⁶⁵ These men and others played a vital role in the success that was to come to the troops from Fort Keogh.

The Crow Indian scouts were not always so reliable as the scouts just mentioned. They functioned well at finding the hostile forces, but it was hard to curb their hatred of the Sioux. This hatred manifested itself on December 16, 1876 as a party of Sioux, among them young Sitting Bull, arrived at the Post under a white flag to surrender. At 11:15 a.m., the Crow Indians killed the Sioux before they made it to the soldiers.⁶⁶ The Crow Indian involved ran for fear of what Colonel Miles would do.

This event made it much harder for Colonel Miles to convince the hostile forces under Crazy Horse to surrender. Scouts were sent to talk but could not locate Crazy Horse.

⁵⁹Adjutant General's Office, Introduction by Dale E. Floyd, Chronological List of Actions & c., with Indians from January 15 1837 to January 1891 (Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1979).

⁶⁰Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles, p. 127

⁶¹History of Custer, Powder River, Garfield Counties (Miles City, Montana: Einar Berge, 1931), p. 12.

⁶²Don Rickey Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), p. 222.

⁶³*ibid.*, p. 255.

⁶⁴Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles, p. 135.

⁶⁵Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 25.

⁶⁶Don Rickey Jr., "The Battle of Wolf Mountain," Montana the Magazine of Western History 13 (Spring 1963): 46.

In late December, Miles sent Companies C and F of the Twenty-second Infantry under Captain Charles J. Dickey and Company K of the Fifth Infantry under Lieutenant Mason Carter in pursuit of Crazy Horse and followed them on the twenty-ninth of December with Companies A, C and E, accompanied by artillery.⁶⁷ Contact was made on the eighth of January. The day before, Miles' scouts had found Crazy Horse's band and after a 190 mile march, the United States Army was able to engage Crazy Horse in battle. On the morning of the eighth, the hostile forces watched the soldiers eat breakfast from the bluffs that surrounded the camp. After nights of sleeping on the snow without fires, the soldiers had cleared snow and made fires. With what little fuel they could find they boiled some coffee and frozen salt pork. Some of the hostile forces were shouting that they were eating their last meal. Yellowstone Kelly, who understood all they shouted, replied back that they were all women. Women were afraid to fight."⁶⁸ The Cheyenne felt that they had surprised Miles. It was Miles, though, who surprised them. What appeared to be supply wagons, to the hostile forces were in fact howitzers.⁶⁹ The Cheyennes' position was on high ground to the front and left of the troops. Miles had captured some women, some of whom were related to chiefs (they helped locate the hostile forces), and because they failed to rescue the women, the Cheyenne decided to stand and fight the Army.⁷⁰ During this battle at Wolf Mountain, the soldiers had to fight their way up a hill to dislodge the Indians. Seeing that the ammunition was short on the skirmish line, Captain Baldwin grabbed a box of rounds; most of the ammunition fell in the snow as they were slipping from his hand, but his effort and the shouts of encouragement aroused his men to victory.⁷¹ The battle turned on the death of a medicine man who was dancing in plain view as proof that bullets could not harm him. When a soldier's bullet felled the Medicine man, the Indians broke and ran. They headed for the Big Horn mountains, leaving a great deal of their equipment, and surrendered a few months later. In no condition to follow the Indians, the troops returned to the Post after a march of about 242 miles. They reached the Post on January 18, 1877.⁷² The returning to the Post was sad and cold. Two officers and an enlisted man had been killed, and the cold was taking its toll in frozen hands and feet. Captain Baldwin was coughing so violently that he had to be held.⁷³ As the command neared the Post the band struck up "Marching Through Georgia." It did not look much like an Army marching, but it was an impressive scene, the formation moving through the wintry landscape. Miles' elation at his victory was cut short by the orders he received when he returned. These orders stated that he must cut back on expenses. This cost the jobs of teamsters, wagon masters, guides, packers, blacksmiths and all the scouts but two. Furthermore, only thirty wagons were permitted.⁷⁴

1877

During the months of January through April, most of the command was at the

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 47.

⁶⁸Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles*, p. 147.

⁶⁹National Park Service (Conrad L. Wirth, Director), *Soldier and Brave* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 194

⁷⁰Secretary of War, *Reports* (for each of the years from 1876 through 1879) Washington, Government Printing Office, 1876-1879, 1876-1877, p. 487.

⁷¹Rickey, Jr., "The Battle of Wolf Mountain," p. 50.

⁷²Ibid., p. 52.

⁷³Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles*, p. 154.

⁷⁴Ibid. p. 153.

cantonment tending to the construction of a new post. February saw the scouting increased and three supply trains escorted, but 385 troops still remained to ready the new Post.⁷⁵ In order to improve his ability to cover more ground during the scoutings, Miles ordered that some of his infantry be mounted on captured Indian ponies. Captain Simon Snyder reported great trouble in carrying out this order, but it did give the Indians something to laugh about. Horse and man had a hard time staying together in the endeavor.⁷⁶

After months of escort duty and scouting, the troops were readied for another campaign against the hostile forces. On May 1, 1877, Companies B and H of the Fifth Infantry and Companies E and F of the Twenty-second Infantry, under the command of Colonel Miles, headed south after Lame Deer's band of Cheyenne.⁷⁷ Smoke from the Cheyenne camp revealed their location. Miles ordered the young officer named Lieutenant Edward Wanton Casey with a force of thirteen civilians and six soldiers to stampede the Indian ponies. The success of this action at Little Muddy Creek, Montana was the major reason for the campaign's success. Four hundred fifty to five hundred horses were captured, and Casey was recommended for a brevet.⁷⁸

Lieutenant Casey was commissioned at West Point in 1873 and assigned to the Twenty-second Infantry as a second lieutenant. He first arrived at the cantonment on October 2, 1876 and was acting Post Adjutant for a time and then was given command of a company of citizens and Indian guides.⁷⁹ Casey would return to Fort Keogh in 1888 with the Twenty-second and serve as commander of other Indians until his death.

The fight at Little Muddy Creek led to the death of Lame Deer. Soon after the attack by the soldiers, a parley was called. The Indian negotiator, misinterpreting the movement of some soldiers with Miles, fired at Miles. His shots missed Colonel Miles but killed his orderly behind him. This brought an immediate counter fire which resulted in the death of Lame Deer and Iron Star.⁸⁰ The surrender of Lame Deer's band left Sitting Bull uneasy and he moved north across the Missouri River. Scouting parties were sent north of the Missouri to observe him, but Sitting Bull kept out of range.

Between the unpleasant duties of chasing hostile forces, the troops had a gruesome task to attend to. In June of 1877 they found that rain and coyotes had disinterred some of the troopers that had died with Colonel Custer. Troop I of the Seventh Cavalry was chosen for the task of reburial. This was Captain Myles Keogh's company and the command was reformed around Captain H. J. Nowlan, an officer in the command, who had missed the battle of the Little Big Horn due to having been assigned other duties.⁸¹ This command and others of the Seventh Cavalry played a large role in the defeat of Chief Joseph and the Nez Perces that was soon to follow the gruesome task of burying the soldiers.

⁷⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Returns from U.S. Military Posts, February 1877.

⁷⁶Rickey Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, p. 225.

⁷⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, May 1877.

⁷⁸*Yellowstone Journal*, and *Live Stock Reporter*, 1884-1891, 8 March 1890.

⁷⁹Maurice Frink and Casey Barthelmess, *Photographer on an Army Mule* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 103.

⁸⁰William Addleman Gano, *The History of the United States Army* (Ashton, Maryland: Eric Lundberg, 1964), p. 344.

⁸¹Brown and Felton, *The Frontier Years*, p. 110.

On August 4, 1877, after reports reached Miles of the movement of the Nez Perces Indians east in the direction of his location, Miles sent troops in an attempt to stop them. Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane was sent on the third and Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis with the Seventh Cavalry was sent on the tenth of August. The Nez Perces slipped by this contingent in the battle of Canyon Creek.⁸² The wounded from this battle reached the cantonment on September 22, 1877 by way of a Mackinaw boat on the Yellowstone River.⁸³

With news of the Nez Perces' victory at Canyon Creek, Miles ferried a force across the Yellowstone and headed north in hopes of intercepting them. Including his six troops of Cavalry, five companies of infantry (mounted) and thirty Cheyenne and Sioux scouts, Miles commanded a force of 600 men.⁸⁴ Fort Keogh's location put Miles in the right place at the right time. It was a group of well trained veterans that departed Fort Keogh on September 18, 1877. The wives were veterans of a sort as well. One example was Mrs. Frank Baldwin who reported in her memoirs that years before she had gone into hysteria when her husband took the field; during the Nez Perces conflict she met his leaving with composure.⁸⁵

Soon after their departure from Fort Keogh, Captain Owen Hale was asked to select a young officer to ride ahead to flag a steamboat on the Missouri. He chose Lieutenant Jonathan W. Biddle, and as Miles wrote of these two officers. "I little realized the unfortunate fate and sacrifice that awaited these two valuable officers in the campaign in which we were engaged."⁸⁶ Miles believed that the hostile forces were still south of the Missouri so he let the steamer head down river. A few men who had come from Crow Island corrected him on this and the steamer was called back with a cannon shot which Miles felt sure Captain Baldwin (who was aboard) would respond to.⁸⁷

The Indians were delayed at Crow Island where they crossed the river. Sergeant Moelchert who was in charge of a few soldiers from the Seventh Infantry who were guarding government supplies at this landing, informed them that he could not sell the goods at the landing because they were not his. After taking or destroying what they found, the Nez Perces moved on. Another delay for the hostile forces was the action of Major Guido Ilges who forced the Indians into a few skirmishes.⁸⁸ Major Ilges was a big Bavarian with a strong accent and an open and friendly manner. He would later serve at Fort Keogh and make friends with soldier and civilian alike. The Yellowstone Journal of February 5, 1880 praised Major Ilges as the coming Indian fighter of the Northwest since by that time Colonel Miles was promoted and transferred. The newspaper also referred to the major as a Prussian, not a Bavarian. Later in his career Ilges was court-martialed for duplicating pay records and his career was cut short. Because of Major Ilges' efforts and the quick pace of Miles' hardened troops, contact was made between Colonel Miles' troops and Chief Joseph's Nez Perces.

⁸²Miles, Serving the Republic, p. 172.

⁸³Returns from U.S. Military Posts, September 1877.

⁸⁴Mark H. Brown, The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 315.

⁸⁵Oliver Knight, Life and Manners in the Frontier Army (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), p. 193.

⁸⁶Miles, Serving the Republic, p. 173.

⁸⁷*ibid.*, p. 174.

⁸⁸Helen Addison Howard and Dan L. McGrath, War Chief Joseph (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), p. 265.

First the soldiers acted to stampede the Indian horses. This job was given to Captain Tyler's battalion, which captured 800 horses.⁸⁹ The first charge was stopped and a stalemate developed. Miles' cannons were placed at too high an elevation and close to the hostile forces, thus they took a great deal of heat from the hostile forces. Unlike other tribes, the Nez Perces took care to aim for the leaders and the toll taken was great. This, and the military tactics resulted in a state of siege.⁹⁰ These tactics also caused a high rate of casualties, as high as 20% of those engaged. Captain Simon Snyder located a hospital on high ground, south of the battle area. Because of a lack of tents and fuel along with the cold wind and snow, the death rate was high. As Colonel Miles wrote:

Our success was not without serious loss. Captain Hale and Lieutenant Biddle, with twenty soldiers, were killed; Captains Moylan and Godfrey, Lieutenant Romeyn, and Assistant Adjutant General Baird and twenty-eight soldiers were wounded. . . .⁹¹

After days of suffering on both sides, Colonel Miles opened negotiations on October 1. Chief Joseph had hoped that the Sioux would come to his aid but they feared any contact with "Bear Coat," as Colonel Miles was called. When Chief Joseph arrived to negotiate, he was held by Miles, but had to be released in exchange for Lieutenant Jerome who, while on a spy mission, was captured by the Indians.⁹²

Chief Joseph wanted the suffering of his people ended and so accepted the terms set by Colonel Miles. Joseph was promised that he could return to his Lapwai reservation, but this would not come for many years as the government did not back up what Colonel Miles had promised. The Nez Perces were taken to Fort Keogh for the winter and sent on to the Indian territory the next year.⁹³

1878-1879

Aside from a small encounter between scouts out of Fort Keogh and hostile forces at the head waters of Sunday Creek, Montana, on 5 February 1878, the winter of 1877-1878 was quiet following the Nez Perces' defeat. Escort duty was the major endeavor of Fort Keogh's troops as hunting parties would attack undefended supply trains, but Sitting Bull was afraid to move his band against the troops from Fort Keogh.

Once again it was hostile Indians from outside Miles' district of the Yellowstone that caused him to campaign actively in the summer of 1878. Yellowstone Kelly was sent out in July to get prospectors off Crow Indian land and was to report on the movement of the Bannock Indians. About a month later Colonel Miles was headed in the same direction for a vacation at the Yellowstone National Park. Always the soldier, Colonel Miles never let himself get out of contact with what was going on with the Bannocks. Upon his arrival at the Crow agency, he was informed of their movement out of Idaho.

⁸⁹Miles, *Serving the Republic*, p. 177.

⁹⁰Robert J. Ege, *After the Little Big Horn* (Great Falls, Montana: Kiah Buckner, 1977), p. 4.

⁹¹Miles, *Serving the Republic*, p. 179.

⁹²Howard and McGrath, *War Chief Joseph*, p. 278.

⁹³Ganoe, *The History of the United States Army*, p. 347.

With this news Colonel Miles sent Lieutenant W. P. Clark of the Second Cavalry up Rosebud Creek where contact was made at Index Peak in Wyoming on August 29, 1878.⁹⁴ Crow Indians were asked to join Colonel Miles and with about twenty-five of them and his small escort, Colonel Miles set out to find the Bannocks and succeeded in surprising them on September 4, 1878. Fourteen Bannocks were killed and the others captured in this battle at Clark's Fork, Montana, which cost Captain Andrew G. Bennett and an interpreter named "Rock" their lives.⁹⁵ The success at Clark's Fork came even though the bugler tripped on some sagebrush and bent the bugle making it useless to sound the attack.⁹⁶ The troops from Fort Keogh did not always have to go miles across the state of Montana to catch fleeing hostile forces. Sometimes the hostile forces passed near Fort Keogh on their trek to join Sitting Bull.

Little Wolf's band of about 149 who fled with Dull Knife from the Indian territory towards their beloved homes in Montana, later departed from Dull Knife and had to escape from Camp Robinson. This escape on a cold winter night of January 9, 1879 reduced the number of his band to below eighty persons.⁹⁷ In response, troops were sent from Fort Keogh under the command of Lieutenant William Philo Clark on February 22, 1879. It consisted of Companies E and I of the Fifth Infantry along with a detachment of Artillery and Indian scouts. A camp was established on the Yellowstone at O'Fallen Creek and scouts sent out to find Little Wolf.⁹⁸ After spotting Little Wolf in the valley of the Little Missouri, Clark sent his Indian scouts out to make an agreement to surrender. Owing to the loyalty and fine efforts of Indian scouts like Hump, Wolf Voice, and Two Moons, Little Wolf's hostile forces joined forces with the soldiers of Fort Keogh.⁹⁹

Lieutenant Clark was somewhat typical of many Army officers in the Indian conflicts, because of his characterization of the Indians. He put his impression of the Indian this way.

Unfortunately for the race, our opinions of them in many cases are based upon the observation of the vicious habits of those who hang about the immediate presence of portions of our Western Civilization, which has, by its rough and rank dissipation, demoralized the barbarian, who usually absorbs the bad and eschews the good, quickly becoming diseased mentally, morally, and physically, and in this debased condition there are few vices or crimes of which they are not capable.¹⁰⁰

Aside from the campaigning, the troops from Fort Keogh had an ongoing dose of small police actions to tend to. Horse stealing was a major problem, and because of the wide open country of the late 1870s in Montana, thieves felt little need to re-brand livestock. A typical report sounded something like this: The stage agent sees Indians or Whites

⁹⁴Secretary of War, Reports 1877-1878, p. 67.

⁹⁵"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," September 4, 1878, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁶Brown, The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone, p. 319.

⁹⁷Utley, Frontier Regulars, p. 284.

⁹⁸"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," October 1881, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁹Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 116.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p. 200.

driving sixty head of mules with "S & T" brands and the troops are on the trail. Sioux hunting parties raid Crow Indian herds and the soldiers are on the trail.¹⁰¹ Friendly tribes steal from other friendly tribes and the soldiers are on the trail. These incidents drew the Army's attention, but it was the killings by the hostile hunting parties from north of the Missouri that attracted the attention of the civilian press, Washington and the troops from Fort Keogh. Both Major Baker and Captain Snyder left the Post in early 1879 to prevent hostile forces from crisscrossing the Yellowstone valley at will. Glendive, Montana was the destination of both of these commands.¹⁰² The same two officers would repeat their efforts in June of the same year. If nothing else, this kept the Indians on guard.

The Indians were able to operate with some success close to Fort Keogh because their groups were small and could go unnoticed. Before the big push came in the middle of 1879, the Army had some success against these small bands. Sergeant Thomas B. Glover, who would later be commissioned, had great success against one such band led by Black Coyote. Black Coyote had killed two members of his own tribe and thus was banished. About seven people followed him into banishment. On April 5, 1879, the band of eight killed a Private named Boader and wounded Sergeant Kennedy, taking their Army mounts. Both were telegraph repairmen.¹⁰³ Sergeant Glover was quick to overtake this small band and force their surrender. On July 31, 1879 the Yellowstone Journal reported that another telegraph repairman was attacked by Sioux but escaped from about thirteen of them on his way from Cracker Box Creek.

When civilians became the victims of these attacks, Washington loosened the rein it held on Miles. The Colonel received the reports: March 20, 1879--two men were killed on the Upper Yellowstone. June 6, 1879--Sebbesye was killed. Other reports of killings came into Fort Keogh during April, May and June.¹⁰⁴ On April 5, 1879, Colonel Miles ordered Colonel Ravolle from Fort Custer to protect the areas north of that post, but he could not allow him to proceed north of the Yellowstone.¹⁰⁵ This restrained policy was soon to change.

On his return from Washington, D.C., in early June of 1879, Colonel Miles moved against the hostile forces that were hunting in the United States. This action came about as a result of Miles' ear-bending and pressure from the citizens of Montana. The mission ahead was to separate the hostile from friendly Indians and clear the country of those Indians that moved south of the Canadian line.¹⁰⁶ Three companies of the Fifth Infantry left Fort Keogh on June 30, 1879. Four more companies of the Fifth Infantry and four troops of the Second Cavalry soon followed, along with a detachment of artillery and scouts.¹⁰⁷ The three other troops of the Second Cavalry came from Fort Custer.

¹⁰¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 2, 1878.

¹⁰²Returns from U.S. Military Posts, February 1879.

¹⁰³Brown, The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone, p. 321.

¹⁰⁴Secretary of War, Reports 1878-1879, p. 69.

¹⁰⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 5, 1879.

¹⁰⁶"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," October 1881, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1879.

The general mood of the troops and officers alike was one of satisfaction. It was good to get away from the dull life in garrison and feel like they were doing something. During the evenings, according to John F. Finerty, a correspondent with the Chicago Times, the officers would relay stories of past glory. Some of the officers that had interesting stories to tell were Lieutenant William Philo Clark who was with MacKenzie during his attack on Dull Knife's camp and with Crook on his starvation march, and Lieutenant F. W. Sibley, who, during the battle of the Rosebud, nearly was spotted by hostile forces as he and his Command suffered while eluding them and rejoining Crook's command after a scout mission. Another was Lieutenant Edward S. Godfrey who was at both the battle of Little Big Horn and Chief Joseph's defeat at Snake Creek.¹⁰⁸

Intelligence of the Indians' situation was coming in not only from the scouts that were traversing the border country, but from Lieutenant John C. F. Tillson as well. He had been sent on a spy mission into the Dominion and reported Sioux numbers at about 5000, including 2000 warriors.¹⁰⁹ The regular scouting paid off when Lieutenant W. P. Clark found about 400 north of the Beaver Creek and engaged them. The Sioux lost a great deal of equipment after a retreat, a short stand, and finally a route.¹¹⁰

According to a report in the New York Times of August 7, 1879, Colonel Miles asked for permission to leave the area north of the Missouri, but General Sheridan denied his request. Miles felt the job was done, but events would show Sheridan to be right. Fast Bull with his band of about fifty-seven left the Lower Brule Agency and were headed to join Sitting Bull. On August 10, 1879, they were stopped by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph N. G. Whistler of the Fifth Infantry as they crossed the Missouri.¹¹¹ It was also on this expedition that the problem of those supplying Sitting Bull was addressed. Miles summed up his efforts in a letter to his wife Mary in these words:

After all the fuss and hubbub they have made over my expedition it has been eminently successful. We drove the whole Sitting Bull following out of the country, so badly frightened that they promised not to come back again. We then turned and scattered from Pacafrem Creek almost to Belknap and captured 829 half-breeds with over six hundred carts and finally wound up the campaign by capturing Short (Fast) Bull's band as they were crossing the Missouri.¹¹²

In the Yellowstone Journal of August 28, 1879 credit for the conception of the campaign was given to Carl Schurz, the Secretary of the Interior. It reported on the return of all the troops and the success they had had.

¹⁰⁸Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 25.

¹⁰⁹John F. Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 263.

¹¹⁰Secretary of War, Reports 1878-1879, p. 72.

¹¹¹"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," October 1881, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹¹²Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles, p. 219

CHAPTER III PEACE COMES TO THE REGION

1880-1881

With the close of the fall campaign against Sitting Bull in 1879 the troops returned to the routine duties of escorting. The Post Returns of January 1880 indicated such escort duties as government trains, supply trains, mule trains and transportation to Powder River. Most of the early part of 1880 was quiet and the Yellowstone Journal of February 28, 1880 indicated great confidence in the Post's ability to protect the Yellowstone valley. The troops at the Post would still have plenty of small hostile bands to deal with. A small party of troops, with a detachment of Indian scouts under the leadership of Sergeant G. B. Glover, was successful in its pursuit of about six hostile warriors who had killed a hunter and wounded another. Sergeant Glover was given much press in the Yellowstone Journal about this minor military action and his efforts to secure a commission.¹¹³ It was as though the paper knew that the minor action against this small band would have a major effect on the decision of about 2000 of Sitting Bull's followers to surrender.¹¹⁴ Sergeant Glover was later given the Medal of Honor for capture of the small band of six.¹¹⁵

Aside from the new task of escorting the Northern Pacific Railroad crews as they moved into Montana, the troops still had to try to stop acts of violence such as those that Sergeant Glover dealt with. March and April of 1880 saw many such efforts from the troops at Fort Keogh. Immigrants, though few, were coming into the area around Fort Keogh. One such family was the Brants. They arrived at Fort Keogh in March of 1880 just after the murder of Henry Friese, a stage driver carrying mail between Bismarck and Fort Keogh. The Sioux hostile forces, with the mail to indict them, were tracked down and killed in a route following the tracking by a Cheyenne scout called Howling Wolf.¹¹⁶

West of Fort Keogh other Indian trouble was noted. Captain Frank Baldwin, with two companies of the Fifth Infantry, was sent out after the hostile forces to stop horse stealing and murder. On March 8, 1880, after a gallop of 40 or so miles, a small battle was joined with the Sioux. In this battle the soldiers only achieved the capture of Indian livestock.¹¹⁷ The large picture was much more complicated. Captain E. P. Ewers with E Company, Fifth Infantry, Captain T. B. Dewees with four troops of Cavalry, Lieutenant S. W. Miller with a detachment of E Company, Fifth Infantry and Indian scouts, and Captain S. G. Hamilton all were in the area near the mouths of Rosebud and Porcupine Creeks. Lieutenant S. W. Miller made contact with the hostile forces who were raiding the settlements in the area. Miller lost two scouts and managed to kill three Indians

¹¹³The Chronological List of Actions With Indians from January 15, 1837 to January 1891 from the Adjutant General's office has his name as T. B. Glover and the battle of February 12, 1880 and Pumpkin Creek (near New Mexico); Records of United States Army Continental Commands 1821-1920, Record Group 393, September 22, 1880, has his name as J. B. Glover, National Archives.

¹¹⁴Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, Before Barbed Wire (New York: Bramhall House, 1956), p. 15.

¹¹⁵Don Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), p. 307.

¹¹⁶Louis Pfaller, "The Fort Keogh to Bismarck Stage Route," North Dakota History, July 1954, p. 119.

¹¹⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh), Returns from U.S. Military Posts, March 1880.

before Captain Baldwin made contact with the hostile forces and recovered the stock.¹¹⁸

In the next month, April 1, 1880, this scene was repeated with a few changes. Captain Huggins with Troop C, Second Cavalry made contact with hostile forces near O'Fallon's Creek, Montana. The results were better than Captain Baldwin had; forty horses were captured as well as five hostile Indians. The price paid was higher, since Sergeant Johnson was killed. He received a full dress funeral where 200 men followed in the processions.¹¹⁹ Chasing horse stealing hostile forces occupied the time of about four companies during much of April, but in May murder had to be dealt with.

In late June the stage arrived at Miles City without the mail for the citizens and the soldiers of Fort Keogh. Mr. Cole the driver informed the authorities that on May 27, 1880, the Beaver station on the Bismarck-to-Fort Keogh mail line was attacked and two men killed; Sidney McQueen and Frank Jarvis both were shot through the head.¹²⁰ Major Ilges was sent out to find the hostile forces and reported back on the details. It appeared to him that some mule wagons arrived at Beaver station and the mules, while grazing, were driven off by the Indians. When one victim went after them he was shot and the same fate later followed for the other victim.¹²¹ Major Ilges returned about ten days after he left, having had little luck. It was felt that the six Sioux Indians, since they came from the East and returned east, must have been from the Red Cloud Agency.¹²²

These small raids were the order of the day for hostile forces as a short time later, on July 11, 1880, a stage driver was killed between Pennel and O'Fallon stations. Company H, Fifth Infantry, under Lieutenant John C. F. Tillson, was sent after the hostile forces to follow them to the British boundary if need be.¹²³

Soldiers did not always end up chasing hostile Indians, as, for example, in the case of the stolen horses belonging to Mr. Bruns and Mr. Stiger. It was thought that Indians had done the job, but later the tracks indicated that White men were the "thieving rascals." The pursuit was conducted by the scouts since too much Army time had all ready been invested.¹²⁴

Later in the same month and the couple of months that followed, small Indian bands were reported all over the Yellowstone valley. Some wanted to surrender; others wanted trouble. Either way the soldiers of Fort Keogh had their work cut out for them. On August 1, 1880, Company E left for Willow Creek and brought back 140 prisoners after marching 250 miles.¹²⁵ Colonel Miles sent word out that all hostile forces had thirty days from September 25, 1880, in which to surrender their guns and ponies. Spotted Eagle agreed on behalf of one hundred lodges. Sitting Bull, on the other hand, moved his followers near Fort Peck and prepared to avoid conflict with Miles by fleeing

¹¹⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 27, 1880.

¹¹⁹Yellowstone Journal, Miles City, Montana, 1879-1881, 10 April 1880.

¹²⁰Ibid., 5 June 1880.

¹²¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record 393. Various documents, June 5, 1880.

¹²²Yellowstone Journal, 1879-1881, 12 June 1880.

¹²³Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1880.

¹²⁴Yellowstone Journal, 7 August 1880.

¹²⁵Returns from U.S. Military Posts, 14 August 1880. Yellowstone Journal, 25 September 1880. Ibid., 9 October 1880.

north if Miles moved.¹²⁶ Major Ilges was sent north to the Poplar Creek Agency area to insure against any trouble. No serious difficulty came for some months, because Sitting Bull moved north.¹²⁷ While the soldiers watched for trouble in the Poplar Creek and other areas, other troops did routine work as escorts to the Northern Pacific crews. The summer months were a good time to be in Montana and according to the *Yellowstone Journal* the escort troops did their best to take advantage of it. A report from the area of the mouth of Cedar Creek recorded that Captain Charles E. Hargous had a mishap while trying to land a boat. The area was full of Black Tail deer and Sergeant Church managed to get three of them. Lieutenant Borden tended two young fawns and to keep busy, the soldiers were building corrals to contain the sheep used as rations. It was hard to supply this group of soldiers as they were cut off by floods.¹²⁸ Such escorts were made routinely because the Indians did not feel safe making an attack on an Army unit.

To deal with the ongoing problem of Sitting Bull and his followers on the border line, an expedition was formed at Fort Keogh and on December 15, 1880, it moved north. It consisted of 170 men and the first few months of 1881 would be productive for Major Ilges and his men.¹²⁹ Chief Gall, an important figure at the Battle of Little Big Horn was the major prize of the campaign. As part of Sitting Bull's larger group, his band was forced south by starvation because the British would not tend to their needs. As Chief Gall's band neared Poplar River Agency, some of the warriors became belligerent and as a result Major Ilges attacked on January 2, 1881, taking 324 prisoners and killing eight Indians.¹³⁰ Before he returned to Fort Keogh, Ilges had a smaller engagement with another band of Sioux on January 29, 1881, also at Poplar River where sixty-four Indians surrendered.¹³¹ Major Ilges' command suffered no casualties in either engagement, and the local press referred to the Major as "Hero of the Poplar River Campaign".¹³² Similar surrenders followed where few shots were fired and no deaths occurred; some took place in February and April. On February 12, 1881, Major Ilges captured 185 hostile Indians at Redwater, Montana; and on April 11, 1881, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph N. G. Whistler accepted the surrender of 156 Indians at Fort Keogh.¹³³

By the middle of 1881, with the surrender of Sitting Bull at Fort Buford, Dakota, the Army had won the peace. It now had the job of keeping it. The area around Miles City was still wide open and supplies that Broadwater, Hubbell and Company hauled for the government still had to be protected. Not only was freight lost to greedy White men, but some of these settlers also coveted Indian lands. July 5, 1881 brought a response from Fort Keogh to this problem, when Companies D and K of the Fifth Infantry were sent to eject anyone, not authorized, from the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. Captain Robert McDonald succeeded in this mission.¹³⁴ Captain Simon Snyder, with Companies A and F of the Fifth Infantry, was assigned the duty of

¹²⁶*Yellowstone Journal*, 25 September 1880.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, 9 October 1880.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, 3 July 1880.

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, 18 December 1880.

¹³⁰Merrill G. Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier* (Helena, Montana: State Publishing Company, 1942), p. 247.

¹³¹Adjutant General's Office, *Chronological List Of Actions With Indians*, February 29, 1881.

¹³²*Yellowstone Journal*, 19 March 1881.

¹³³Adjutant General's Office, *Chronological List of Actions With Indians*, February, April 1881.

¹³⁴Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1881.

preventing trouble between Yanktonais Indians and White hunters who invaded their land. This job took from October 5 to October 18, 1881, and was also successful.¹³⁵ Keeping the peace between Indian tribes was another task the Army had. In February it quieted the Crow who wanted war with the Flatheads. The latter were stealing horses and in the process killed two Crow Indians.¹³⁶

1882-1891

For the most part the decade of the 1880s was quiet, but a few incidents show that "Indian trouble" was still a fact of life. Fear, if not actual bloodshed, was still much in evidence. Major (not military rank) William D. O'Toole the Post trader at Fort Keogh, in an interview with the New York Times dated May 8, 1882, stated that there was no reason to fear a Crow Indian war because Whites would be more likely to attack them and as far as stealing, the Whites do a much better job of that.

Over a year later, in August of 1883, there was some trouble reported with the Cheyenne at the Tongue River location near Lame Deer Creek. The Indians were not receiving promised rations and this resulted in some stock killing. Some of the Cheyenne left their area and joined with Assiniboine Indians. Ranchers went to Miles City to stock up on ammunition and threatened to send cowboys after the Cheyenne. Stock detectives apprehended some Cheyenne. After a prominent stockman commission met with Colonel John D. Wilkins, Commander of Fort Keogh, a troop of Cavalry under the command of Lieutenant James L. (N.) Allison was sent. The settlers were reassured and no trouble was encountered by this command.¹³⁷

Black Wolf and a band of Cheyenne burned Mr. Alderson's house in March of 1884 and this brought a quick response from the authorities at Fort Keogh. Officers and a posse found the guilty parties and a trial at Miles City closed the incident.¹³⁸ Later in that year more horse stealing between Indians was reported, but most of this happened near other posts.¹³⁹ Troops from Fort Keogh were sent in November of 1885 under the command of Major Simon Snyder with Lieutenants Edwin P. Brewer, James D. Mann and Hunter Liggett. Again the presence of the troops had a quieting effect on both Indian and White.¹⁴⁰

Nearly a year later the same command was sent to the Cheyenne near Lame Deer for the same reason and with the same result. Other soldiers, however, had "nice" duty in that they were assigned to accompany a group of researchers from the Smithsonian around the country of eastern Montana.¹⁴¹ A month later the less fortunate troops under Major Snyder were ordered to remain at Lame Deer until further orders.¹⁴²

¹³⁵Ibid., October 1881.

¹³⁶New York Times, 24 February 1881.

¹³⁷Miles City Daily Press (Montana), 1, 3, 4, 6 August 1883.

¹³⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter (Miles City, Montana), 29 March 1884.

¹³⁹New York Times, 11 September 1884.

¹⁴⁰Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 28 November 1885.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 2, 30 October 1886.

¹⁴²Ibid., 6 November 1886.

The year of 1887 saw the introduction of the Sun Dance into Montana to the point where it impacted on the troops of Fort Keogh. In June of 1887, Agent Upshaw at the Lame Deer Agency could not expel a group of Cheyenne from Pine Ridge. These Indians resented the treatment they received from the Sioux at Pine Ridge and through their expulsion the Sun Dance beliefs were spread.¹⁴³ Major Snyder led a battalion from Forts Keogh and Custer that returned 120 Cheyenne to South Dakota. The march lasted fifteen days.¹⁴⁴

Sword Bearer, a young Crow Indian, was talking friendship with the Cheyenne and this meant trouble for the White settlers. Some difficulty was reported. In response, the Army sent Colonel Dudley with six troops from Fort Custer and Major Snyder with three companies from Fort Keogh.¹⁴⁵ Rumor in the local press had twenty settlers killed by Sword Bearer; the actual event was minor with Sword Bearer being killed in a minor clash with these troops and the Sun Dance frenzy among the Crow died with him.¹⁴⁶

In the midst of the Ghost Dance trouble, the troops still had to continue other duties. Lieutenant Edward W. Casey planned a reconnaissance of Yellowstone Park in July of 1888, but other duties kept him from securing this assignment.¹⁴⁷ Lieutenant Thomas M. Moody, was sent with fifteen men on special duty to the National Park. His task was to protect it by patrolling until October 1, 1888. He had taken station there on about July 28.¹⁴⁸ This guard duty at the National Park became a long-term function and reliefs were sent for the troops about every three months.

A few Indian horse stealing forays during 1889 foreshadowed the major Ghost Dance trouble that hit the Northern Plains in 1890 and concluded in 1891. A basic tenet of the Ghost Dance belief was that a White man with scars on his hands and feet would come among them. He would counsel them that the Indians should use bow and arrow against the Whites and that dead Indians would return to life and “the world would roll over on the White men.”¹⁴⁹ This belief caused some Indians to start hostilities against settlers. White Buffalo and Black Medicine were accused of killing Mr. Ferguson and after being located at Fort Keogh were ordered arrested.¹⁵⁰ This action excited the Indians at Lame Deer which in turn excited the citizens of the area. Nothing came of this because troops under the command of Captain Mott Hooton of the Twenty-second Infantry were sent, preventing any serious conflict.¹⁵¹

Washington, D.C. sent a fact-finding commission into the area of the Ghost dance problem. The commission headed by Fort Keogh's former commander, General Miles, was escorted to Lame Deer by Lieutenant Edward Wanton Casey, who would die as a

¹⁴³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 17, 1887.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., July 27, 1887.

¹⁴⁵Richard Upton, Fort Custer on the Big Horn 1877-1898 (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1973), p. 148.

¹⁴⁶Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 29 October 1887.

¹⁴⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 16, 1888.

¹⁴⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 28 July 1888.

¹⁴⁹New York Times, 27 April 1890.

¹⁵⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, May 30, 1890.

¹⁵¹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 14 June 1890.

result of the commission's inability to stop the Ghost Dance movement.¹⁵² As commander of the Division of Missouri, General Miles ordered that troops be sent out from Fort Keogh to keep an eye on the Indians. In November 1890, President Harrison ordered, the then General Miles, to Standing Rock to find out what the Sioux were doing, and a short time later Fort Keogh was put on alert as the Sioux were threatening. The Cheyenne at Lane Deer were quiet.¹⁵³

Troops started to move east in late November. Lieutenant Edward Wanton Casey took his scouts to the area around Pine Ridge Dakota on November 27, 1890.¹⁵⁴ Orders were received by Captain H. H. Ketchum about November 29, 1890 to move his company of the Twenty-second Infantry to Fort Abraham Lincoln when transportation was available.¹⁵⁵ The people of Miles City did not like the idea that most of the troops at Fort Keogh were headed east, because of their fears of Indian trouble in the Yellowstone valley, but none really materialized.¹⁵⁶ The element that had the most eventful time in Dakota was Lieutenant Casey and his Cheyenne scouts. They first traveled to Belle Fourche, South Dakota and from there headed for Hermosa via the railroad. At Hermosa they again mounted their ponies and rode to Pine Ridge. The trip took from December 7 to December 24, 1890.¹⁵⁷ Different elements of Infantry and Cavalry were being sent in various directions as Indians were reported moving all over the region, but Lieutenant Casey was in a difficult spot. Captain John A. Adams was ordered to join Lieutenant Casey's scouts with his troops of the First Cavalry.¹⁵⁸ Both Lieutenant Casey and Captain Adams were to join Colonel Summers' camp while keeping an eye on Sitting Bull and his band who were reported heading up Grand River and then south towards Cheyenne River and Pine Ridge.¹⁵⁹

Lieutenant Casey's scouts found it uncomfortably cold as they had packed no stoves but only Sibley tents.¹⁶⁰ This did not dampen the spirit of Lieutenant Casey's Cheyenne scouts nor their willingness to fight, as shown by Wolf Voice concerning the Sioux position. Frederic Remington in Pony Tracks quotes Wolf Voice stating the following:

"De big guns he knock 'em rifle pit, den de calvary lum pas 'in column
Injun no stop calavy-kill 'em heap but no stop 'em - den de walk-a-heap
dey come too, and de Sioux dey go over de bluffs." and with wild
enthusiasm he added, "De Sioux dey go to hell!" That prospect seemed to
delight Mr. Wolf-Voice immensely.¹⁶¹

Lieutenant Casey's scouts did not understand that he was under orders not to fight. This puzzled them because they were fired on, but they held their ranks. All that Casey was doing was staying off the Sioux's flanks and keeping General Miles informed of

¹⁵²Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1890.

¹⁵³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 8, 22 November 1890.

¹⁵⁴Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 27, 1890.

¹⁵⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 29 November 1890.

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 6 December 1890.

¹⁵⁷Maurice Frink and Casey Barthelme, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 114.

¹⁵⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 13, 1890.

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*, December 18, 1890.

¹⁶⁰Frederic Remington, Pony Tracks (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 18.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 25.

their movements.¹⁶²

This task was not enough to make Casey believe that he was doing all he could for peace. The day before he was killed, some hostile forces were at his camp, and he was led to believe that if he could but talk with the Indian leaders, the hostilities could be peacefully terminated.¹⁶³ In his enthusiasm for peace, he went on January 7, 1891 towards the hostile camp, accompanied by White Moon, one of his Cheyenne scouts. Bear-Lying-Down was sent by Lieutenant Casey to inform Red Cloud that Casey was coming. Bear-Lying-Down, accompanied by Pete Richards, a halfbreed, returned from Red Cloud's camp to tell Casey not to advance further as he was in danger so near the hostile camp. Casey was found by these two messengers in the company of his scout and two other Indians, Broken Arm, an Oglala Sioux and Plenty Horses, a Brule Sioux. The message was delivered and most of the party turned to mount their horses. As Lieutenant Casey started to mount his horse, Plenty Horses shot him in the back of his neck. Bear-Lying-Down rode to tell Red Cloud. White Moon and Pete Richards rode to General Brookes' camp and the other two Sioux disappeared to their camp.¹⁶⁴ Brooke sent Lieutenant R. N. Getty, a subordinate of Casey, with a detachment of his scouts after his body. They found the body stripped but not mutilated and recovered it.¹⁶⁵ Casey's remains were sent back east where he was buried on his family's estate. Lieutenant Getty took charge of Casey's scouts and led them back to Fort Keogh.¹⁶⁶ At the trial of Plenty Horses, Captain Frank Baldwin, ordered to testify by General Miles, stated that Lieutenant Casey had gone beyond his authority in asking to talk with the hostile forces.¹⁶⁷ Baldwin also stated that a state of war existed and so Plenty Horses was acquitted.¹⁶⁸ The reason for Plenty Horses' action was to regain respect among his people as he had been sent east to the White man's school and felt that he no longer was accepted in Indian society.

During the rest of this conflict troops passed through Fort Keogh on their way to South Dakota, and couriers were set up to keep Fort Keogh informed of all activity.¹⁶⁹ After the battle of Wounded Knee and all related activity was over, the troops from Fort Keogh returned. The force about 600 strong marched down Main Street in Miles City, led by the field grade officers.¹⁷⁰

Much bad press had been given the Army over its handling of the battle of Wounded Knee. Robert M. Utley, author of Frontier Regular stated of his research into this question:

... it is still clear that most officers tried hard to spare women and children. Even Wounded Knee, which took the lives of at least sixty-two women

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁶³Frink and Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule, p. 115.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 116.

¹⁶⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 17 January 1891.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., 28 February 1891.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 13 June 1891.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., 6 June 1891.

¹⁶⁹Ibid., 10 January 1891.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 31 January 1891.

and children, discloses extraordinary efforts to avoid harming them.¹⁷¹

With Wounded Knee and the Sioux problem behind them, the troops of Fort Keogh once more looked south up the Tongue River for problems with the Cheyenne. Troops remained stationed in the area of Lame Deer and were periodically relieved by other soldiers.¹⁷² As a result of a Cheyenne Indian scare caused by the arrest of some Cheyenne for cattle killing, a permanent camp was ordered constructed by General Merritt. In December 1891 this was done and Camp Merritt, as it was called, was manned by Fort Keogh troops on a three-month rotation basis.¹⁷³

1892-1908

The battle of Wounded Knee was the last Indian campaign of any consequence for the troops of Fort Keogh. In May 1897, the killing of a White shepherd caused the Agent at the Tongue River agency to request help from the troops, but in the end they were not needed.¹⁷⁴ According to the Post Returns dated January 1902, troops were sent to the agency again but returned nine days later from an uneventful trip. The Ute Indians decided to leave Utah in late 1906, which drew troops from Fort Keogh, but they returned within a few weeks.¹⁷⁵ The last Indian scare which effected Fort Keogh was again with the Utes. In this scare of 1907 Fort Keogh was preparing to send a wagon train of rations to Fort Robinson, Nebraska, but the Utes were peacefully returned to Utah.¹⁷⁶

In the last decade of the 19th century, the Army became involved in civil problems and Fort Keogh was situated where it was able to exert an impact on the social struggles as it had on the Indian question. Orders were received at Fort Keogh on July 13, 1892, directing that all available troops be sent to Idaho for duty against miners who were rioting.¹⁷⁷ It took two days for the troops from Fort Keogh to reach Wallace, Idaho, where, under the direction of the Martial Law Authorities, they helped restore order to the mines.¹⁷⁸ Assistant Judge Advocate Captain John G. Ballance, Twenty-second Infantry, was given high praise for his efforts at bringing peace to the mines of Idaho. Captain Ballance also received a sword as a gift of thanks from the governor of Idaho.¹⁷⁹ In spite of the job that the soldiers did in Idaho, they could only enforce the peace; they could not change the policy that caused civil unrest, so the soldiers were compelled to repeat their efforts.

A national movement soon required more help from the soldiers at Fort Keogh (see figure 2 showing soldiers of the Post at about this period). Unemployment was high

¹⁷¹Robert M. Utley, Good Guys and Bad Changing images of Soldier and Indian (Grow Agency, Montana: Custer battlefield Historical & Museum Assoc., Inc., 1978), p. 7.

¹⁷²John Palmer and William Smith, Twenty-second United States Infantry 1866-1922 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Publication, 1922), p. 15.

¹⁷³Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Frink and Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule, p. 128

¹⁷⁵Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1906 and November 1906.

¹⁷⁶Frink and Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule, p. 134.

¹⁷⁷Palmer and Smith, Twenty-second United States Infantry 1866-1922, p. 15.

¹⁷⁸The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, Miles City, Montana, 1892, 16 July 1892.

¹⁷⁹Stock Growers Journal (Miles City, Montana), 14 January 1893.

across the nation in 1894 and the miners of Montana were affected. A militant group of miners under the leadership of William Hogan was formed as part of a national movement. The national organization was started in Ohio by a man named Jacob S. Coxey. It was planned that Coxey's "Army," as it was called, would meet in Washington, D.C. in 1894. The Montana element of the Coxeyites was more militant than most and because of this, the U.S. Army was needed to maintain order and the troops of Fort Keogh were given the mission.¹⁸⁰ Governor John E. Richards called on President Cleveland for help after the Coxeyites under Hogan seized a train in their effort to reach Washington. On April 25, 1894, troops left Fort Keogh via rail for Forsythe, Montana to arrest Hogan's followers when they arrived at that place.¹⁸¹ Some of the Coxeyites headed for the hills when they faced United States troops, but most were arrested. The troops were then ordered to escort the prisoners to Helena. Companies A, C, and H of the Twenty-second Infantry moved the prisoners to Helena and guarded them at the fairgrounds until civil authority could manage and on July 27, 1894 Major E. H. Liscum, who commanded the Battalion returned with his men to Fort Keogh.¹⁸²

Foreign conflicts finally drew from Fort Keogh its troops and eventually its life as a Army post. In 1898 the Spanish-American War left the garrison with less than one hundred soldiers. After this the barracks were never full again and the Post returns indicated little activity aside from troops shipping out for ports both east and west.¹⁸³

Fort Keogh had played such an important role in the Indian Wars, it is not surprising that with the decline of its reason for existence would come its demise. To tell the story of Fort Keogh is also to tell a good deal of the story of the Crow, Cheyenne, and Sioux. Some of them were also soldiers and other members of these tribes helped the effort in other ways. They were not only the victims of Fort Keogh; in many ways they made the Fort what it was.

¹⁸⁰Thomas A. Clinch, "Coxey's Army in Montana," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 15 (Autumn 1965);4.

¹⁸¹Returns from U.S. Military Posts, April 1894.

¹⁸²Ibid., July 1894.

¹⁸³Ibid., May 1903.

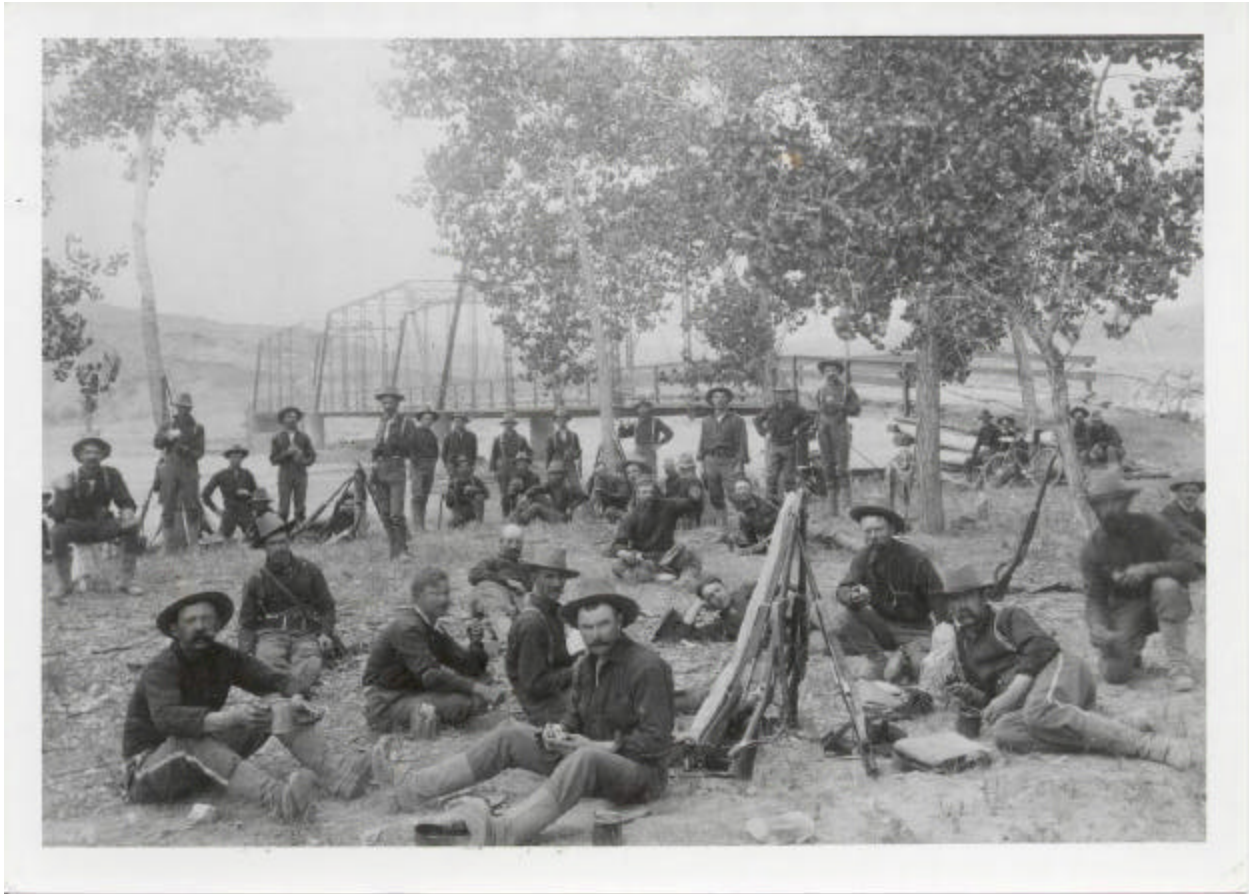


Figure 2. Some of the Second Infantry who had stopped at the Powder River bridge for a rest and a “bite” while on a march from Fort Keogh in 1896. The spot shown is just above the mouth of Mizpah Creek about 37 miles east of the Post. (Courtesy of Christian Barthelmess collection, Montana Historical Society.)

CHAPTER IV INDIANS AS CAPTIVES AND WARDS

Prisoners

Through the efforts of Colonel Miles and his troops, thousands of Indians were captured. The capture of so many Indians was made possible by two different factors: (1) Miles deployed his troops effectively in subduing hostilities, (2) Colonel Miles handled surrendered Indians in a sensible manner, and the word got back to the Indians that had not surrendered. Miles gave much freedom of movement to the captured Indians. Captured Indians were allowed free run of Fort Keogh and could visit the off duty soldiers, which caused many friendships to form. However, Miles, did not allow the Indians to venture into Miles town without an escort, as he felt contact between civilians and Indians would be akin to a "powder keg."¹⁸⁴

The Indian prisoners started to come into Fort Keogh immediately after the first major battles in the winter of 1876-1877. Most captured Indians accepted their status as prisoners of war, but one woman that Colonel Miles captured during the early stages of the battle of Wolf Mountain on January 8, 1877 did not. On February 1877, the captured squaw shot herself through the heart rather than remain a prisoner.¹⁸⁵ Miles used prisoners in an effort to talk hostile forces into stopping hostilities and this was successful. One example was Sweet Woman who was sent to talk with the Cheyenne. Promises that Sweet Woman made for Miles were effective and the Cheyenne leaders came into Fort Keogh. They had been informed through Sweet Woman to watch Miles. If Miles was on his white horse, it would mean all was peaceful. If he was on his roan horse, it would mean that they should be alert as the opposite might have been true. As the Indians neared the garrison, they saw that Miles was on his roan, so they were alert as they neared the command. Colonel Miles was a person who liked formality and as such had his command lined up and facing the hostile forces across the open field. When the hostile forces neared, Miles dismounted and started to shake hands, prisoner style. Two Moons, Old Wolf, Crazy Head, White Wolf, Old Spotted Wolf, and Little Chief all took their turn. This prisoner handshake, of hand around wrist was replaced by hand around hand after the Indians and soldiers became friends.¹⁸⁶ Three hundred Cheyenne surrendered to Colonel Miles during the first few months of 1877, and Miles took on the responsibility of their care. Miles did not feel that the Indian Bureau would effectively insure the welfare of the Indians. It was felt that the Indian Bureau would object to Miles' movement of the Indians to Fort Keogh, but Miles proceeded. The distance from Fort Keogh to St. Paul, Minnesota kept the Indian Bureau from interfering with what actions Miles chose to take.¹⁸⁷ Once the prisoners were located at Fort Keogh, Captain E. P. Ewers was put in charge of them. Ewers set about educating the prisoners in the "habits of industry and the better modes of life."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, *The Frontier Years* (New York: Bramhall House, 1955), p. 243.

¹⁸⁵Don Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), p. 720.

¹⁸⁶Verne Dusenberry, "The Northern Cheyenne, All They Have Asked is to Live in Montana," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 15 (Winter 1955):26.

¹⁸⁷Virginia Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles* (Boston: 1962), p. 133.

¹⁸⁸Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911), p. 17U.

Conflict with the Nez Perces brought another large group of Indian prisoners into Fort Keogh. After capture, the Nez Perces prisoners were given coats and blankets. The season was late fall and Colonel Miles, therefore, also ordered the command and prisoners to remain in camp because of stormy weather. Almost all Nez Perces baggage was carried in Army wagons as the soldiers and Indians moved slowly toward Fort Keogh.¹⁸⁹ Chief Joseph and his Nez Perces were kept in camp across the Yellowstone from Fort Keogh during the winter of 1877-78.¹⁹⁰ Miles had promised the Nez Perces that they would be sent back to their homes in the Northwest, but Washington did not agree. Despite all Miles' efforts, the Indians were ordered south to the Indian Territory. Fourteen flatboats were used for transportation, because the river was near its low water mark.¹⁹¹ As the Nez Perces left Fort Keogh, they cried, because their home in the northwest meant so much to them.¹⁹² Many of the Nez Perces died in the Indian Territory before the tribe was returned to its homeland, some years later. Captain Frank Baldwin as acting judge advocate for the Department met Chief Joseph and his band on their return. Some settled in Idaho, but because of local prejudice, Joseph and about 150 of his tribe's people lived in Washington State.¹⁹³

Not all Indian surrenders were preceded by battles. With the help of Indian scouts, Lieutenant W. P. Clark was able to bring Little Wolf's band from the field. The New York Times, reporting about the battle on March 31, 1879, gave credit for the surrender to the starved condition of the hostile forces. It is more likely that the Indians' trust in Lieutenant Clark and the stories of life at Fort Keogh were the main factors causing Little Wolf's surrender without a fight. This band of Indians had fled Fort Robinson and had lost many of its number in captivity and so would not have wanted a repeat of that type of prison life.¹⁹⁴

By the middle of 1879, the Indian prisoner population had risen to 407: 192 Cheyenne, 30 Sioux and 63 Bannocks.¹⁹⁵ It was the job of Company E, Second Cavalry to watch over the captured Indians and their stock.¹⁹⁶ Their job was soon to involve watching a vastly increased population as in late July 1879, about three hundred lodges of Sioux surrendered at Fort Keogh.¹⁹⁷ With the prisoner population going up, it was decided that the Bannock Indians would be moved to Fort Ellis. After receiving detailed instructions, the Bannocks at Fort Keogh were transported to Fort Ellis in late summer 1879.¹⁹⁸

With the departure of the Bannocks, came other prisoners to take their place. At the Pine Ridge agency, run by Agent Valentine T. McGillicuddy, the Cheyenne were

¹⁸⁹Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay, p. 321.

¹⁹⁰Helen Addison Howard and Dan L. McGrath, War Chief Joseph (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), p. 290.

¹⁹¹*Ibid.*, p. 292.

¹⁹²New York Times, 21 November 1877.

¹⁹³Howard and McGrath, War Chief Joseph, p. 301.

¹⁹⁴Dusenberry, "The Northern Cheyenne, All They Have Asked Is to Live in Montana," p. 29.

¹⁹⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 1879.

¹⁹⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh). Returns from U.S. Military Posts, May 1879.

¹⁹⁷New York Times, 24 July 1879

¹⁹⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 25, 1879.

unhappy. Colonel Miles knew of their dissatisfaction and requested that they be sent to Fort Keogh. McGillicuddy, not wanting trouble with the Cheyenne, agreed, and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs directed the transfer of the Cheyenne to military control.¹⁹⁹ Miles wanted to educate the Indians in his charge in agriculture. To insure against hunger, he also issued ammunition to Indians that buffalo meat might be had.²⁰⁰ These methods dealing with the prisoners paid dividends in the Indian's welfare and speeded the surrender of other hostile forces.

Knowledge of Miles was widespread among the hostile forces. The Indian belief that he would treat them fairly and the starvation conditions in Canada started to drive the Sioux to seek surrender at Fort Keogh in mid 1880. In April of that year, a group of about one hundred Sioux surrendered at the Post. They spoke of the many Sioux who were soon to follow.²⁰¹ The following month over 700 under Rain-in-the-Face camped across the Yellowstone River from Fort Keogh.²⁰² In June 1880, five hundred of this group surrendered.²⁰³ The remaining two to three hundred Indians under Rain-in-the-Face stayed in camp, waiting for Colonel Miles to return, as they would only surrender the arms and ponies to the "Big Chief" as Miles was called.²⁰⁴ Feeding the nearly one thousand Indians became a major project for the Army. Lieutenant S. W. Miller led Company E, Fifth Infantry and a detachment of Indian scouts on a mission to solve this problem. A herd of captured Indian ponies was sold and the proceeds used to buy cattle at Eveston, Montana for consumption by Indian prisoners at Fort Keogh.²⁰⁵

The efforts of the Army along these lines had to be redoubled in the months that followed as more Sioux continued to surrender in August, September and October of 1880. In the middle of August, Captain Eli L. Huggins captured 22 lodges, about 125 Indians. On September 8, 44 lodges, including 250 Indians came into Fort Keogh. This brought the population of prisoners to approximately 1,500.²⁰⁶ The number was again increased on October 31, 1880 when Lieutenant Eli L. Huggins returned to Fort Keogh with Spotted Eagle's band of Sioux. This band numbered about six hundred and brought the total Sioux population alone up to 1,482.²⁰⁷ Secretary of Interior, Carl Schurz visited Fort Keogh in August of 1880. This was an inspection visit to assist Schurz in making a decision on the relocation of the Sioux. At the time of his trip, there were only about seven hundred Sioux at Fort Keogh. More than double this amount would have to be relocated to the reservation designated by Secretary Schurz.²⁰⁸

Major Ilges was the officer who orchestrated the relocation of the 1,700 Sioux from Fort Keogh to the Standing Rock Agency of Dakota chosen by Secretary Schurz. The livestock were driven overland by one troop of Cavalry and two hundred Sioux. The

¹⁹⁹Dusenberry, "The Northern Cheyenne, All They Have Asked Is to Live in Montana," p. 30.

²⁰⁰Returns from U.S. Military Posts, January 1880; Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 29, 1879.

²⁰¹Returns from U.S. Military Posts, April 1880.

²⁰²Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), 15 May 1880.

²⁰³*Ibid.*, 19 June 1880.

²⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 3 July 1880.

²⁰⁵Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1880.

²⁰⁶Yellowstone Journal, 11 September 1880.

²⁰⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1880; Yellowstone Journal, 30 October 1880.

²⁰⁸Yellowstone Journal, 21 August 1880.

remaining 1,500 Sioux were loaded aboard steamers and boated down river to their new homes.²⁰⁹ These Indians did not know much about this impending relocation. Some of the Sioux thought it was the Cheyenne that were being moved so it did not trouble them much. The Sioux wanted to stay at Fort Keogh where they had cattle and farms. It was believed by the Yellowstone Journal that they would walk back to Fort Keogh, but few Sioux did, since all their relatives were relocated with them.²¹⁰ Before they were shipped, however, the Yellowstone Journal reported that many Sioux, on learning that it was they, who were being relocated, escaped from Keogh. In the opinion of the Yellowstone Journal, the Indians had a right to be outraged over the move. It argued that they trusted Fort Keogh and its commander; thus they settled down to farm out of a sense of security. Security was what Fort Keogh meant to the Sioux prisoners.²¹¹

Sioux Indians were loaded on board five steamers. Captain Marsh commanded the Eclipse, the flagship. General Terry, Josephine, Black Hills and Batchelor were the other four boats. It was a sad occasion for the Indians and some soldiers and civilians were saddened by it as well, but the boatmen decided to race to Standing Rock.²¹² With this massive movement of humanity, the Indian population of Fort Keogh dropped to a few hundred Cheyenne.²¹³

Scouts

Those Cheyenne who were left at Fort Keogh gravitated up the Tongue River and made a home for themselves near Lame Deer, Montana, which was later designated as their reservation through the efforts of General Miles and others. The days of Cheyenne prisoners of war were not yet over at Fort Keogh, when eleven of what were known as "Casey scouts" were sent out in January 1892 to capture Walks-in-the-Night and a few of his followers. This mission was accomplished and he was held for trial at Fort Keogh in the charge of L Troop, also known as "Casey scouts."²¹⁴ In August 1897, Walks-in-the-Night escaped from "Casey scouts."²¹⁵ This brought to an end days when Fort Keogh was a prison for some Indians and a home for others. "Casey scouts" were disbanded a short time later.

"Casey scouts," so named, in honor of Lieutenant Edward Wanton Casey, were the end of a long tradition of Indians assisting the Army at Fort Keogh. While the Fort was still a group of log huts, and the Sioux and Cheyenne ruled the surrounding country, Crow Indians were being enlisted for three month tours.²¹⁶ Lieutenant Edward W. Casey was the first officer to drill the Crow scouts.²¹⁷

²⁰⁹New York Times, 14 June 1881.

²¹⁰Yellowstone Journal, 4 June 1881.

²¹¹Ibid., 11 June 1881.

²¹²Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 97.

²¹³Returns from U.S. Military Posts, June 1881.

²¹⁴Ibid., January 1892.

²¹⁵Ibid., August 1892.

²¹⁶Ibid., November 1876.

²¹⁷Richard Upton, Fort Custer on the Big Horn 1877-1898 (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company), P. 215.

Indians were willing allies but showed little discipline and their willingness was a result of their hatred of the Sioux. It was this hatred that would undo the alliance between the Crow and the Army. As a group of Sioux chiefs were arriving at Fort Keogh to talk terms of surrender under a flag of truce, the Crow scouts killed them all. Cheyenne were used to replace the Crow. This change proved to be a very good one from the standpoint of the successes of military operations from Fort Keogh. The Cheyenne were much more loyal, disciplined and effective than the Crow. Brave Wolf, a Cheyenne scout, showed his loyalty on March 25, 1879, when he was sent by Lieutenant W. P. Clark to talk terms to Little Wolf who was the leader of a hostile band of 114 Cheyenne. In addition to the terms, Brave Wolf also delivered a personal message to Little Wolf. He said:

I love the soldiers at Keogh; I go with them to fight all their enemies, and if you will not listen you will force me to fight my own people, for you are my kinfolk.²¹⁸

Cheyenne scouts showed their effectiveness in that many turned over to the Post Adjutant (Captain Baldwin) part of their pay for their wives and mothers at Fort Keogh. The scouts were paid in the same manner as the other troops.²¹⁹ The effectiveness of the Cheyenne was proven by the great success that Colonel Miles had in bringing peace to a vast portion of the Northwest.²²⁰

Indian scouts took part in all the major battles and most of the small encounters that the troops at Fort Keogh had. Authority to enlist Cheyenne scouts came from higher headquarters, but their enlistment was not on the same basis as the non-Indian enlistees. The scouts did not have to adhere to the same discipline. This situation was changed when the Twenty-second Infantry with Lieutenant E. W. Casey returned to Fort Keogh in 1888.

Colonel Peter J. Swaine read a report on efforts at using Indians as soldiers. As commander of the Twenty-second Infantry, Swaine decided to form a troop made up of Cheyenne Indians. After permission was received from the commissioner of Indian affairs, Swaine directed Lieutenant E. W. Casey to proceed.²²¹ Casey believed that Cheyenne Indians could be subject to military discipline and dedicated himself to this project of forming the troop. "Big Red Nose" as Casey was known, had little trouble in finding Cheyenne willing to enlist. Artist Frederic Remington attested to the success of his efforts at training the troop. Just before the Sioux outbreak of 1890, Remington had come to Fort Keogh along with General Miles who was in charge of a peace commission. Remington commented on the Indians that Lieutenant Casey led by saying that they "fill the eye of a military man until nothing is lacking."²²²

²¹⁸Secretary of War, Reports, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1876-1879, p. 57.

²¹⁹Yellowstone Journal, 31 July 1879.

²²⁰Ibid., 16 October 1879.

²²¹Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 104.

²²²Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 123.

Compensation given to the Cheyenne soldiers was equivalent for the most part to that given to other soldiers, twenty-five dollars each month along with full Army issue. Enlisted Indians did not have the same required length of service, their tour only lasting six months.²²³ Housing for the Cheyenne soldiers was quite different in that tents and tepees were used, rather than barracks. Lieutenant Casey changed this by requesting funds and directing the Cheyenne in logging operations. The Cheyenne soldiers were constructing a cantonment of their own when the Pine Ridge trouble started.²²⁴ These quarters, once construction was restarted, were only occupied for a short time.

While the Cheyenne soldiers were located some distance south of the main garrison, interpersonal conflicts between Whites and Indians still arose. Lieutenant Casey felt it his duty to his troops to defend them in these encounters and this he did. In one instance, Casey reported to the commander that the son of Mrs. Foley, the hospital matron cut off the braids of an Indian boy as he and his mother passed the hospital on their way to the canteen store. Casey pointed out what this act meant to the Indians and mentioned other trouble that Mrs. Foley caused by letting her cattle, horses, and hogs have the run of the Post against orders. Casey hoped that the commander would also consider the good service given by the Indian boy's father, Scout Dog, and the feelings of all the Indians under Casey's command when the commander decided what action to take on this conflict.²²⁵

Supplying his troops was another struggle that Lieutenant Casey had to face. On May 7, 1890, he had to justify the amount of money he requested for the construction of quarters for his troops. The quarters that were built could not even compare with what the rest of the Twenty-second Infantry stayed in. The Cheyenne had little or no construction experience and the Department of Dakota wanted as much of their labor used as was possible. Casey and the Cheyenne soldiers made do.²²⁶

Lieutenant Casey's troops were outside the normal command and control of the Twenty-second Infantry. As with the money matters just mentioned, Casey corresponded with the Department of Dakota through the commander of the District of the Yellowstone. Orders for Casey would flow back through the same channels. Authority to increase the size of his troop was at the Secretary of War level,²²⁷ and a promotion selection within his troop of noncommissioned officers was sent up to the Department level. The Secretary of War set the size of Casey's troop at one hundred. Rank structure of the unit was set at six sergeants, four corporals, two trumpeters and one teamster. Casey was authorized to appoint them and the names were then sent to the Department of Dakota.²²⁸

A great deal of Lieutenant Casey's time was spent in defending his troops. In June 1890, he and other officers at Fort Keogh retained a lawyer for some Cheyenne Indians who had been accused of killing Mr. Furguson. In answer to a question regarding his

²²³Frink and Barthelmess, *Photographer on an Army Mule*, p. 104.

²²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 113.

²²⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 10, 1890.

²²⁶*Ibid.*, May 7, 1890; *Yellowstone Journal*, and *Live Stock Reporter*, 24 May 1890.

²²⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 22, 1890.

²²⁸*Ibid.*, June 8 & 9, 1890.

reasons for taking this action, Casey stated something to the effect that having by special orders of the Secretary of War been placed in charge of the Indian recruits, of whom these four Indians were a part, he felt it his duty to see that they received simple justice, nothing more.²²⁹ To insure that his troops were protected against the winter weather, Casey requested that his troops be dismissed from Quarter Master duty in order that construction of their quarters might be finished before it got real cold. He pointed out that with an interpreter, the planned class in packing would take up a great deal of valuable time.²³⁰

With all the work and training that had to be done, it was still hard to keep one hundred men out of trouble. Casey's scouts had money after pay day which could not all be spent at Fort Keogh, so their officer had to deal with disturbances in town, but the worst problem was AWOL (absent without leave). It was hard to make soldiers from any group understand that family contact had to be given up for some periods of time. In the case of one Cheyenne soldier who went AWOL, the family reaction was worth noting. One of Casey's men went AWOL, in November of 1890, and when his parents brought him back they said that he had disgraced his people. For the disgrace that this soldier felt he later shot himself to death.²³¹

Later a major turning point for Casey's scouts came during the Sioux trouble at the Pine Ridge Agency when Casey was shot. It was not only his troops that took his death hard, but most of the Cheyenne nation felt the loss. On January 17, 1891, the Yellowstone Journal reported that after they heard of Casey's death, "the squaws were moaning and crying and the bucks – walked around with sullen faces. Casey's death and the end of Indian hostilities marked the beginning of the end for the Cheyenne soldiers as a unit. The attitude of the Cheyenne people towards military service changed, and where as before parents would turn their sons in after they had gone AWOL, later they would protect their sons against capture.²³² Recruiting became very hard as well because a council of warriors was called when recruiters would come to Lane Deer. These councils would tell the young men not to go, as it was "heap bad medicine to be with the Whites."²³³

Lieutenant R. N. Getty and Lieutenant F. C. Marshall were the officers that had to preside over the decline of the Cheyenne soldiers. On March 7, 1891, their return from Pine Ridge was reported. It was a sad procession that Lieutenant Getty led into Fort Keogh on that cold March day after the death of their leader and a hard two months traveling. Getty probably saw the large task that faced him. He would have to fill Casey's shoes, and with the changing attitudes among both Whites and Indians, his job would be even harder than the one Casey had. In honor of what Lieutenant E. W. Casey had done for, the Cheyenne soldiers, Troop L of the Eighth Cavalry was renamed and officially became known as "Casey's scouts."²³⁴

²²⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 14 June 1890.

²³⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 15, 1890.

²³¹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 29 November 1890.

²³²Stock Growers Journal (Miles City, Montana), 1 July 1893.

²³³Ibid., 14 January 1893.

²³⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 18 April 1891.

A few years after the death of Lieutenant Casey, Lieutenant F. C. Marshall replaced Getty as commander of Casey's scouts. It was pointed out in an interview with Lieutenant Sturgis given by the Stock Growers Journal, January 14, 1893, that Casey's scouts were still in top form. It also mentioned that a statue would be erected at the Worlds Fair of a member of Casey's scouts. Although Casey's scouts were getting recognition in high places, life around the garrison still had all the normal little problems. On April 28, 1894, the Stock Growers Journal reported on an invasion of sorts of Casey's scouts' company area. The report read:

The peace and dignity of the Indian company at Fort Keogh were invaded by a tramp who took up quarters in the immediate vicinity of theirs, and was so obnoxious that Lieutenant Marshall assigned one of the sergeants, whose knowledge of the English language is quite limited, to invite the stranger to leave. Lo adjourned to his quarters, buckled on a belt full of cartridges, revolver and saber. Approaching the visitor with all the military dignity he could command, he spoke more forcibly than eloquent: "Ugh! John; Go home' G__ d____. Next instant the tramp was touching only the high places on the prairie in his endeavor to reach the railroad track.²³⁵

Casey's scouts had one more mission of importance. During the unemployment problem with the attending march on Washington, D.C., and the train takeover by the followers of Coxey, Troop L, Eighth Cavalry was sent to Forsyth; this was one time when Indian troops were used against Whites.²³⁶ The leadership of Casey's scouts did not wane, nor did the soldiering ability of the Cheyenne, but the need for their services closed the book on a great effort.

In December of 1894, plans were made to disband Casey's scouts when their enlistment ran out. For sentimental reasons the breakup was very sad for soldier and civilian alike, as many friendships had been formed.²³⁷ On May 4, 1895, twenty-seven Cheyenne were discharged and a month later the troop was skeletonized. Lieutenant Marshall turned in all the property and the officers were sent to Fort Meade, South Dakota.²³⁸

Activities

The daily encounters between Indians and Whites at Fort Keogh may have on occasion led to some trouble, but it was a way for the Indians to get exposed to the White culture that soon would envelope them. The large Indian population had an impact on the attitude that the White in the area held toward the Indians as well as the other way around. Whiskey was a negative factor on Indian-White relations, so the military made strong efforts at controlling it, but profiteers in nearby towns were successful on some occasions and murder was often the result. Trials of Indians for murder were not so

²³⁵Stock Growers Journal, 28 April 1894.

²³⁶Returns from U.S. Military Posts, August 1894.

²³⁷Stock Growers Journal, 8 December 1894.

²³⁸Returns from U.S. Military Posts, May and June 1895.

rare in the Yellowstone valley when the whiskey flowed free.²³⁹ Poor Elk was killed by Lone Wolf as a result of 'fire water,' in December 1880, at Fort Keogh. Lone Wolf at first left camp clandestinely, but later gave himself up to Captain Ewers.²⁴⁰

When whiskey did not interfere, good times and good friendships were developed between Whites and Indians. One strong friendship emerged between Lieutenant W. P. Clark and Little Wolf, the Cheyenne chief that he had captured. They both spent many hours at the Post photographer's studio conspiring to translate the sign language they were both so good at, and they left a photographic record of some of the various attitudes.²⁴¹ Much more interaction between Indian and soldier went on at the studio but not all was serious. One April Fool's Day Mr. L. A. Huffman, the Post photographer, had passed around some loaded cigars. All did not go the way he had planned when he presented the cigars to some Indians as he later recorded. In describing it, L. A. Huffman, said:

. . .there we made the mistake of presenting some of these loaded cigars to Spotted Bear, High Bear and at least one other, who, when they lighted them, left the burning fragments, hiked their buffalo skinned garments or robes high above their ears and without casting any glances behind walked rapidly towards the Indian camp.

This joke was the talk of the camp and word of it got to Colonel Miles, who then called Mr. Huffman onto his carpet to answer for it.²⁴²

Spotted Bear spent much time around the studio and, became the butt of more than just a few jokes. Once Major Ilges, Two Moon, Captain Clark and Johnny Brughier, the interpreter, were giving Spotted Bear trouble by asking him if it were true that when Custer was killed, he (Spotted Bear) sat on a hillside at the battle site and cried. A laugh was had by all, and even Spotted Bear enjoyed the joking because they all enjoyed each others company.²⁴³

A lot of humor came from the lack of understanding that both soldier and Indian had about the world of the other. Colonel Miles wanted to train the Indians in farming methods. Some Indians wanted to farm. White Bull really liked the idea because of the item he felt he could plant. The crop was raisins. He stated his reason for this choice as: "Raisins were the best food the White man had."²⁴⁴ The Indians were moving into the White man's world and the soldiers had front row seats. The local press would often report funny contacts between Indians and Whites. Lieutenant M. C. Martin related one story in 1889.

Lieut Martin was sitting on the MacQueen veranda (Hotel in Miles City) yesterday, musing upon the condition of Indian affairs in the west of

²³⁹Yellowstone Journal, 31 July 1879.

²⁴⁰Ibid., 18 December 1880.

²⁴¹Paul Husted (Editor), The Yellowstone Journal, Illustrated and Historical Edition (Miles City, Montana: Reprinted by the Miles City Star, 1976). (This was originally written by Sam Gordon, Editor of the Yellowstone Journal on 27 September 1900.

²⁴²Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, D. 55.

²⁴³Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, Before Barbed Wire (New York: Branhall House, 1956), p. 16.

²⁴⁴Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 103.

today. "Indian raids, Indian wars, Indian depredations, conducted by any body of Indians," said the Lieutenant, "may be counted on as played out. Not only are the Indians becoming dwarfed into insignificance, but they are experiencing the occasional domestic grievances of civilization and when that begins, savagery departs. It was only yesterday that White Wolf, one of our Cheyenne scouts, came to me with his countenance expressing a mind deeply troubled and said: 'Heap hell! 'What's the matter?' I asked. 'Issue, you know Issue, like White Wolf, is one of our scouts.' Then continuing, 'Issue,' said the Indian, 'he squaw she got mother; she come to camp--she talk much; she make heap trouble with my squaw; I no stay in camp while she stay.' 'Well,' I replied, 'you must tell her that if she don't stop her talk she must leave the camp, and you put her out if she don't stop.' This seemed to please him greatly; he brightened up instantly and said to me: 'you say, she not stop me put he out?' 'Yes' I replied again. 'All right,' he answered, and he strode off in direction of the camp, apparently satisfied he had found a solution to the difficulty." "No, Sir," continued the Lieutenant; "Indian difficulties with the whites are past and done for. When you see a mother-in-law come in among a band of bucks and run the camp, it's an evidence that all the fight has been taken out of them."²⁴⁵

For the most part, the fight was gone from the Indians. Encounters such as the one between Lieutenant Martin and White Wolf were humorous, but encounters between the Indians and the Interior Department with regard to supplies and control of Indian land were not.

The proximity of Fort Keogh to Miles City, a frontier town, meant that whiskey would always be available, and the Indians managed on numerous occasions to get their fill. A day or so before Christmas in 1880, after a fire at Mr. Silverberg's Saloon, some squaws were noticed near a barrel. The barrel was open and the women seemed to be having a great time, standing in a group around it. Mr. Silverberg was pleased to find out that the whiskey had not blown up, but then the whiskey had to be saved from Indian consumption.²⁴⁶ On occasion, soldiers would take advantage of the Indian's desire for whiskey and cheat him of his money. Other times the soldier would deliver. Often the Indians did not need the middleman as "fire water" could be had at more than one location in Miles City. The standard defense of the merchant, who sold whiskey to the Indians, once he was caught, was that the Indians had stolen the whiskey from him. This was the story given in the case of Louis Bach. In this case, Two Moons and Shotgun testified that Bach had sold them "fire water." Bach's claim was that while he was out in the back of his saloon, the two Indians took it.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 8 September 1889.

²⁴⁶Yellowstone Journal, 25 December 1880.

²⁴⁷Ibid., p 29 January, 19 February, 11 June 1881.

The problem of Indians drinking died down for a few years after 1881 and then in 1888 it again came to the attention of Captain Ewers. Due to the much smaller Indian population, the difficulty was easily handled in 1888.²⁴⁸

Whiskey was a much easier problem to get control of than Indian hunger and encroachment on Indian land by civilians and policy makers in Washington, D.C. In fact, after control of the Indians passed into civilian hands there was little that could be done for the Indians, although the Indians still looked to the Army to solve their problems. In December of 1880, when it was decided to put the railroad across Crow lands, they showed up at Fort Keogh with a force of two to three hundred. This protest march did little to solve their problem.²⁴⁹

When the officers of Fort Keogh could help, they often did. In numerous claims against the government for destruction of livestock, the officers would not only defend the Indians in their charge verbally, but with money and time as well. Lieutenant L. M. Brett publicly offered to help any persons who thought they had lost stock to the Indians find the thieves. Brett had no one avail himself of this offer and he, therefore, felt that accusers should be careful whom they accused.²⁵⁰ Sometimes it was found to be true that indeed Indians had taken stock. In the vast majority of these cases, the guilty Indians were found to be from other tribes. The reason most often was hunger that had driven them from their agencies. The officers made a point of these findings in the local press.²⁵¹ When cattle industry moved into the Yellowstone valley, the officers of Fort Keogh found themselves between Indians and cowboys much more often. On March 15, 1882, a detachment was sent out from Fort Keogh to prevent trouble between the two antagonists. After returning to the Post about two weeks later, they reported on the progress made by the Cheyenne in farming.²⁵² Anger and distrust between the Cheyenne and cattlemen oftentimes led to charges and countercharges every time something destructive happened. In late March of 1888 the commander of Fort Keogh was asked to send someone to represent ten Indians who were accused of burning a building at the Alderson and Yook Cattle Company on the Rosebud.²⁵³ Most cowboys had little toleration for the Indians and such an incident was often the entire spark that was needed. An example of what the soldiers faced came in a report from Lieutenant Joseph A. Gaston from his camp on Tongue River. The Lieutenant reported that some cowboys took a blanket from several Indians, one of them being the son of Sun Bear. The cowboys' leader was a man named Penell, who claimed he did it for fun, but Lieutenant Gaston believed it was to make trouble. The soldiers managed to keep the lid on this and other such encounters.²⁵⁴

Feeding their families was the major concern of most Indians and most took to farming near Fort Keogh to achieve this end. The Yellowstone Journal on August 7, 1880, reported that: "... the Indians have become greatly interested in the work; the bucks as

²⁴⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 18 February 1888.

²⁴⁹Yellowstone Journal, 11 December 1880.

²⁵⁰Ibid., 30 April 1881.

²⁵¹Miles City Daily Press, 29 March 1883.

²⁵²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 1, 1883.

²⁵³Ibid., March 24, 1884.

²⁵⁴Ibid., December 10, 1890.

well as the squaws are working, and quite a number asked the privilege of taking up ranches." Watermelons and other tasty products were the main incentive for Indian farming, and the Sioux as well as Cheyenne took to the occupation." In 1883, President Chester A. Arthur was considering moving the control of the Indians back to the War Department from the Interior because of corrupt Interior Department agents and the success shown in Indian farming at places like Fort Keogh. The Indians were raising cash crops after just one season. In the early fall of 1881, they could be seen on the streets of Miles City selling watermelons and other products that they had harvested.²⁵⁵

Indian productivity was not limited to farming. Under the direction of Captain Ewers, the captured Indian ponies were sold and cattle purchased for the benefit of the Indians. Colonel Miles wrote in a report to the Department of Dakota that the 2,000 Indians at Fort Keogh were maintained at no expense to the government.²⁵⁶ Much construction of roads was also completed with Indian labor, which the local press verified as being well done.²⁵⁷ Indians were involved in the arts; both Cheyenne and Sioux would show up in town to dance. The townspeople displayed their interest in the performance by rewarding the Indians with "crackers, caddies of tobacco and large quantities of sugar and gay printed calico."²⁵⁸

Hunting remained one way in which the Indians produced income. While the buffalo were still around in great numbers, they sold buffalo meat and hides in Miles City. In the early part of 1885, the Cheyenne sold one hundred deer skins to Major MacQueen who ran a Miles City hotel and later became the Post trader at Fort Keogh.²⁵⁹ A few months later on March 7, 1885, the Yellowstone Journal reported that a "buck" received \$8.00 for a mountain lion pelt. The Indian women, with their great skill at tanning hides, were often called on to tan for Whites who fancied the frontier look. Father Lindesmith, the Post Chaplain, was one customer who paid for this service.²⁶⁰

Customs, both social and religious, were not all discarded, as the Indians tried to make a living in the "White man's world." Still close to nature, the Sioux had Grass dances, Sun dances and an Omaha dance, which, unlike the others, was a mock battle. All had religious and social elements.²⁶¹ Marriage among the Indians at Fort Keogh was as it had been in earlier tribal living. When Hump, an important Indian leader, was found missing one morning, it was felt that harm had come to him so there was great commotion in the Indian camp. It was found later that the belle of the neighboring Cheyenne camp was also missing, so it was concluded that the two had gone off to nature to join in marriage.²⁶²

Death, to the Cheyenne, was seen in a much different light than it was by the Whites. Two young Cheyenne, with unruly natures, killed a man named Hugh Boyle in 1890.

²⁵⁵Yellowstone Journal, 23 July 1881.

²⁵⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 16, 1880.

²⁵⁷Yellowstone Journal, 4 September 1880.

²⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 30 October 1880.

²⁵⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 17 January 1885.

²⁶⁰Rev. E. W. I. Lindesmith Diaries (Montana Historical Society: Microfilm Collection #301, vol. 9, 5 November 1889), p. 22.

²⁶¹Yellowstone Journal, 17 July, 14 August 1880, 26 March 1881.

²⁶²Miles, Serving the Republic (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1911), p. 167.

Their surrender was demanded, but they wanted to make a property settlement. When it was explained that killing a person could not be dealt with in that manner, they still refused to surrender. Since they knew that soldiers were on their way and if taken it would mean hanging, they insisted they be allowed to die like Cheyenne. James A. Cooper was told that on September 13, the two young men would ride into the agency and attack the troops. The soldiers were expected to defend themselves and could kill them. The agent accepted this, and justice, Indian style, was done.²⁶³ The Indian concepts of life and death were changed somewhat after Father Les Egler rode south on St. Valentine's Day in 1884. Father Egler set up a mission among the Cheyenne by building a school, church, priest's house and convent.²⁶⁴ Others that the Cheyenne have accepted as they once did Father Egler are still doing the work he started.

Although the Indians kept many of their old customs, they were still extremely interested in some of the White man's customs. As Miles put it:

These wild Indians took the greatest interest in watching the industry, customs, and mode of life of the white race; seeing the soldiers at long-range rifle practice, watching them construct roads and telegraph lines, build bridges and buildings. The telegraph and telephone astonished them more than anything else.²⁶⁵

Culture was also not missed by the Indians as they were given an opportunity to see concerts and "variety troops" that visited Fort Keogh. It was the band that gave many of the Indians the greatest pleasure, which is not surprising since this was also the case with the White population.²⁶⁶

The administration of the Indians in Southeast Montana showed a lack of long range planning in Washington, D.C. Control was first managed by the Army, then civilians for a short time, and then was returned to the military and ended with control in the Interior Department under civilian agents. In 1884, Captain Ewers took charge of the Cheyenne. He insured that provisions were contracted for and delivered. The local press paid a great deal of attention to him as he controlled the \$12,000.00 that was appropriated for the tribe located near Lame Deer, Montana.²⁶⁷ Using officers as Indian agents was tried because of the many proven cases where civilian agents were stealing from the Indians. Captain Ewers was replaced in this office by another officer from Fort Keogh. In September 1884, Captain T. H. Logan became responsible for insuring that the Cheyenne were getting all rations due them.²⁶⁸ Once land was set aside for a Cheyenne reservation, surrounding Lame Deer, it was decided the Indians would have a civilian agent and so in January 1885, it was reported that Mr. Armstrong replaced Logan.²⁶⁹ Troops from Fort Keogh still kept the peace at the reservation but had little control. They did watch the rations issue to insure that the Indians were provided for,

²⁶³Brown and Felton, *The Frontier Years*, p. 197.

²⁶⁴Lindesmith *Diaries*, 14 February 1884, vol. 4, P. 1.

²⁶⁵Miles, *Serving the Republic*, p. 182

²⁶⁶Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles*, p. 168.

²⁶⁷*Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter*, 16 August 1884.

²⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 20 September 1884.

²⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 3 January 1885.

but without control of the money or books much went unnoticed.²⁷⁰ In the latter part of 1886 the Cheyenne were restless under the civilian agents. Father Grasse, the new priest with the Cheyenne, felt that most Indian agents were bad. The Cheyenne, he believed, were only troublesome when they were hungry. Father Grasse, also mentioned that the Indians had support at Fort Keogh.²⁷¹ Major Snyder, in his report on the trouble with the Cheyenne, drew the same conclusions, as did the priest regarding the Indians' hunger.²⁷² The commander of Fort Keogh wrote letters that drew the attention of the Secretaries of War and Interior. He complained that the Cheyenne were neither getting enough to eat nor the blankets that had been promised. The Secretary of the Interior, with information from his agent replied that the food was enough and the blankets had been sent.²⁷³ Major Snyder and the soldiers at Fort Keogh knew that the words of the Interior Department would not feed the Cheyenne so the Indians were relocated closer to Fort Keogh and given aid by the military. Because of trouble at Lame Deer, a Cheyenne commission was sent, headed by General Nelson A. Miles. It had little effect other than to draw more attention to the problem.²⁷⁴

By the early part of 1891, the Cheyenne, both from Pine Ridge and Lame Deer, were doing much better as the subsistence Department was feeding some of them.²⁷⁵ With Captain Ewers back in charge of the Indians there was talk of building a warehouse in Miles City from which to issue supplies to the Cheyenne.²⁷⁶ This was never done as the Cheyenne were moved to Lame Deer. In the mid-nineties Army officers were detailed as Indian agents once more, but with the close of the Indian wars and foreign war calling them to other duties, this policy was ended.

Opinions held by the civilians and the press of Miles City generally reflected self-interest when they pertained to the Indians. During 1880 and 1881, when the community and the newspaper were young, the general view was negative. It was due mainly to the hostilities that the country still faced from Indians. Yellowstone Journal of August 28, 1879, when referring to an Indian that had been killed, used the saying "A good Indian." A clear picture of the great hostility felt by the local press towards the Indians can be seen in an article dated April 3, 1880. Speaking of the Crow who were allied with the Army, the paper wrote:

The mortality among the Indians at the Crow agency still continues. It is estimated that over one third of them have already died (from measles and scarlet rash) and it is hoped that the balance will follow the illustrious example of their predecessors.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁰Ibid., 9 January 1886.

²⁷¹Ibid., 4 September 1886.

²⁷²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 12, 1886.

²⁷³Ibid., February 26, 1887.

²⁷⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 13 August 1887.

²⁷⁵Ibid., 14 March 1891.

²⁷⁶Ibid., 28 March 1891.

²⁷⁷Yellowstone Journal, 3 April 1880.

As the Indian wars in the area cooled off, this type of journalism did likewise. The paper still championed the cause of the ranchers in the area who wanted the land and water rights of the Indians.²⁷⁸

Good press coverage of the Indians most often came through the efforts of officers at Fort Keogh and, in later years, the priests at the mission. On more than a few occasions the local press printed retractions about the Indians. In the Yellowstone Journal of July 7, 1880, it was reported that the young "bucks" were "skipping out" leaving the old men and squaws for the Army to feed. In the following week's issue, the paper stated that the officers at Fort Keogh informed them that the Indians had just gone on a hunt and would bring the meat back for their families.

Soldier-Indian relations at Fort Keogh were most often very good, with the exception of during actual combat. All indications are that from the officers of Fort Keogh down to the privates, the soldiers at the Post respected the Indians as fighters and people. Humor never detracted from this and was, on some occasions, the bridge between the two cultures. No doubt some of the reasons for the good relationship between soldiers and Indians were self-interest. The soldiers were geographically close to the Indians and thus could easily judge their motives. They knew that mistreated Indians meant trouble and this trouble often forced them out onto the field of battle. The generally accepted view of much of the modern media, that the Indians disliked the soldiers and vice versa is inaccurate as it is based on isolated and unrepresentative data, much of it generated by fiction, not research. Of all the groups on the American Frontier, soldiers were the best friends that Indians had. It was due to their efforts that the Indians made progress at fitting into the "White man's" world. When trouble faced the Indians in the late 1800s, it was the soldiers to whom the Indians ran. Fort Keogh was a prime example of this, as it became the home to thousands of Indians.

Few people in the west saw the Indian with as much depth as did the Army officers. Many, such as Captain William Philo Clark, studied the Indians to gain even more understanding. Miles and most other officers of Fort Keogh indicated by word and actions that they wanted to civilize the Indians and not rob them of land, dignity or freedom. The Indians knew this and generally counted on the friendship of the soldiers from Fort Keogh.

²⁷⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 12 June 1886.

CHAPTER V TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Steamboats

Vital to the success of operations from Fort Keogh was availability of transportation and communication. Various means were used, but the most important was the steamboat on the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers. It was the ability of the steamboat to make its way up to the mouth of the Tongue River, during a good part of the year, that dictated the location of Fort Keogh.²⁷⁹

Grant Marsh, a steamboat captain, was responsible in large part for the quick construction of the cantonment and Fort Keogh. Marsh, who was a good friend of Colonel Nelson Miles, was much like Miles in his attitudes. Both men worked hard to get their jobs done and this meant, in Marsh's case, not being scared off by Wolf Rapids which kept other captains down river below the Tongue for all but a short time every year. Grant Marsh was respected very much in the Yellowstone valley because he brought troops, supplies and families to Fort Keogh, which made it quite a livable place in a short span of time.²⁸⁰ When the Yellowstone hit its high water mark during 1877, twenty-four steamboats were on the river. This made the process of constructing a post an easier job and changed the good fortune that the Nez Perces were having. With the steamboat traffic high on the Yellowstone and Missouri, Colonel Miles was able to move vast quantities of soldiers and supplies and thus catch Chief Joseph before he made his getaway to Canada.²⁸¹ Fourteen steamboats made the run in 1878. The loss of supplies became a problem in 1877 and afterward. Fees for a contracted vessel were about \$500.00 a day and the government felt that the shippers must pay for lost supplies.²⁸²

Docking facilities were built and maintained by the soldiers and became the site of much excitement as people made a great event of a steamboat arrival. To the women the steamboat meant company and they would strain their eyes hoping to spot the vessels coming up the river.²⁸³ As the years passed, the number of steamboats dropped. In 1879, nine ran and in the following year the same number. Following this in 1881 only seven arrived and this dropped to three in 1882. After the tracks for the railroad were laid in 1882 all the way to Fort Keogh, the steamboats could not compete.²⁸⁴

Land Transport

When Indian campaigns were undertaken, Colonel Miles effectively used mule trains to carry his supplies. It was found that with pack mules the Infantry could move more effectively than cavalry.²⁸⁵ When Captain Frank Baldwin found his wagon train stuck

²⁷⁹Robert A. Murray, *The Army Moves West* (Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1981), p.10

²⁸⁰Virginia Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles* (Boston, 1962), p. 110

²⁸¹Murray, *The Army Moves West*, pp. 11-12.

²⁸²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands 1821-1920, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 15, 1878.

²⁸³*Yellowstone Journal* (Miles City, Montana), 22 May 1880.

²⁸⁴Merril G. Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier* (Helena, Montana: State Publishing Company, 1942), p. 142

²⁸⁵Murray, *The Army Moves West*, pp. 17, 20.

near the Little Missouri in January of 1880, a pack train was loaded with grain and led through the streets of Miles City on its way to relieve the teamsters.²⁸⁶ With lessons like this it was not surprising that when Lieutenant Edward W. Casey had to supply his movement to Pine Ridge, pack mules were chosen to do the job. The Department of Dakota directed Casey through the commander of Fort Keogh that Indian pack animals should be used.²⁸⁷

Pack animals carried the supplies overland while on campaign and when not mounted on captured Indian ponies, the soldiers (Infantry) "carried" themselves. Captain Simon Snyder wrote about this mode of transportation while his battalion was on road construction. He observed:

The day was very warm, all hands suffering from thirst. R [an officer] played out. Before F, H, and K Cos. had time to pitch their tents, we were ordered to build bridges, which kept us at work until dark. August 9--Up bright and early and at work on bridges for almost an hour before they were completed. Had a hard march of about 11 miles [in a drenching rain] . . . camped at 5 p.m.²⁸⁸

A few times while the Fifth Infantry was on campaign against hostile forces, Indian mounts were captured and used. At first it was a great task to train some Infantrymen to ride, but it was eventually completed. The Indians who watched the training found it extremely humorous.

Crossing rivers was always a most dangerous feat for Infantry. While crossing the Milk River near Fort Peck in July of 1879, Colonel Whistler had a close call. The Colonel's horse became excited and the officer almost drowned. A soldier with the command barely survived a similar accident. Private Dowd, an Irishman, won the respect of the officers and the men of his command in a daring rescue of that infantryman.²⁸⁹

Horses presented other problems for the Infantry soldiers. After the hottest parts of the Indian conflicts were over, a critical shortage of horses had to be dealt with. The horses that the Army had were not being maintained. Many did not get the proper ration of oats and directives were required directing that all mounts would be shod.²⁹⁰

Wagons, despite the lack of good roads, had an important role to play in transportation to and from Fort Keogh. This mode was not reliable in the early stages because civilian teamsters refused to work while there was a high risk of being attacked by Indians. In one case, when the civilian teamsters were informed that an Indian attack was expected, forty-one of their number refused to work. On this same occasion Lieutenant Colonel E. S. Otis was forced to take soldiers away from escort duty and make teamsters of them

²⁸⁶Yellowstone Journal, 17 January 1880.

²⁸⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 9, 1890.

²⁸⁸Don Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 243.

²⁸⁹John F. Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 260.

²⁹⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 15, 1890.

in October 1876. Colonel Otis pushed eighty-six wagons through with five companies but had to fight Indians and inhospitable landscape to do it.²⁹¹

Wagon transport was used to a great extent for supply. Colonel Miles understood logistics and used them but understood the limits of wagon transport as well. He was angry that his superiors saw fit to supply him grain from outside Montana via wagons. Miles accused other officers of mismanagement in their efforts to ship him 500,000 pounds of grain; they used 1,500,000 pounds for the draft animals. Miles argued for as much local supply as possible, because of the inefficient modes of transportation in use before the completion of the railroad.²⁹² Wagons were still in great demand to haul between Glendive Creek and Fort Keogh when the river was at the low water mark. This mode of transportation was also used as late as 1890 and beyond for supplying certain campaigns that could not be supplied by rail.²⁹³

Construction of Roads and Bridges

To facilitate the growth of commerce and to control the countryside, the Army at Fort Keogh, as it had done at other posts, set about to build bridges and roads. This was necessary for military, as well as civilian conveniences. A road running between Bismarck, Dakota Territory, and Fort Keogh was the main artery between Fort Keogh and the world. It was over this road that the mail came, as well as people, the latter if they were willing to take the risk because there were several killings at the hands of Indians on this road known as the Fort Keogh road. Today monuments stand to a few of those that died and in some places where the road crossed cow pastures, one can still see the wagon ruts.

Between assignments of scouting for Indians, the scouts like Yellowstone Kelly had the important job of determining the feasibility of roads. In the spring of 1878, Kelly located the road between Fort Keogh and Deadwood.²⁹⁴ A year and a half later the building of a road from Fort Keogh west to Bozeman was begun. It was finished in the winter of 1880-1881.²⁹⁵

After construction, road repair became a major concern. Colonel Miles rode over the Fort Keogh road from Bismarck to the Post in January 1880 in a sleigh. During much of the winter this was the only possible way to travel on the road aside from horseback or on foot. Miles had no problems, but with the spring thaw came massive difficulties on all roads. Troops went out to work on all the roads in need of repair and stayed on the job for months. As the local press put it: "The pick and shovel drill is still in force and the boys are anxiously looking for recall."²⁹⁶ Company K, Fifth Infantry under Captain Frank Baldwin had the job of repairing the road from Fort Keogh to Fort Custer. With

²⁹¹Secretary of War, Reports (For each of the years 'from 1876 through 1879), Washington, Government Printing Office, p. 490, 1876-1877.

²⁹²Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles*, p. 164.

²⁹³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 25, 1890.

²⁹⁴Luther S. Kelly, "Yellowstone Kelly," *Memoirs of Luther S. Kelly*, ed. Milo M. Quaife (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), p. 207.

²⁹⁵*Yellowstone Journal*, 28 August 1879.

²⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 3 April 1880.

the experience that the soldiers received repairing the Keogh-Custer road, they were put to work building a utility road to facilitate moving raw lumber from the pineries, (forests east of the Post) to the sawmill near Fort Keogh.²⁹⁷

Other repairs were still going on even as new roads were being built. When the roads were good, the local press noted it, just as bad roads were made a matter of public record. In the vast area that is Southeastern Montana, it was considered imperative for a person to be able to travel. The Yellowstone Journal on September 11, 1880, noted that Captain Charles E. Hargous had arrived from Glendive, having made the trip of 105 miles between sunup and sundown. This trip by the Captain was made in his private conveyance with a tandem team over what had to be good road.²⁹⁸ Captain Hargous had been on duty guarding the railroad workers and was returning to Fort Keogh to take his wife back east.

Major Ilges and Captain James S. Casey did not have the same luck as Captain Hargous had with the roads. In January 1881, Casey had to be assigned to Fort Snelling, Minnesota, because the roads to Fort Keogh were closed.²⁹⁹ Major Ilges was counted as absent without leave and almost court-martialed because he could not get through to Fort Keogh.³⁰⁰ This Fort continually sent troops out to inspect the roads and a great deal of time was spent insuring that the transportation arteries were all passable. In an effort to protect the people wishing to use the roads, the Army set up camps along thoroughfares and manned them with Cheyenne. These combined efforts kept the roads open most of the time.³⁰¹

In building and maintaining all the roads in the area of Fort Keogh, the Army did a great deal to bring civilization to the region. Within a few short years the troops had constructed over eight hundred miles of roadway.³⁰² The soldiers also undertook improvements in and around Miles City. Most of this work was done at government expense.

River Crossing

The citizens of Miles City paid ongoing attention to the various means of crossing the Tongue River to Fort Keogh. On January 23, 1879 about twenty of Miles City's leading men signed a letter to Colonel Whistler at Fort Keogh. The citizens of the town were willing to supply the rocks for the piers if Fort Keogh would provide the labor force.³⁰³ A new bridge was built and was in operation by September 1880.³⁰⁴ Until that time a ferry was operated between the two locations.

²⁹⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh). Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1880.

²⁹⁸Yellowstone Journal, 11 September 1880.

²⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 29 January 1881.

³⁰⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 17, 1881.

³⁰¹Louis Pfaller, "The Fort Keogh to Bismarck Stage Route," North Dakota History, July 1954, p. 119.

³⁰²"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, 'National Archives, Washington, D.C., October 1881.

³⁰³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 23, 1879.

³⁰⁴Yellowstone Journal, 18 September 1880.

Covering the distance between Fort Keogh and Miles City were various hacks, (comfortable spring wagons) that made up to three round trips a day. There was a great deal of competition between the hackers, and to control their sometimes-unlawful practices, Colonel Whistler restricted their number.³⁰⁵ In February 1880 only two hacks were in business between the fort and the town. Gradually this number increased as the traffic increased.³⁰⁶

Owen Dowd, who had been a hack driver, became Colonel Miles' driver shortly after the bridge was finished in 1880. The Tongue River bridge brought Miles and the soldiers of Fort Keogh to Miles City much more often, and the citizens of the town visited Fort Keogh frequently for band concerts and other entertainment. This traffic was reduced less than a year after the first Tongue River bridge was finished, because the bridge failed. Major F. H. Logan, who had built the first bridge, then put another ferry across the river.

When ice started to form on the river, travel was impeded, so little time was wasted in constructing another bridge.³⁰⁷ Construction of the second bridge was more thorough, taking from December 1881 until March 1882. Late in May of 1883 the second bridge also failed temporarily, but repairs were soon made and this only kept soldiers and citizens at home for a short time.³⁰⁸ At the height of travel between the Fort and town in July 1883, the bridge totally failed and about fifty cattle fell to the water below while crossing it.

After the third bridge failed, the Army did not have much heart for another try. The citizens of Miles City next proposed a steel span bridge and bids were taken.³⁰⁹ In the meantime, during the short season when the Tongue River was low, fording the stream became the solution.³¹⁰ When winter came, teams were crossed on the frozen ice, but with spring and high water horses would not cross.³¹¹

Soldiers from Fort Keogh did not let the lack of a bridge stand in their way of a good time in town. In late 1881 the railroad construction crews had built a railroad bridge just south of the Government Bridge constructed by the Army. When the Government Bridge was out the soldiers walked across the Railroad Bridge. Some soldiers had problems crossing it. While crossing the bridge one night, two soldiers had to jump from the bridge, as a train without lights was about to run them down. As the local press put it: "... by letting themselves down with their hands and taking a good swing they managed to clear the water and landed safely on the ground just on the other side of the water."³¹² On numerous occasions drunken soldiers returning to the Post fell the sixteen feet from the Railroad Bridge to the river or to its banks.³¹³

³⁰⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 1, 1879.

³⁰⁶Yellowstone Journal, 20 March 1880.

³⁰⁷Ibid., 19 November 1881.

³⁰⁸Miles City Daily Press, 29 May 1883.

³⁰⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter (Miles City, Montana), 28 June 1884.

³¹⁰Miles City Daily Press, 1 August 1883.

³¹¹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 10 May 1884.

³¹²Ibid., 14 November 1885.

³¹³Ibid., 9 January 1886.

Pressure was put on the commander from citizens of Miles City and Major MacQueen, Post trader at Fort Keogh, to get a ferry working across the Tongue. In response to this need, the commander ordered another government bridge built. Major Logan again set about to construct a bridge and finished it in October of 1887.³¹⁴ Less than six months later people traveling between the Post and town again had to walk across the railroad bridge.³¹⁵

In 1894 the ferry that had been placed on the Tongue was washed down stream with the ice that was breaking up. A few years later, in 1898, a private citizen with hopes of a profit placed a new ferry on the river.³¹⁶ A steel bridge that served as long as Fort Keogh existed followed this.

Railroads

Fort Keogh was opened up to the world in 1881 when the Northern Pacific Railroad was completed from Bismarck to the Fort. Through the efforts of Colonel Miles and his troops, the railroad made good progress despite hostile Indians. The government invested a great deal in the railroad not only in lands but also in protection of the workers.³¹⁷ The citizens and soldiers both welcomed the railroad as it meant contact with the States. When T. F. Oak, the vice-president of the Northern Pacific, visited the area, Colonel J. G. Whistler and Captain F. H. Hathaway planned his welcome. The reception was nearly as grand as that given the President of the United States.³¹⁸ An equally well planned reception was given to President Henry Villard of the Northern Pacific when he visited the Post a few years later.³¹⁹

A grateful railroad showed its appreciation to the soldiers in various ways. Circulars were distributed at Fort Keogh stating that all officers, their families and attendants as well as enlisted soldiers would be given unlimited tickets at half-price to St. Paul from all places east of Walla Walla.³²⁰ Troops were transported on the Northern Pacific lines when needed as in the threatened Crow outbreak in 1887 and in the transfer of the Fifth Infantry from Fort Keogh to Texas later. The railroad also brought new troops to Fort Keogh. A few who were transferred out found it easy to come back for visits with old friends. In the winter of 1884, Captain Frank Baldwin returned via the Northern Pacific for just such a purpose.³²¹

During the first year of operation around Fort Keogh, the railroad was not always a prompt form of transportation. On one of Chaplain Lindesmith's many trips for religious duties he had to wait from twelve noon to 7:00 p.m. for a train to Glendive.³²²

Communication

³¹⁴Ibid., 22 October 1887.

³¹⁵Ibid., 3 March 1888.

³¹⁶The Miles City Weekly News (Miles City, Montana), 30 August 1898.

³¹⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, June 1880.

³¹⁸Yellowstone Journal, 20 August 1881,

³¹⁹The Weekly Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), September 1883.

³²⁰Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 3 July 1886.

³²¹Ibid., 27 December 1884.

³²²Rev. E. W. I. Lindesmith Diaries (Montana Historical Society: Microfilm Collection #301, vol. 2, 31 May 1882), p. 79.

As a frontier post, Fort Keogh had much the same problems with communications as other posts and found similar solutions. A few of the earliest means of communication were couriers, carrier pigeons and the heliograph. On some occasions, as in December 1878, relay teams were sent out, and at other times scouts on fast horses did the job.³²³ The importance of the carrier pigeons was reflected by the great care taken in maintaining the birds. On August 24, 1879 a request was made for three bushels of wheat, three bushels of Canadian peas and three bushels of buckwheat. It was felt that these grains were the best and could not be grown in the area around Fort Keogh.³²⁴ On several of the campaigns led by Colonel Miles, the heliograph was used. This consisted of finding some high ground with good visibility and stationing a signalman on top to send signals by reflecting the sun with a combination of mirrors to a distant point.³²⁵

Mail became the primary means of communication with the States after the Fort Keogh road was opened to Bismarck, the railhead at that time. During the first few years of the Post the mail ran twice weekly because it took about four days to make the trip from Bismarck to Fort Keogh.³²⁶ Because of the presence of hostile Indians, the soldiers of Fort Keogh had a hard time keeping the mail running. Henry Friese, a stage driver, was killed by hostile forces west of the Beaver Creek station during the summer of 1880.³²⁷

Isolation made mail a very precious item and an important one for good morale. Colonel Whistler wrote several letters from December 27, 1880 until April 11, 1881, asking why mail was slow in getting to Miles City. On most occasions the mail then sat in Miles City for twenty-four hours before arriving at the Post. In a response that did not satisfy Whistler, the railroad stated that high water and bad weather were the reasons for delays.³²⁸ It was later discovered that once the mail had arrived at Miles City, it then faced further delays as a result of being passed back and forth between the wrong addressees.³²⁹

Newspapers

The press was another important media of the region. Colonel Miles was accused of equipping the first paper of Miles City in order that it might be used as his personal organ.³³⁰ In its early years the paper (Yellowstone Journal) did communicate much praise for Miles, but his success warranted nothing less. The paper was also anti-Indian in the early years, which is not an attitude that Miles held. It would seem that if Miles secretly controlled the Journal, he did not really use it as a tool. Captain E. P. Ewers

³²³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 18, 1878; Returns from U.S. Military Posts, June 1893.

³²⁴Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 24, 1879.

³²⁵Finerty, War-Path and Bivouac, p. 252.

³²⁶History of Custer, Powder River, Garfield Counties (Miles City, Montana: Einar Berge, 1931)-, p. 4.

³²⁷Pfaller, "The Fort Keogh to Bismarck Stage Route," p. 118.

³²⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, March 29, 1881.

³²⁹*Ibid.*, March 1881.

³³⁰Paul Husted, The Yellowstone Journal, Illustrated and Historical Edition (Miles City, Montana: reprinted the Miles City Star, 1976, p. 12. This was originally written by Sam Gordon, Editor of the Yellowstone Journal, 27 September 1900.

and other officers would often visit the newspaper office and report on campaigns and other news items. The paper made full use of this information.³³¹

The practice of gathering the news informally and using reports submitted by participants continued for some time around Miles City, but a formal correspondent was sought by the Journal to cover Fort Keogh in the summer of 1880. The desire for news from Fort Keogh was evident as ads for a correspondent stated that "a good one can name his own price."³³² News from the world at large was received via telegraph and as the story of the Czar's death in 1881 showed, news was often received the same day the event happened.³³³

W. D. Knight, who became the publisher of the Yellowstone Journal in January 1880, had been a frontier newspaperman before having transferred from the Black Hills Journal. The paper was sold for ten cents a copy at both Miles City and Fort Keogh.³³⁴ Subscribers to the paper from Fort Keogh oftentimes did not get their copy on time because of the poor mail service during the early years. It was hoped by the readers that they could enjoy the paper during a relaxing Saturday, but during the spring of 1882, the paper often did not show up until busy Monday.³³⁵

Since the paper was a civilian institution, it most often faulted the soldiers for any problem that arose between townspeople and soldiers. After the Democratic Daily Press was started, the views of the Yellowstone Journal became more pronounced. The Yellowstone Journal would complain of "a newspaper crank at Fort Keogh" who was stealing their material and sending it to eastern newspapers. It also complained about soldiers getting drunk and fighting the citizens. The Daily Press covered more pleasant subjects like a play and all the officers and wives that were in town to see it.³³⁶ Press was also given in the Yellowstone Journal to writers such as Lieutenant J. M. Partello who had been published in Scribner's and General Brisbin, another, who at one time was stationed at Fort Keogh, and later wrote various news articles. Other than a few such references, the Journal had little space for Fort Keogh during the 1880s and 1890s and sided with the money interests as Miles City went from a camp following to a cattle town.

Wire Communication

Telegraphic communication not only played an important role in the life of a newspaper, it played even a more important role in the life of an Army post. Soldiers from Fort Keogh first ran a line from the Fort to Bismarck. This line was completed in April 1878.³³⁷ This line sustained the Post until hostile forces had been somewhat subdued. In September 1878, serious construction got underway on a communications network. First, several companies under the command of Lieutenant William Bowen

³³¹Yellowstone Journal, 13 March 1880.

³³²Ibid., 26 June 1880.

³³³Ibid., 2 April 1881.

³³⁴Ibid., 13 March 1880.

³³⁵The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 1 April 1882.

³³⁶Miles City Daily Press, 13 January 1833.

³³⁷Historical Building (Montana Historical Society: Microfilm collection #325, 1963).

set to work and completed a line from Terry Point (a supply center located at the mouth of the Big Horn River) to Fort Buford, Dakota Territory.³³⁸ A month later Company D, Fifth Infantry, under Lieutenant H. K. Bailey, was sent to construct a line between Fort Keogh and Fort Buford.³³⁹ Company D was joined in its efforts by Company H, Fifth Infantry during November 1878, with Lieutenant Logan in command. Troop B, Second Cavalry, under Lieutenant M. E. Brien, started a line from Fort Keogh to Deadwood in the same month.³⁴⁰

The problems faced by Lieutenant Brien, as well as the solutions given, reflect those of the other officers and men who constructed the telegraph line around Fort Keogh in those days. Brien's party had thirty-eight enlisted men and six skilled civilian workers. They started the job with seventy-seven miles of wire, all that Fort Keogh could supply. Conditions in the field were hard, resulting in the discharge of half the civilians after two days out. Soldiers such as Private Stage of Company "B" did a great deal of the pole climbing. In ten days they had used up all the wire and had traveled seventy-seven miles out from Fort Keogh. Several men were sent to Deadwood for more wire as the troops remaining went back over old ground and installed more insulators. After the Quartermaster delivered thirty additional miles of wire to the Little Missouri, work on stringing the wire resumed. Indians were seen by his troops near Belle Fousche, Dakota Territory and so Lieutenant Brien left the line after stringing all the wire he had and pushed on toward Deadwood. There he found eighty-six miles of wire, 650 brackets and 360 insulators. With his fresh supply of material, Brien started to construct the line now back from Deadwood toward where he had left off. The pine timber in the badlands slowed his work a great deal as reels had to be fed out and wire chopped. This forced the using of connectors, thus slowing the process. In open country thirteen or fourteen miles a day was average, but the pace dropped to two miles in the pines. As Brien reached the end of his supplies, he failed to find any more waiting at Camp Ruklen and so he pushed on to Spearfish at the west edge of the Black Hills and was informed by telegraph there that more material was coming via the stage. Insulators were short in numbers so every other pole was insulated and after the supplies arrived, troops were sent back to finish the job. When the job was completed, Lieutenant Brien was informed that part of the line had been torn up. He was ordered to return down the line to Deadwood where he found that teamsters, while passing under the wire, had stood on the wagon seat and torn the wire down. Brien decided to move the line fifty feet to prevent temptations and then marched on to Deadwood to resupply and maintain his animals. On his return to Fort Keogh, Brien inspected the line and as needed he nailed on brackets where lost, replaced split wire, tamped and banked poles and tested the line. It was reported back to Fort Keogh that there was an average of twenty poles to the mile. Thus the Lieutenant completed the job he had begun some thirty-six days earlier.³⁴¹

By the end of 1879 Fort Keogh was in telegraphic communication with Bismarck, Deadwood, Fort Custer, Fort Ellis, Helena, Fort Shaw, Fort Benton and Fort

³³⁸Returns from U.S. Military Posts, September 1878.

³³⁹Ibid., October 1878.

³⁴⁰Ibid., November 1878.

³⁴¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Report by Lt. Brien to C.O. of Keogh, December 18, 1878.

Assinniboine.³⁴² Troops from Fort Keogh had run 650 miles of telegraph lines, most of which was used by the general public in 1880.³⁴³

With this proliferation came an enlarged need for telegraph operators. The Army Signal Corps filled this need both on the various military posts and in some civilian areas such as Miles City.³⁴⁴ When the telegraph operator at Miles City was transferred to Bozeman, it was a great shock to Miles City. An article in the Yellowstone Journal argued that the city should get the Fort Keogh operator since the civilians felt that the commercial business was more important than the official business of Fort Keogh.³⁴⁵ Miles City did get an operator, but not at the expense of Fort Keogh.

Fort Keogh not only had early and almost constant telegraphic communication but also could boast the first telephone in Montana territory. The phone line ran from Colonel Miles' office (in his house) to the telegraph office and was installed a year after Fort Keogh received the telegraph.³⁴⁶ Five years later, in 1884, a telephone line was strung between Fort Keogh and Miles City. In the area of telephone communication, Miles City had the advantage over Fort Keogh. The Department of Dakota refused even to fund a subscription by Fort Keogh to the Miles City phone exchange in 1884.³⁴⁷ The desired funds for a phone subscription were received late in 1888. The cost to the government was \$5.00 a month.³⁴⁸ Fort Keogh had its own small exchange in 1905 and most of the Post was tied into it.³⁴⁹ The Fort was fully into the twentieth century at this point, but the area around the Post was booming and Fort Keogh was on the decline.

³⁴²Secretary of War, Reports, 1878-1879, p. 66.

³⁴³"A History of Fort Keogh to 1881," Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, National Archives, Washington, D.C., October 1881.

³⁴⁴Yellowstone Journal, 31 July 1880.

³⁴⁵Ibid., 28 August 1880.

³⁴⁶Don Miller and Stan Cohen, Military and Trading Posts of Montana (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1978), p. 43; Historical Building (Montana Historical Society: Microfilm collection #325, 1963).

³⁴⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 10, 1884.

³⁴⁸Ibid., November 9, 1888.

³⁴⁹The Miles City Independent, Miles City, Montana, 23 March 1905.

CHAPTER VI ECONOMICS

Post Upkeep

After the primary construction a few carpenters were kept on to maintain the Post. Other problems aside from the construction demanded attention. Water supply, drainage, irrigation and wind damages were but a few of the problems faced. During the summer of 1879, the Quartermaster Department delivered to Fort Keogh a large quantity of four and six inch pipe along with seven large cisterns. An additional 2,000 feet of pipe was required before a water system could be installed.³⁵⁰ Lieutenant F. M. Woodruff supervised the installation of all the hardware and Sergeant Pepple, the skilled engineer with Company E, Fifth Infantry, refitted the boiler on the steam engine that had been used at the sawmill.³⁵¹ Through the efforts of Woodruff and Pepple, among others, water was pumped by the steam engine through first six-inch pipe then four-inch pipe from the Yellowstone River to several cisterns at Fort Keogh. As water was needed it was drawn from the cisterns and the water wagon for the most part disappeared from Fort Keogh.

Unwanted water that formed in puddles after a strong rain was another difficulty. This problem was solved in late 1879 about the same time as the water supply question. Private J. E. Wilson was sent to Fort Keogh for duty on September 22, 1879 with a mission to solve the drainage problem at the Post.³⁵²

Wind damage was not uncommon on the plains where Fort Keogh was located and storms destroyed a few buildings in 1879. After a particular barracks was blown down, it was replaced with a multi-purpose building. The building newly constructed in 1879 was used as a dance room with a stage on the second floor and a chapel, schoolroom, and court-martial room below. It also housed the reading room, library, and Captain Girard's coffee and sandwich room.³⁵³

Soldiers were turned into jacks of all trades, as Fort Keogh required a great deal of maintaining and improving. Construction was under way in November 1879 on both a new officers' quarters (replacing the one that had been burned down months earlier) and a guardhouse.³⁵⁴ Painting of existing buildings was an ongoing fatigue duty, with some older buildings only getting their first coats of paint in 1880. The hospital was covered with two coats while the officers' quarters were painted with a light color and dark trim. The soldiers performed other duties such as setting up a new boiler at the

³⁵⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393. Letter from Lt. Woodruff, September 10, 1879.

³⁵¹Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), 22 May 1880.

³⁵²Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh). Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1876.

³⁵³Mark H. Brown, The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. 317; Yellowstone Journal, 13 November 1879; Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 77. Floor plans of various buildings.

³⁵⁴Yellowstone Journal, 13 November 1879.

sawmill, replacing the flagstaff, planting trees around the Post and painting all roofs with red fireproof paint.³⁵⁵

In 1880, by the time the Post was taking the shape of a well-established fort, buildings and other structures were in bad need of replacement. Rotting logs were crashing in on top of stored food in the root cellar and it was noted in an inspection from higher headquarters that the laundresses' quarters had rotten wood in their roofs just a year later.³⁵⁶

Other problems at the Post were identified some months later on June 26, 1882. The inspector pointed out that the barracks still needed whitewashing and were overcrowded. Ventilation was not sufficient in the barracks, and new iron bunks had not arrived. Regulation lockers, needed to secure personal belongings, had still not arrived. Lighting in the barracks was also found to be a problem because the allowable number of lamps was insufficient. A recommendation was made that two double burners for each squad room should have been allowed at Fort Keogh. On the logistics side, it was pointed out in the inspection that the wagons at the Post should have had a shelter built for them and the rotting old blacksmith and wheelwright shops should have been replaced.³⁵⁷

The following year the barracks were still the major concern of the inspector from the Department. It was pointed out that the plaster was weak and fell off because of the moisture caused by the washing of the floor. The barracks were sinking, causing the porches to droop and the steps were in need of replacing. The granary at the Post, which had its supports replaced came under criticism because in the replacement, the defense against invasion by rats was lost. Many of the buildings constructed at Fort Keogh back in 1877 had this problem of settling because they were founded on cottonwood stumps and the unstable soil of the area.³⁵⁸ A few buildings erected during the middle of the 1880s had rock foundations such as the new guardhouse constructed in 1886-1887, but most were poorly built structures on log stumps.³⁵⁹ With constant improvements going on and a general lack of space, troops were often found in the pine hills cutting and hauling lumber to expand and maintain Fort Keogh's large physical plant.³⁶⁰

For many years the sinks at Fort Keogh were a matter of concern for medical personnel. Sinks were sometimes only filled in with gravel that caused the odor to remain. Garbage was dumped near occupied buildings that added to this.³⁶¹ For the most part the medical personnel attended to this problem and kept disease at a controllable level, but occasional outbreaks were reported. In 1902, a man called Mr. Brosius, a civil engineer, and his assistant were sent to Fort Keogh to install a sewage system and this solved a major part of the problem.³⁶²

³⁵⁵Ibid., 6 March 1880, 3 April 1880, 1 May 1880.

³⁵⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 26, 1881.

³⁵⁷Ibid., June 26, 1882.

³⁵⁸Ibid., July 14, 1883.

³⁵⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter (Miles City, Montana), 13 November 1886

³⁶⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 1887, pp. 23-25.

³⁶¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 3, 1884.

³⁶²Returns from U.S. Military Posts, September 1902.

Individuals such as Colonel Melville Cochran made a contribution to better living at Fort Keogh as well. In early June 1886 he invited some townspeople out to Fort Keogh where he showed them the results of his experiment in growing trees. Cottonwood stumps were put into the grounds around the parade field in hopes that they would take root. People joked that they were telegraph poles and someone even went so far as to put wire on them, but the local press reported that the cottonwoods were going well, as Colonel Cochran had hoped they would. An irrigation system for Cochran's flower and vegetable garden, as well as the company vegetable gardens, was also shown to the townspeople. Cochran had designed a reservoir on high ground, which was pumped full from the Yellowstone, and then the water was gravity-fed into the gardens.³⁶³

With regard to the other water needs of the Post, attention was turning from the pump at the Yellowstone to Artesian wells in late 1884. Bids were asked for by the War Department and in March of 1885, the American Well Works received the contract.³⁶⁴ After going down 450 feet, water was struck and came to the surface at only twenty gallons per minute. The contractor dug deeper, as this amount was not sufficient.³⁶⁵ The Post trader, Major MacQueen, sunk a well only thirty feet and used a pump to supply his green house with water in 1888. A need was felt for a complete system that would serve the water needs of all the people at Fort Keogh; and in the middle of 1889 Congress agreed to finance a complete waterworks system for the Post. Ten thousand dollars were earmarked for the project that introduced water into several houses and about the grounds of the Post with the use of pumps and gravity.³⁶⁶

During the last third of Fort Keogh's life, improvements were still being made and money still flowed from Congress for these projects. Bathrooms and other additions were made to the barracks, heating fixtures were put into the commander's quarters, new wagon sheds and hay stores were constructed and \$1,400.00 was appropriated for a new shooting gallery in 1905 (about three years before the Post was shut down).³⁶⁷ Most of the buildings that were constructed and improved near the end were put to use after the troops left and thus the government had not wasted money because Fort Keogh had other roles to play.

Impact on Miles City

From its earliest days to the present, Fort Keogh has always had an impact on the area that surrounded it. The principal of concern for Miles City was the economic impact that the Post had. From the one thousand soldiers and civilian employees at Fort Keogh came the lifeblood of the town. As a service to the local businessmen, the Yellowstone Journal reported on the periodic visits of the Paymaster. The paper closed one such article by saying that the Paymaster would show up Wednesday, and then informed the readers that they could look out for a business boom for a few days!³⁶⁸ With all the money that was being pumped into the Yellowstone valley by the military at Fort

³⁶³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 12 June 1886.

³⁶⁴Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, March 25, 1885.

³⁶⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 22 August 1885.

³⁶⁶Ibid., 13 May 1889.

³⁶⁷The Miles City Independent (Montana), 16 March 1905.

³⁶⁸Yellowstone Journal, 31 January 1880.

Keogh, Mr. C. W. Savage was able to start a bank in Miles City in April of 1880.³⁶⁹ During most of the years preceding 1880, the payroll for the civilian employees alone was about \$3,000.00 a month.³⁷⁰ Even years after the primary construction of the Post, a need for civilian labor was still evident. Examples of the type of labor contracts handed out were building cook ovens in May of 1886, hauling Army supplies in 1890 while troops were busy in the field, and the ongoing jobs of clerks.³⁷¹ A large portion of the soldiers' pay was also spent in Miles City, mostly on alcoholic beverages. In 1888 when three companies of the Twenty-fifth Infantry arrived in the town on their way to Fort Keogh, they spent \$50.00 at the Drover bar while waiting for breakfast.³⁷²

Before major holidays the ladies of the Post would go into Miles City to do a great deal of shopping. Much of their money was also spent at the Post. With personnel being transferred in and out of Fort Keogh, auction sales were a big part of the Post's economy and not only were townspeople often invited but transportation was provided to and from the auction.³⁷³ Household goods were the major items sold at auctions of this Post, often going to incoming soldiers. Fort Keogh not only impacted on Miles City in an economic way; it was the Post that drew some people into the area. Many of the civilians in the early years of Miles City were related to personnel at Fort Keogh. Word of mouth became a means of infusing the area with ambitious men who helped build its economy. George M. Miles, who ran a big hardware store in Miles City, was Colonel Miles' nephew, and no doubt the relationship affected the site where he chose to settle.³⁷⁴ Another businessman of Miles City, a Mr. Lampher, was the nephew of Captain Frank Baldwin.³⁷⁵ The speed with which the area was settled was determined in large part by the letters that the soldiers sent home. Contracts with the military brought other business men to Miles City, and among them was Colonel Charles A. Broadwater, J. B. Hubbell, Paul McCormick, and Major Borchardt.³⁷⁶ From the Fort's beginning in 1876 until about 1883, most of the major contracts were handled by Broadwater, Hubbell and Company.³⁷⁷ Later McCormick and Borchardt handled the major supply contracts for Fort Keogh and other posts in the department.³⁷⁸

With all the capital that was flowing through Miles City, it was not surprising that the citizens clamored for a money order department at the Fort Keogh Post Office during 1879. In this area they received little help.³⁷⁹ On other scores the civilians did receive assistance from the soldiers. Before Miles City had a jail, the civilian prisoners were locked up at Fort Keogh, and in the summer of 1880, even after Miles City had its own

³⁶⁹Ibid., 10 April 1880.

³⁷⁰Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1878.

³⁷¹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 15 May 1886, 5 July 1890.

³⁷²Ibid., 9 June 1888.

³⁷³Ibid., 9 March 1889.

³⁷⁴Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, The Frontier Years (New York: Bramhall House, 1955), p. 141.

³⁷⁵Sam Gordon, Illustrated and Historical Edition, The Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana: Yellowstone Journal, 1900; reprint ed., Miles City, Montana: Paul Husted (Editor), Miles City Star, 1976).

³⁷⁶Nicolas P. Hardeman, "Brick Stronghold of the Border, Fort Assiniboine, 1879-1911," Montana the Magazine of Western History 29 (Spring 1979):57. The origin of Broadwater title is not known, but is not a military commission.

³⁷⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 25, 1880; Miles City Daily Press, 1 June 1883.

³⁷⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 2 June 1888.

³⁷⁹Yellowstone Journal, 7 August 1879.

jail, the suspected killer of Dutch Mike and Mr. J. Sherman were held at the Fort. Some citizens of Miles City wanted to lynch James Harris for this crime, but the soldiers were able to protect him before the trial.³⁸⁰ On other occasions local law officers were equipped with mounts from the Post. When flooding occurred, the officers of Fort Keogh loaned out flat boats and did what they could to help.³⁸¹

The government wanted to aid in the development of the area as well, but it seemed that the civilians wanted more than was offered. In 1878, all reservation land east of the Tongue River except for the Riverside Park area was opened to occupation. This meant that Miles City could move closer to the Fort Keogh garrison.³⁸² Some citizens wanted to be even closer to the garrison and so in May 1880 on a rumor that the park was open for settlement, they "jumped the park." The men had the park sectioned off and tents erected when as the less greedy citizens looked on, the soldiers came and cleared the park.³⁸³ Where the Tongue River flowed through the park, the banks were low which caused flooding in Miles City. In an effort to solve this problem, the citizens requested help and the Army acted to change the flow by straightening it. This change was over three years in the making and resulted in no flooding and two lakes in the park. It was finished in early 1893.³⁸⁴

Each town seemed to be proud of the military post closest to it and Miles City was no exception. On May 24, 1884, the Yellowstone Journal printed an article from the Benton River Press. This location was a competitor for the Army dollars. The article went:

Whatever may be done in reference to Custer, Maginnis and Eillis, there is no probability that Fort Assinniboine will be abandoned. It is a new post, the finest in the northwest, and of the lot is the only one that is of any real service to Montana and the government. Fort Assinniboine will be occupied by the boys in blue long after Fort Keogh is abandoned and forgotten!³⁸⁵

Of course Miles City did not agree with this, and felt the same was true of Fort Keogh regarding outlasting other posts in the area. An article of June 22, 1905 in the Miles City Independent was a reprint from the Anaconda Standard in which Fort Keogh was praised. The unit transfers were noted as well as the \$40,000 spent during the two previous years. The article states how proud Miles City is of the troops and officers at Fort Keogh and how they give the streets a "genteel splendor."³⁸⁶ Undoubtedly the impact of Fort Keogh on Miles City diminished as the town's own economy grew, but it is fair to say that Miles City received much more than its name from its neighbor to the west.

Civilians at the Post

³⁸⁰Ibid., 12 June 1880

³⁸¹Ibid., 5 March 1881.

³⁸²S. Gordon, Recollections of Old Milestown (Miles City, Montana, 1918), p. 25.

³⁸³Yellowstone Journal, 15 May 1880.

³⁸⁴The Weekly Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), 6 October 1892.

³⁸⁵Yellowstone Journal, 24 May 1884 (reprint from the Benton River Press).

³⁸⁶Miles City Independent, 22 June 1905 (reprint from the Anaconda Standard).

Fort Keogh had a constant contingent of civilian employees, some of whom moved with the jobs and others who remained at the Post for a long term. The two categories of employees were those who worked for the Quartermaster on a more or less long term bases and those who were tradesmen at the Post under a short-term arrangement with the Quartermaster. Most of the Quartermaster long term employees worked at Fort Keogh during its first decade. A sample of these was blacksmiths, carpenters, clerks, foragers, guides, herders, interpreters, masons, packers, saddlers, scouts, teamsters and wagon masters. Other employees were hired to complete a particular task such as boatmen, couriers, engineers, farriers, harnessmakers, hostlers, laborers, mechanics, painters, plasterers, plumbers, tanners, truekeepers and watchmen.

The Returns from Fort Keogh indicate that the Post had tradesmen of a wide range. Special crafts were practiced by the tradesmen such as architect, bookbinder, brushmaker, cigarmaker, coachman, druggist, dyer, glassblower, hatter, jeweler, papermaker, pianomaker, potter printer, puddler, stonecutter, tailor, watchmaker wiredrawer and woodturner. Usually the employment of tradesmen with special skills was for short periods of time, but skills such as baker, blacksmith, butcher, clerk, cook, engineer, machinist, painter, printer, shoemaker, tailor and teamster were on the payroll almost all of the time that records were kept.³⁸⁷ Most of the rarely used tradesmen were hired from the local economy and then returned to their former jobs once they were no longer needed by the Army. Those who had permanent jobs at Fort Keogh most often lived at the Fort and so they were much more at home at Fort Keogh than Miles City.³⁸⁸ Some civilian employees were part of the government and thus were transferred as much as the officers and units were. In 1892, Thomas Russell, who had worked at Fort Keogh for ten years in the Quartermaster department upon his transfer from the Post, was given a watch and chain in honor of all he had done.³⁸⁹ The pay for the civilian workers for the most part ranged from \$100 a month for the clerks to \$30 a month for the teamster. These rates dropped a little during the hard times, but never went much higher.

Pay Call

Probably the civilians were not paid in the same manner as the soldiers, because this would have raised considerable controversy. The soldiers' pay was sometimes infrequent. During 1877-1878, the Fifty-fourth Congress failed to appropriate funds to pay the Army. Officers had to pay high interest on loans, sometimes just to survive. When the money did come, some cutbacks on promotions caused it to be a bittersweet occurrence.³⁹⁰

On the Western frontier, a small number of paymasters had to cover a great deal of territory, which meant that the troops of Fort Keogh were not paid on a regular monthly basis. Months would pass before a line would form with happy smiling

³⁸⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, 1876 to 1908.

³⁸⁸The Miles City Weekly News (Montana), 3 December 1898.

³⁸⁹The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 26 March 1892.

³⁹⁰William Addleman Ganoe, The History of the United States Army (Ashton, Maryland: Eric Lundberg, 1964), pp. 348-349.

soldiers waiting to collect the earnings that some would unload in Miles City in a day or two.

Escorting the paymaster was a regular function of the troops at Fort Keogh. This duty had its perils in the early days when Paymaster Earl Thomas carried the cash, as he would disperse \$11,000 at one time to Fort Keogh and move on to Fort Buford; later when road agents roamed the country instead of Hostile forces it became even more dangerous.³⁹¹ By 1884 road agents had replaced the Hostile forces as the major threat to the Paymaster during his travels.

Paymaster (Major) Charles Whipple, while on his way to pay the troops, neared Fort Keogh was attacked by road agents. Along with Whipple were his clerk, Mr. Such, and an escort, Sergeant Coonrod (a Medal of Honor winner), in charge of the escort. Coonrod was killed and the clerk and two privates were wounded as the Major made a dash for the nearest ranch. Troops were sent after the robbers, and the Major continued on his rounds.³⁹²

When fire claimed the personal affects of Captain A. C. Girard and Major David H. Brotherton, Representative Martin Maginnis of Montana introduced a bill in Congress to reimburse the two officers for their losses, amounting to \$7,782. This form of insurance kept the officers going and made further service on their part possible.³⁹³ If it were not for the Quartermaster attending to all the basic needs (other than pay and food) of the enlisted soldiers, they could not have continued to serve. Numerous paydays were missed, and average monthly pay of a private was \$13 for most of Fort Keogh's existence. Often a lot of this pay was spent on drink, and even if this were not the case it would not have provided the soldier with much. To compete for these dollars some local merchants would pack up their goods and travel to Fort Keogh when the Paymaster was in the area.³⁹⁴ For the most part the troops would be headed the other direction to spend their money on whiskey at Miles City's many saloons and perhaps end up in the local jail. This was even more likely to be the case if payday fell near a holiday.³⁹⁵ In the decade of the nineties, a patrol was started under the command of a Lieutenant to insure that soldiers in town after payday behaved themselves.³⁹⁶

Post Businesses

There were several places on the Post where soldiers could spend their money for personal desires. The Post Trader had for sale items as varied as bacon and wagons and in the early days was given sole right to trade on the Post.³⁹⁷ The first Post Trader at Fort Keogh was William D. O'Toole from St. Louis, who ran the store from 1877 to about 1881. Food items for the troops were handled by the Commissary, which was

³⁹¹Yellowstone Journal, 17 September 1881.

³⁹²Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 17 May 1884.

³⁹³The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 11 February 1882.

³⁹⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 6 March 1886.

³⁹⁵Ibid., 14 March 1885.

³⁹⁶Ibid., 17 October 1891.

³⁹⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, March 2, 1877.

managed by the Subsistence Department. A wide variety of foodstuffs were handled such as pickled lambs' tongue, almond extract, figs, ginger and raisins.³⁹⁸

During most years of Fort Keogh's existence, a soldier who wanted a picture taken could visit the Post photographer. The studio for the first fifteen years was of upright log construction and had several occupants in quick succession. In 1888, when the Twenty-second Infantry took station at Fort Keogh, Christian Barthelme built a frame studio with plenty of room and a skylight. Fort Keogh was about as well documented in photographs as any other frontier post.

Laundry service for the soldiers was generally provided by enlisted men's wives, but in 1880 it was reported that Charles Bishop from Miles City was opening a laundry service and a shoe repair shop on Fort Keogh.³⁹⁹ Laundresses would charge different rates to the soldiers, some getting as much as fifty cents for washing one bedsack. An inspector called for an end to the unfair pricing as some men did not have their beds cleaned and thus endangered the health of themselves and the men near them.⁴⁰⁰ In the summer of 1884, the laundresses wailed as they heard that a Chinese laundry would soon be allowed to operate on the Post. Here competition was good for the health of the troops.⁴⁰¹ Other businesses also located themselves on Fort Keogh after receiving permission. Charles Brown established a dairy on the reservation.⁴⁰² Robert W. Parker, a private in Company E, Second Cavalry purchased a watch repair business from Mr. Kennis and ran it during his free time at Fort Keogh, and Konrad Schmid was appointed Post tailor and opened a shop near the trader's store.⁴⁰³ A business that was started by soldiers for soldiers, and did quite well, was the little coffee shop opened by Captain Girard and run by Sergeant George Kirkbride. This coffee shop was intended to sway the soldier away from whiskey shops in town by selling him a sandwich and a cup of coffee for five cents. During the last months of 1884, this coffee shop, called the Coffee Canteen, sold 7,000 lunches, which was a sad commentary on the company mess halls, according to the local press.⁴⁰⁴ Without a doubt the most important business on Post was the Post trader's store. No competition meant the right to run the trader's store was a valued prize for any merchant if he could get the job. As mentioned before, William D. O'Toole was the first. In 1880 his brother-in-law, Jeff Chandler, and Jeff's partner, Mr. W. W. MacQueen, arrived at Miles City aboard the steamer, Big Horn, from St. Louis. They had a good selection of merchandise and set about to make a profit. MacQueen later branched off and built a fine hotel in Miles City and in the summer of 1882 was appointed Post Trader at Fort Keogh.⁴⁰⁵ In this endeavor, he was the senior partner, as O'Toole, his predecessor, had been. The Post Trader did not have competition but did have to contend with price fixing. A few months before MacQueen got the job, the inspector from the Department found that the council of administration was not effective and that items were overpriced. The year MacQueen started, the same

³⁹⁸Montana Historical Society, Helena, Post Commissary Papers, Ft. Keogh, Montana Requisition Papers, Envelope 10.

³⁹⁹Yellowstone Journal, 1 January 1880.

⁴⁰⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 9, 1882.

⁴⁰¹Yellowstone Journal, 14 June 1884

⁴⁰²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 24, 1882.

⁴⁰³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 28 August 1880, 3 March 1888.

⁴⁰⁴The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 11 November 1882; Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 24 January 1885.

⁴⁰⁵The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 1 July 1882.

problem was found, indicating that the Post Trader was exploiting the soldiers of Fort Keogh.⁴⁰⁶ Some soldiers did recover part of the money they spent at the trader's store in 1887, by burglarizing the store and taking \$40 in silver. The honest soldiers had to take the loss.⁴⁰⁷ The trader's store was ended in 1890 when the War Department decided to stop such establishments at forts where other stores could replace them in nearby towns.⁴⁰⁸ The Post Exchange system replaced the trader store and was run by the Army for the Army. At Fort Keogh a Lieutenant generally ran the store as one of his duties.⁴⁰⁹

Army Sales

Quartermaster sales provided another means by which a soldier could part with his money. In the early years most sales were of Indian ponies and generally went to civilians for about \$16 a head.⁴¹⁰ Other occasions for these sales were condemned cavalry horses or excess mounts after the Infantry was returned to full foot-soldier status.⁴¹¹ Occasionally, as in 1904, an outlaw horse that the Army could not control was sold. More than one soldier lost his life by the actions of a horse before it was sold.⁴¹² It is impossible to determine how many cowboys lost lives or limbs by outlaw horses purchased at Army auctions.

Condemned Quartermaster store goods were also sold at Fort Keogh with the government always taking a large loss.⁴¹³ Local businessmen also took losses as a result of Army sales. One instance involved the excess stoves that were sold in July 1881. The local merchants had little hope of unloading their stoves after the Army dumped over 200 good stoves on the local populace.⁴¹⁴

Army Buffalo coats were also in demand among the locals in the cold country. Unlike the stoves, the Army did not want to sell these garments, but some soldiers would do so if they could get away with it. Cold weather had hit hard in Montana during the winter of 1886 and 1887. The next winter in December 1887, buffalo coats had a good market. In that month, the Journal reported that a Mr. McNally of Miles City was a party to a scheme to sell the coats. Any soldier who left the Post with a buffalo coat was required to have a pass, with that fact written on the pass. If a civilian visited the Post, it was possible for him to leave the Post unmolested. McNally's scheme was to visit a particular soldier or soldiers, get coats, and return half the profits to the soldiers. McNally and one of the soldiers he named were both arrested and punished.⁴¹⁵ A soldier in the Quartermaster department managed to get away with a coat, which he sold to a Black porter named Reynolds, for eight dollars. The coat was traced and the soldier confessed, but other coats disappeared and were not traced, so some soldiers

⁴⁰⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 9, 1882 and July 14, 1883.

⁴⁰⁷Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 24 September 1887.

⁴⁰⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 25, 1890.

⁴⁰⁹Stock Growers Journal (Miles City, Montana), 22 December 1894.

⁴¹⁰Yellowstone Journal, 14 August 1880.

⁴¹¹Ibid., 19 November 1881

⁴¹²The Miles City Independent, 21 April 1904

⁴¹³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 12, 1887.

⁴¹⁴Yellowstone Journal, 30 July 1881.

⁴¹⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 3 December 87.

and civilians succeeded in making a profit and keeping warm at government expense.⁴¹⁶

Logistics

From its beginning, Fort Keogh never had much of a problem with logistics. The river made it possible to move large amounts of supplies to the bastion and the area around it was fertile enough to fill a large part of the food needs. Fort Keogh became a large supply depot for the smaller posts in the District of Yellowstone and thus had a big role to play in the movement of most types of supplies. Shortly after the Post was begun, it became clear to Colonel Miles that, owing to the expense of shipping and damage to goods, it was better to get as much from the local economy as was possible. Initiative was shown, as companies would try to provide themselves with a variety of foods. Company F, Fifth Infantry in 1877 used unit funds to purchase two live pigs with intentions of fattening them up and serving them in the mess hall.⁴¹⁷ After the government bought seeds, most units at the Post planted gardens. Captain E. P. Ewers requested that five acres be set aside for the garden of each company.⁴¹⁸ During the first year there were excess potatoes and onions which were sold at a slight loss.⁴¹⁹ For the first four or five years the company gardens did well, but this changed in 1883 as hot, dry, windy weather did not cooperate and the year's yield was only about one third of normal.⁴²⁰ The following year the same story was repeated with worse results. Only the potatoes yielded and some still had to be purchased. Water was the problem as it was hard to move enough to serve all Post needs. In 1885 more problems overtook the gardens. As Lieutenant Hunter Liggett (who would become second in command of United States forces during World War I) put it, the soil was poor and little rain fell. Only fifty bushels of potatoes were harvested from the garden of Company F, Fifth Infantry, and Liggett remarked that the grasshoppers got the rest.⁴²¹ To insure a better crop in the future, the company commanders at Fort Keogh raised some money and in June 1886 about 4,400 feet of iron piping was received to irrigate the gardens.⁴²²

To round out the diet of vegetables and potatoes when these were available, the Army operated a bakery on Fort Keogh that had to work almost around the clock in the early years to meet the needs. Later more ovens were built and things improved.⁴²³ The Army contracted for meat, but the soldiers of Keogh took pleasure in helping the government out a little by going hunting. During the years before the buffalo were wiped out hunting was excellent in eastern Montana. L. A. Huffman, the Post photographer, often joined in the hunts and reported on one such occasion:

In October 1879, I left Fort Keogh, Montana, with a party of eight officers, twelve soldiers, and five Indians, for a hunt along the valley of the

⁴¹⁶Ibid.

⁴¹⁷Don Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), p. 119.

⁴¹⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 22, 1878.

⁴¹⁹Ibid., October 1878.

⁴²⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Report to A.G.D.D., September 1, 1883.

⁴²¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Letter from Lieutenant Hunter Liggett, August 22, 1885.

⁴²²*Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter*, 19 June 1886.

⁴²³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 9, 1882.

Rosebud. We were gone six days and had great success. During that time we killed sixty large deer, three antelopes, one mountain sheep, five elks, seventeen buffaloes, seventy prairie chickens and six ducks . . . and on our return to the post we had ten six-mule wagons heavily loaded with the trophies of our rifles. There was a feast for the whole garrison of four hundred men.⁴²⁴

In later years hunting became a matter of official policy as detachments from all companies were sent on protracted hunts.⁴²⁵ Captain A. C. Girard, the Post surgeon, had no troops for this purpose and thus had to request that a party be sent out to shoot meat for the hospital.⁴²⁶

Oftentimes the Army would purchase domestic livestock and herd it to where it would be used and then slaughter it. Other times to save the troops, dressed beef would be ordered, but this had its drawbacks. In late summer of 1882, Colonel Whistler felt that the dirty slaughterhouse of William H. Guthire was endangering the health of his troops. The Adjutant sent a forceful letter to the contractor and in his reply Guthire stated that he was working fast and hard to clean his slaughterhouse, but did not believe that Whistler wanted the harsh tone used in the letter he received. Guthire added that that he was the Adjutant's equal and did not want to be treated like a dog just because he had a good contract.

Despite the problems of quality control, the Army continued to contract for the majority of its meat in this manner.⁴²⁷ In April 1884 a contract was signed to supply 200,000 pounds of beef to the Post for the period starting July 1, 1884, and ending June 30, 1885.⁴²⁸ The price for the beef for most of this period was about \$6.00 per 100 pounds.⁴²⁹ This rose only a few dollars during the last few years of the Post to about \$8.00 per 100 pounds.⁴³⁰ When local contracts were not used, even greater problems had to be faced by Fort Keogh in sustaining itself. An example of the problems associated with ordering rations through Higher Headquarters happened in 1883. The Post ordered bacon and for some unknown reason received 26,600 pounds of salt pork, a disappointment to the troops.⁴³¹

In addition, commodities that could be raised in the local area, foodstuffs and supplies were shipped into Fort Keogh from more distant areas. The soldiers had a wide selection of food to choose from although not all shipments arrived. Before the Cantonment was even finished, the troops were ordering such things as sardines, allspice, cinnamon, condensed milk, raisins, granulated eggs, vanilla extract, prunes and staples such as beans, meat and potatoes.⁴³² A few years later they were receiving vinegar, linseed oil, rice, cheese, and, of course, the ever present beans. The soldiers

⁴²⁴Mark H. Brown and W. R. Fulton, The Frontier Years (New York: Bramhall House, 1955), p. 81.

⁴²⁵Miles City Daily Press (Montana) 18 November 1882.

⁴²⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 5, 1882.

⁴²⁷Ibid., August 11, 1882.

⁴²⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 12 April 1884.

⁴²⁹Ibid., 25 April 1891.

⁴³⁰The Miles City Independent, 1 June 1905

⁴³¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 14, 1883.

⁴³²Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 95.

consumed so many beans that jokes started among the troops. The local press picked up on one of them when it reported in 1879:

Twenty thousand pounds of beans were shipped to Gen'l Miles' command. There evidently has been a scheme on foot to blow up the troops if the Indians should not annihilate them!⁴³³

If the soldiers wanted variety above what the commissary department offered, they could purchase such things as canned shrimps, mushrooms and codfish balls from the Post trader or go to Miles City and purchase items on the open market. The prices in Miles City were high, for example, fifty cents per pound for butter and seventy-five cents per dozen for eggs.⁴³⁴

Shipping foodstuffs was always a problem because of spoilage. Boards of survey were formed at Fort Keogh to look into a wide range of items, from bad flour to spoiled cheese.⁴³⁵ As a supply point, Fort Keogh had to store large amounts of commodities. For this purpose, the Post had two main storehouses, with cellars having one-foot thick walls, ceilings and floors made of wood and protection against rot. Bacon was kept in the cool cellar of one and canned goods, pickles and the like were kept in the other. In the upper floors, flour, hard bread, sugar and salt were kept; bars to insure against burglars secured all.⁴³⁶ From these storehouses Fort Keogh would supply Fort Ellis with 2,000 pounds of flour, and Fort Maginnis with 3,000 pounds of sugar during 1883 and 1884.⁴³⁷ What was not shipped to other posts was consumed at Keogh or sold to make way for fresh commodities.

In the area of durable supplies, the Post also acted as both a supply depot and as a consuming unit. On occasion the supply channels would be closed and items would not be shipped. Several important items that did not show up on time in 1880 were coal, oil and soap. The soldiers washed less and burned more candles.⁴³⁸

As winters came to Fort Keogh, a large stock of fuel was needed to warm the Post during those cold periods. Coal was purchased by contract locally and at first was delivered in large consignments. When it was not used up rapidly, it began slacking and cost the government dearly. This slacking led to a new policy in which the Quartermaster was to have the coal delivered monthly.⁴³⁹ During times that the government did not have the funds to purchase coal, troops at Fort Keogh had to cut their own fuel, using wood from the "pinery". When woodcutting was the order of the day, all hands participated, officer as well as enlisted man. In May of 1883, an officer at Fort Keogh gave an account of four captains and four lieutenants leading their men in swinging the ax. Five companies of the Fifth Infantry were involved in cutting fuel on May 10, 1883 and this Fort Keogh officer made the point that cutting fuel would cost the

⁴³³Yellowstone Journal, 31 July 1879.

⁴³⁴Ibid., 20 March 1880.

⁴³⁵Ft. Keogh Official Papers (Montana Historical Society, microfilm collection #90A).

⁴³⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 8, 1881.

⁴³⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, September 1883, and June 1884.

⁴³⁸Yellowstone Journal, 6 March 1880.

⁴³⁹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 26, 1882.

government much more than if it had contracted for the fuel. He pointed out that many soldiers became absent without leave, resulting in more desertions than the worst campaigning.⁴⁴⁰ It was not clear if the morale factor was even considered when the troops were ordered out for such fatigue duty.

Ice cutting was another of the Post's major "fatigue" duties. Ice could have been contracted for, but most often the troops were sent out to cut and haul it themselves. In September 1878, Lieutenant Rice had to request five additional cutting bars so he could occupy more men in the process of cutting ice.⁴⁴¹ Every year about 500 tons of ice was hauled to the Fort. This work kept one company busy each season, and unlike the fuel cutting, few complained about this duty because, as the Yellowstone Journal observed, "it is a departure from the daily routine like 'cooks' police orderly room and guard duty."⁴⁴²

Most of the other consumable items, and much of the equipment at Fort Keogh was contracted for. An early contractor at Fort Keogh was W. H. Bullard, who took part in the campaigns against the Cheyenne with Colonel Miles and later built and ran the sawmill in the pine hills. With Captain C. S. Heintzelman (Quartermaster), Bullard furnished most of the lumber that built Fort Keogh.

In sustaining the Post, many contracts were let and most such as the one signed with Bullard were successful. Some agreements, for the most part dealing with perishable items did not have a happy ending. In 1881 hay had to be purchased on the open market as the contractor failed to deliver.⁴⁴³ In 1882 Broadwater, Hubbell & Co., delivering on a contract for four hundred tons of hay, passed off on the Army ". . . worthless, rotten, mouldy swamp hay . . ." according to an inspector from the Department.⁴⁴⁴ Five years later rocks were loaded in with the hay in an effort to increase the weight. The Army had to post guards, with soldiers doing the work of unloading in order that rocks would not be passed as hay.⁴⁴⁵ Prices for contract hay started high in 1876, \$100 a ton, and dropped the following year to between \$15 and \$30 a ton. In 1878 it sold for a high of \$28.50 a ton and dipped to \$10.00 a ton in 1879. A shortage of hay in 1880 brought the cost up a little but prices leveled off during the following years. This was the general pattern followed for most commodities.⁴⁴⁶

Oats, during 1876 and 1877 were shipped up river from the states and had to be inspected as closely as was the hay, in order to keep the contractor from charging for rocks and dirt.⁴⁴⁷ After the first few seasons, grain was found to grow well in the Yellowstone valley and contractors from the local area started to supply Keogh. This local supply system worked satisfactorily for the most part, but a problem was encountered in that the lowest bids were made on some occasions by people unable to

⁴⁴⁰Miles City Daily Press, 1 June 1883.

⁴⁴¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 2, 1878.

⁴⁴²Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 10 January 1885.

⁴⁴³Yellowstone Journal, 23 July 1881.

⁴⁴⁴Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 26, 1882.

⁴⁴⁵Malley Rocky Mountain Husbandman (Great Falls Montana), 23 September 1887.

⁴⁴⁶Yellowstone Journal, 7 August 1880.

⁴⁴⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 9, 1877.

deliver. In 1881 a grain contractor was to ship grain from the Musselshell River to Fort Keogh. He failed in this effort and blamed the Assinaboine whom he claimed had burned the grain. Because of the man's troubled background, this story was not believed. In the end the government paid a much higher price for the grain.⁴⁴⁸

Horses for use at Fort Keogh were purchased outside of Montana for most of the time of Fort Keogh's existence. The locals resented this, but the horse industry in Montana could not have supplied horses in the early years and Indian ponies were easy to get. The Army also did not need that many until the decade of the 80s.⁴⁴⁹ The horse population at Fort Keogh was high considering that it was basically an infantry post. In 1880, 250 tons of oats was purchased. In 1882, 340 tons, and in 1884, 250 tons. With the outbreak of Sioux trouble in 1889, and the assignment of the Eighth Cavalry to Fort Keogh, the demand increased. Their presence meant that five hundred tons of oats were needed immediately, and the price was steady at \$1.30 per one hundred pounds. The following two years the price rose to nearly two dollars per one hundred pounds as the demand continued.⁴⁵⁰

Mules for the most part outnumbered the horses and were all kept busy, so the bulk of the oats rations went to the mules. While the Post was being built, Army livestock could be seen running free around the area when not hitched to wagons or under packs. This practice was stopped when families arrived and with them more civilization.⁴⁵¹

Colonel Miles added to the Army inventory of horses late in 1879. Using captured Indian ponies, he decided to mount the Fifth Infantry. These Indian ponies had not been grain-fed like the Army mules and horses, and thus they were not as heavy as the fine Army mounts, but with Army care the former Indian ponies were able to do the job. As with most things at Fort Keogh, Colonel Miles had the final say, and he assigned the ponies to the various companies based on size and color of mounts so that his troops would look their best.⁴⁵² John Kirley was the Veterinarian at Fort Keogh in 1881. Under Kirley's charge were five hundred head of horses and mules. Kirley had a loss of only about one-percent a year. Sickness was the major cause for the loss of the horses and mules.⁴⁵³ Most of the Infantry soldiers that were mounted knew little about horses and thus the needs of the horses were not always properly tended. This problem was never addressed well, but the Infantry was dismounted and thus the horses were sold. Keogh became more of a cavalry installation during the decade of the nineties with several hundred horses taxing the resources of the Post, but with the Spanish American war overseas, the Army started to shift livestock to meet its overall needs.⁴⁵⁴

Equipment was vital to the success that Fort Keogh soldiers enjoyed on the field of battle. The equipment at the Post came from various sources and when it was not

⁴⁴⁸Yellowstone Journal, 26 March 1881.

⁴⁴⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 23 January 1886.

⁴⁵⁰Yellowstone Journal, 14 February 1880; The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 20 May 1882; Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 31 May 1884, 13 April 1889.

⁴⁵¹Ibid.,

⁴⁵²Yellowstone Journal, 7 November 1879

⁴⁵³Ibid., 8 October 1881.

⁴⁵⁴Returns from U.S. Military Posts, November 1897.

supplied, the soldiers found ways of making it or making do without it. During the earlier years much equipment was made of various raw materials that could be found around the Post. In 1876 Miles wanted to move against the Indians and when his superiors did not give him full support, he equipped his men as best he could. Cold weather garb was a case in point. In a circular, commanders were told to ensure that their men had "Buffalo and Artic Overshoes attainable from the Q. M. (Quartermaster) Department." Leggings were to be fabricated by the men. If thread was not available, the soldiers were told to use suets of beef (after it was preserved), as thread and make wooden needles in the absence of steel ones.⁴⁵⁵ By the following year cold weather garb was being shipped to Fort Keogh from Philadelphia and Jeffersonville depots.⁴⁵⁶ Each soldier had a buffalo coat, but this was not enough to keep a trooper warm. On some occasions the soldiers decided to sell the coats rather than keep warm. After a soldier was found guilty of this practice, as many were, he spent time in Company Q (guardhouse) and had money deducted from his pay until \$12.95 was received.⁴⁵⁷ Oftentimes the soldiers would go around the grounds during cold weather without coats. Dr. Girard, the Post surgeon, made an effort to insure that the soldiers dressed warmly.⁴⁵⁸ For the most part the soldiers had all the clothes needed for the warmer seasons, but an inspection in July 1883 concluded that the supply table should be altered to allow such cold weather items as thick stockings, gloves and blankets for troops in the area of Fort Keogh.⁴⁵⁹

In September 1878, Private Henry Base died of consumption. An inventory of his belongings revealed how few clothes soldiers had. It listed two forage caps, one great coat, one blouse, one stable frock, three pairs of trousers, two flannel shirts, one pair of boots, two pair of socks, one overcoat cape and two vests.⁴⁶⁰ As with the laundry, the soldier was often charged too much for altering clothing because the Army policy of price fixing was not always followed at Fort Keogh. Much like the modern Army, different uniform styles and construction were phased in. An observer walking the parade ground at Fort Keogh in the years around 1884 would have seen uniforms of various texture and color shades.⁴⁶¹ One way in which a unit could correct this problem was to go on an extended campaign. In 1890 a few companies of the Twentieth Infantry, involved in the Sioux Campaign, had to draw a new issue of clothing because of the demands that the duty put on their clothes.⁴⁶²

Clothing was not the only supply item that was phased into the Army inventory at Fort Keogh. Leggings were phased in before 1888 for field duty but one would probably not have seen all troops with the brown cotton duck leggings in the field until much later.⁴⁶³ When spring beds were first introduced at Fort Keogh, only part of the garrison

⁴⁵⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 15, 1876.

⁴⁵⁶Ibid., Undated.

⁴⁵⁷Ibid., August 12, 1886.

⁴⁵⁸Ibid., January 30, 1884.

⁴⁵⁹Ibid., July 14, 1878.

⁴⁶⁰Ibid., September 14, 1878.

⁴⁶¹Ibid., October 26, 1884.

⁴⁶²Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, p. 268.

⁴⁶³Philip R. N. Katcher, *The American Indian Wars 1860-1890* (New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1977), p. 34.

received them. The troops without the new beds had to continue to use the old bunk slats for some time.⁴⁶⁴

Various Army weapons were used at Fort Keogh during the life of more than thirty years. Every soldier had some contact with a rifle, and of necessity this piece of equipment played a large role in the daily life at the Post. The primary rifle in use at Fort Keogh from its beginning until 1893 was the Springfield. Standard length this weapon was 41.313 inches for those built between 1873 and 1888. Barrel length was 21.875 inches. A walnut stock was used and the gross rifle's weight was about seven pounds. Empty casings would often stick in the chamber after firing, but the rifle was accurate at up to 900 yards. The soldiers at Fort Keogh during hard times reloaded used cartridges, as was done at other posts in an effort to save money.⁴⁶⁵ The Springfield was discontinued in 1893 and replaced with the bolt-action Krag-Springfield .30/40 rifle.⁴⁶⁶ If a soldier lost the Springfield model in 1877, he had to pay \$16.25, and this rose as different models were introduced.⁴⁶⁷

While the troops were campaigning, very little rifle practice was required. In March 1885 about 2,000 rounds were fired in practice. The following month about 9,000 rounds were fired and about 2,000 per month for the months that followed. In 1890 Company H, Twenty-second Infantry fired 15,000 rounds during their practice season. This reflected the Army's ever increasing interest in target practice.⁴⁶⁸ The companies were rotated to the range about one per month and the results were reported to the commander.⁴⁶⁹

All this practice was made a bit easier by the fact that Fort Keogh was also an ordnance depot.⁴⁷⁰ Very little money was spent on facilities to house the ordnance, but the ordnance officers who ran the operation carried on with the mission. One major job of the ordnance officer and his troops was to issue weapons and ammunition to the troops for practice and campaigns. The ordnance personnel also issued such items as carbine slings, canteens, meat cans, and tin cups. For rifle practice ordnance issued priming tools, iron targets and various parts of weapons such as springs.⁴⁷¹ The ordnance depot at Fort Keogh was also responsible for issuing all types of war material from harnesses for the mules and saddles for the horses to curry combs or brushes for both.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 14 March 1885.

⁴⁶⁵Kenneth M. Hammer, The Springfield Carbine on the Western Frontier (Bellevue, Nebraska: The Old -Timy Press, 1970), pp. 7, 10, 11, 12.

⁴⁶⁶Robert A. Murray, The Army Moves West (Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1981), p. 86.

⁴⁶⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 15, 1877.

⁴⁶⁸Ibid., February 17, 1890.

⁴⁶⁹Returns from U.S. Military Posts, 1885.

⁴⁷⁰Ibid., May 1877.

⁴⁷¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 23, 1889.

⁴⁷²Ibid., November 11, 1890.

CHAPTER VII ON DUTY: COMMANDERS AND MILITARY LIFE

Commanders

Commanders of the various units and of Fort Keogh not only had an enormous impact on the installation, but on the vast area surrounding the Post as well. One example, of the influence of a commander in the early years of the Post was the local civilians naming their town in honor of Colonel Nelson A. Miles, the first commander of Fort Keogh. The changing Fort reflected the personalities and attitudes of the men that commanded it.

Colonel Miles was not only a starter but he was a sustainer type person as well. His two strong areas were his skill at moving supplies where they were needed and his appetite for knowledge not only of what was happening in his immediate area but in far flung areas of military concern as well.

He would not read a novel; he lacked the imagination to enjoy fiction, but his interest in anything that concerned his profession was insatiable. He had a great respect for history and historians.⁴⁷³

Family life was something that Colonel Miles enjoyed a great deal, but he was oftentimes pulled from it by his duties. Miles was married to Mary Elizabeth Sherman, a niece of General William Tecumseh Sherman, and had a daughter named Cecelia. The Colonel would often go over the heads of his superior officers when he felt he was not getting the help that he needed from General Alfred Terry. In spite of his use of the relationship with Mary, it is evident by the support that she gave him that their marriage was founded on love and respect. Miles was known as a gentleman and never was known to treat any woman discourteously. In late 1876 while he was engaged against Chief Crazy Horse, Indian women were captured, and, with the same courtesy he showed to White women, he ordered that they be fed and that a private tent be set up for them.⁴⁷⁴

Miles would have been known by today's terminology as a "workaholic." While campaigning, he would spend hours into the night studying maps long after the other officers had gone to sleep.⁴⁷⁵ If the Indians did not present themselves to Miles for surrender, as many did, Miles was a man who wanted to go to them and by force if necessary, personally asking for their surrender. Miles received little support in his efforts to pursue the Indians. Colonel Miles would not accept much garrison life when any part of his district had hostile forces in it. Trips to Washington were often made by Miles in an attempt to convince the authorities back East of his point of view. The War Department requested some of his trips to the nation's capital, but others were used for

⁴⁷³Virginia Johnson, *The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles* (Boston, 1962), p. 183.

⁴⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴⁷⁵Luther S. Kelly, "*Yellowstone Kelly*," *Memoirs of Luther S. Kelly*, ed. Milo M. Quaife (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), p. 157.

hard lobbying for more aggressive campaigns in his District and for supplies to undertake them. On numerous occasions he received the go-ahead.⁴⁷⁶

Although Miles was aggressive against the hostile forces, and although he had a reputation of being an Indian fighter, he treated captured Indians well. On August 13, 1880, an article appeared in the Black Hills News, which reported that Miles did not like to be called an Indian fighter. The newspaper pointed out that the Colonel was more of a Quartermaster and to support this idea, cited his handling of the Chief Joseph battle.⁴⁷⁷ Given the respect that Miles had for history, it is clear that he did not want to make the same mistake that General Crook had made on his hunger march of 1876.

Soldiers, civilians and Indians all respected Colonel Miles, and his attributes such as aggressiveness, fairness, and understanding of logistics made this understandable. He returned the affection shown by the people of the Yellowstone valley to Miles through his involvement in the area long after he left. He had left his mark on the area, but the area had also left its mark on him. Two years after he had left Fort Keogh and Miles City, he sent the local Baptist Church one hundred dollars to help clear their church debt.⁴⁷⁸ About three years after his departure, while in route to his command at the Department of the Pacific, he stopped by and was well received by the officers and civilians. In comments made by the General upon his departure he stated that he always felt "he was at home at Fort Keogh."⁴⁷⁹ Miles made several other trips back to Fort Keogh and was never forgotten there.

The second in command to Colonel Miles during the first few years of Fort Keogh was Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Whistler. Yellowstone Kelly described Whistler as a handsome man with black curly hair.⁴⁸⁰ Oftentimes he was compared with Miles, a comparison in which Whistler came out the loser. The local press in July of 1880 wrote an editorial attacking Whistler for failing to find and punish the hostile forces that were thought to have killed a mail carrier on the Fort Keogh-Bismarck mail line. An officer from the Post defended Whistler in this matter, and the local press later felt Whistler could replace Miles.⁴⁸¹

With the death of General George P. Buell, Whistler was promoted to Colonel and transferred to the Fifteenth Infantry at Fort Buford, North Dakota. Colonel John D. Wilkins was given command of the Fifth Infantry at Fort Keogh. The officers of the Post presented Whistler upon his departure, a pair of shoulder knots and a sword belt. Colonel Whistler had served for nearly seven years at the Post since starting in 1876.⁴⁸²

Colonel John D. Wilkins had taken command of the Post during November of 1882. The officers headed by Whistler gave a large reception, when Whistler relinquished command. A ball in the Post hop room (dance hall) followed the reception given for

⁴⁷⁶Yellowstone Journal, 22, 29 May 1880

⁴⁷⁷Ibid., 4 September 1880.

⁴⁷⁸Miles City Daily Press (Montana), 2 January 1883.

⁴⁷⁹The Weekly Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), 10 -November 1883.

⁴⁸⁰Kelly, "Yellowstone Kelly," p. 13.

⁴⁸¹Yellowstone Journal, 31 July 1880, 20 November 1880.

⁴⁸²Miles City Daily Press, 25 July 1883, 2 June 1883.

Wilkins.⁴⁸³ A few days later, Wilkins moved into General Miles' old quarters and this caused several other officers to move as the ranking officers selected the quarters which, they wanted.⁴⁸⁴

"Aging and friendly" described Colonel Wilkins at the time he became the commander of Fort Keogh. When in town he would spend time shaking the hands of his old friends as well as conducting his business.⁴⁸⁵ In 1886 Wilkins went on the retired list. The Colonel had been in the Mexican War as a brevet Second Lieutenant and took part in many of the battles. He had kept a diary and it was full of sketches and details. Looking back from his final days in the Army, it was his first days that meant a great deal to him.⁴⁸⁶ Wilkins' retirement left Lieutenant Colonel M. E. Cochran in command of Fort Keogh.⁴⁸⁷

Cochran was commander of Fort Keogh for less than a year. His command of the Post ended when Colonel George Gibson arrived to take charge in August 1886. Even after Gibson arrived, Cochran still had plenty of command time, as Gibson would often leave on extended trips to the East. Cochran had done much for Fort Keogh even before his short period as commander. The parade grounds were beautified with shade trees surrounding them and the water supply was improved shortly after Cochran arrived. On September 9, 1887, he left Fort Keogh for Fort Totten North Dakota where he was put in command of the several units at that Post.⁴⁸⁸

Colonel Gibson, who had replaced Lieutenant Colonel Cochran as permanent commander, had been temporary commander of Fort Keogh as far back as October 1877 when Colonel Miles had gone east.⁴⁸⁹ A year or so after this Colonel Gibson was promoted and sent to the Third Infantry and later promoted and returned to the Fifth Infantry and Fort Keogh.⁴⁹⁰ As commanding officer of the Fifth Infantry Colonel Gibson was well liked by both the soldiers and officers.⁴⁹¹ This was the case in spite of the fact that he enforced strict rules on the soldiers' behavior in town. The town was pleased by actions taken by Gibson as the local press put it:

As an evidence of the improvement of the government in the garrison at Fort Keogh under Colonel Gibson it may be noted that but one soldier was arrested in Miles City during the few days that have elapsed since payday. The payday previous to this was productive of as good results. In times past the next day after the troops had been paid and on through the week saw from six to eight and ten before the justices for numerous misdemeanors. The present improvement is an agreeable change, also a

⁴⁸³Ibid., 10 November 1882

⁴⁸⁴The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 18 November 1882.

⁴⁸⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 12 April 1884.

⁴⁸⁶Ibid., 8 May 1886.

⁴⁸⁷Ibid., 7 August 1886.

⁴⁸⁸Ibid., 10 September 1887.

⁴⁸⁹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Letter from Gibson to DD, October 30, 1877.

⁴⁹⁰Yellowstone Journal, 29 August 1879.

⁴⁹¹Rev. E. W. I. Lindesmith Diaries (Montana Historical Society: Microfilm Collection #301, vol. 5, January 1, 1887), p. 122.

saving of many dollars to the city and county, as the soldier is always "broke" when he gets into trouble.⁴⁹²

Not long after this payday the Fifth Infantry was transferred to Texas and the Twenty-second Infantry replaced it. Colonel Peter T. Swaine was the last of the significant commanders at Fort Keogh. Colonel Swaine brought the Twenty-second Infantry, his regiment, from Colorado to Fort Keogh in 1888 and was well received by the townspeople. Due to Swaine's sickness, caused in part by his advanced age, temporary commanders often led Fort Keogh, but the Colonel still had a considerable impact on the Post. It was in large part his efforts that stopped Coxe's Army on its march to Washington after it had taken over a train.⁴⁹³ Colonel Swaine commanded the Post during the buildup in preparation for the campaign against the Sioux uprising of late 1890. The command of the Department of Dakota was sometimes entrusted to Colonel Swaine as the ranking colonel.⁴⁹⁴

Colonel Swaine retired from the service while at Fort Keogh. He had a full-grown family with a daughter (who had a close relationship with Lieutenant Edward Wanton Casey of Indian troop fame), and a son who was a young officer in the Twenty-second Infantry as well. When age caught up with Colonel Swaine in 1894, he was put on the retired list and other less colorful men took over.⁴⁹⁵

Desertions

Owing largely to the mature leadership that was given at Fort Keogh, discipline problems did not become the problem that they were at some frontier posts, but to be sure, Keogh had some difficulties. The reasons included fatigue duties, mistreatment, greater civilian opportunity and drunkenness. Most desertions were by new enlistees who found that the life of a soldier was not to their liking.

Early in 1877, while Colonel Miles was still hot on the trail of the hostile Indians, some soldiers saw the arduous campaigns ahead and found it easy to desert as they were well equipped to travel.⁴⁹⁶ The difficulty of travel, however, kept down desertions among some soldiers who might have gone and who later did desert after travel improved. In the first five years of the Post, travel was such that often people thought to be absent without leave were in fact merely delayed by impassable conditions. Two prime examples of this were the cases of Major Ilges and Major Eugene M. Baker.⁴⁹⁷

Fort Keogh had some abuses of authority. Sometimes they were minor, such as name calling, but other times they involved beatings. In 1893, beating was charged against Lieutenant Tillson, the officer of the day, on Private Patrick Maloney, a sentry who was under the Lieutenant's direction.⁴⁹⁸ Often the non-commissioned officers could get

⁴⁹²Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 28 January 1888.

⁴⁹³Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 120.

⁴⁹⁴Stock Growers Journal (Miles City, Montana) 10 February 1894.

⁴⁹⁵Ibid., 13 October 1894.

⁴⁹⁶Don Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973),

⁴⁹⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1880, November 1880.

⁴⁹⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 4, 1883.

away with a great deal of such abuse at Fort Keogh. An inspection of the Post found in January 1882 that Circular #1, which stated that a soldier did not have to go through the first Sergeant to see the commander, was not being followed.⁴⁹⁹ On a rare occasion, the commanders were no more understanding of the soldier's problem than were the Sergeants. In 1890 Corporal John Bergstrom described his commander as "overbearing and. . .Very unpopular." Bergstrom contrasted his commander with Lieutenant E. W. Casey who had a reputation as a popular commander, one who would associate freely with his men while on campaign, and who was greatly missed when he fell at the hands of a Sioux Indian.⁵⁰⁰

Drinking whiskey was a prominent reason for desertion at Fort Keogh. Lieutenant Wallace of the Seventh Cavalry found this to be the case in March 1880, when two soldiers he was sent to recover gave no resistance. Drunkenness meant that the sentence would be much lighter than if the desertion was planned.⁵⁰¹ Another case where drinking was felt to be the cause, was Private Jim Busch and a soldier called Quinn. After being absent for many days, they were seen around Miles City. Jim Busch even had parents and family at Fort Keogh.⁵⁰² Colonel Swaine in reporting his views on the rash of desertions that hit Fort Keogh in the summer of 1890, stated that he felt the major problems were drunkenness, gambling, prostitution and a desire by some enlistees to get no more than free rides West out of their enlistment.⁵⁰³

The company commanders cited a few sample cases of desertion. Private Edward Murray of Captain Thorne's Company C, Twenty-second Infantry, had a drinking problem that led to his reduction in rank and subsequent indebtedness to other soldiers. Murray escaped. Private Edwin Berry of the same company was said to have been a tramp before he entered and wished to continue in that life style. Berry used a great deal of vulgar and obscene language and was not missed by his fellow soldiers.⁵⁰⁴

Captains Hooton and S. W. Fountain did not attempt, much understanding of the men which deserted from their companies. Hooton wrote of two deserters; both were "... worthless, drunkards and the kind of recruits that might be expected from a great city."⁵⁰⁵ Fountain described deserter Martin Kristensen as a "... lazy worthless man." Fountain went on to say that he had never been anywhere that an enlisted man could serve with less reason for complaint than at Fort Keogh.⁵⁰⁶

An example of a soldier who merely wanted a ride West was Private Henry Jensen, who deserted on May 19, 1890. Jensen was said to be a good man who enlisted from Minneapolis, Minnesota, on December 31, 1889. He had friends in the Northwest and had written to people in Washington and Oregon. Private Jensen's desertion surprised all that knew him.⁵⁰⁷

⁴⁹⁹Ibid., January 9, 1882.

⁵⁰⁰Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, p. 68.

⁵⁰¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, March 18, 1880.

⁵⁰²*Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter*, 24 September 1887.

⁵⁰³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 21, 1890.

⁵⁰⁴Ibid., June 28, 1890.

⁵⁰⁵Ibid., July 3, 1890.

⁵⁰⁶Ibid., June 29, 1890.

⁵⁰⁷Ibid., June 27, 1890.

Other soldiers felt that there were much greater opportunities in the civilian sector. One such soldier, a telegraph operator, deserted and was found near Fort Ellis working in this capacity.⁵⁰⁸ Private Conley A. Judson, while on guard duty at the Yellowstone Park, wanted to get home to the friends he had made at Miles City and so deserted back to the post he was sent from (Fort Keogh). For this action he was sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, loss of all pay and confinement for a year. This ruling was overruled and Private Judson returned to duty.⁵⁰⁹

Payday was the time of the largest number of desertions. In 1880 thirty deserters (only part of those who were absent without leave), ended up in the guardhouse. In 1892, following another payday, seventeen soldiers left and sometime later it was reported that only about half had been caught.⁵¹⁰ When soldiers could not get civilian help or did not feel that payday netted enough money, they were not always with financial means.

One soldier plotted deserting on the money he planned to win in foot racing. "The man was a noted sprinter, who deliberately 'threw' a race in order to get heavier betting odds on his next contest." As the deserter put it, "I am going to walk away with the race and then walk away." Corporal John Bergstrom, with whom the secret was shared, reported that the soldier was successful.⁵¹¹

Most soldiers, even many deserters, were honest men with a desire to get away from military discipline and to the opportunities that the civilian world offered, but this was not always the case. A man named Maxwell owned a mail run from Fort Keogh to Deadwood. He was out checking his line and paying his help when he met a man who, after some time, admitted that he was a deserter from Fort Keogh who was getting horses. The deserter stated that his special object was to "light upon" the mail contractor Maxwell who had large sums of money. Maxwell listened to the plan for his own murder. When they reached the next station, Maxwell got the drop on the man who was defiant and made moves that forced Maxwell to shoot. The deserter died on the spot. This soldier was one of a few violent criminals but one of many deserters.⁵¹² The rate of desertions had dropped slightly in the later years. In 1882 and 1883 an average six infantrymen and two cavalrymen deserted each month. This meant that about two companies of men deserted during these peak years from a post that had only about ten companies.⁵¹³

The Army paid thirty dollars for deserters and military convicts. One deserter who was returned for justice as a result of this reward was Sergeant Joseph Giovanini who left the Fifth Infantry band without authority and ended up in Portland, Oregon.⁵¹⁴ In the Fort Keogh area itself a few men made a fair living from the bounty. Corporal John

⁵⁰⁸Ibid., December 2, 1883.

⁵⁰⁹Returns from U.S. Military Posts, June 1905.

⁵¹⁰Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, p. 149.

⁵¹¹*New York Times*, 4 April 1880.

⁵¹²*The Weekly Yellowstone Journal*, 2 April 1892.

⁵¹³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, September 1, 1883.

⁵¹⁴Ibid., August 24, 1882.

Bergstrom had an encounter with a bounty hunter soon after he was discharged from the Army. Bergstrom was still wearing his Army hat, shirt, and trousers while working on the railroads. When the bounty hunter tried to take him in, Bergstrom had to fight because the hunter would not believe his discharge papers.⁵¹⁵

Those deserters who were returned faced a hard time in the guardhouse and then, if convicted, time in the Federal prison. Escapes from the guardhouse at Fort Keogh were not unheard of and attempted escapes were common, as the soldiers knew what faced them. While Lieutenant Forbes was officer in charge of the guardhouse, three prisoners decided to escape by cutting a hole in the floor. Forbes had placed a guard in the room below and the guard captured them there. After capture the men were handcuffed and put in separate cells. When the officer of the day, Captain Carter, was informed of this escape attempt, he ordered that the prisoners be put on bread and water diets and not given blankets. It was not clear how long this was allowed to continue.⁵¹⁶ A few months before this incident, the Post surgeon, Dr. Girard, requested prisoners who had not attempted to escape should not be shackled and water should be made available for washing and drinking when the prisoners desired.⁵¹⁷ The average prisoner at Fort Keogh was in the guardhouse only a few months before a court-martial directed he be set free or sent to the Federal prison. Few provisions were made for non-judicial punishment, so all prisoners faced a court-martial.

Courts and Boards

Courts-martial were all too common at all levels in the Army during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. At Fort Keogh they were lower than at the average post, but Keogh had its share. The Yellowstone Journal felt that either Army discipline was severe or the Army was not careful regarding whom it recruited.⁵¹⁸ Evidence shows that the Army could not be very careful in the selection process as applications were low and it was hard to check on a person's background.

When the number of prisoners warranted it, a general court-martial was ordered convened, often with a Lieutenant as judge advocate. Whenever deserters were caught in large numbers, a court was convened soon after. In the case of John Dufrey, the trial came one month after he was caught, which was typical.⁵¹⁹

The vast majority of court-martials were for infractions of military law, but murder on occasion was the offense. A soldier named Baker was tried for the murder of Sergeant McDonald in 1893, but Fort Keogh's problem was rarely of this magnitude.⁵²⁰ Aside from murder trials, the trials of officers for various forms of misconduct were the most noteworthy according to the Army and the local press. The majority of the officers facing court-martials, such as Lieutenant Rousseau, were guilty of excessive drinking. During the winter campaign of 1876-1877, Rousseau returned to the cantonment and

⁵¹⁵Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay, p. 152.

⁵¹⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, March 12, 1880.

⁵¹⁷Ibid., December 13, 1879.

⁵¹⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 15 November 1884.

⁵¹⁹Ibid., 26 June 1886.

⁵²⁰Stock Growers Journal, 29 April 1893.

was found drunk after he had earlier promised not to drink. Colonel Miles handled this at General Terry's order. Rousseau was arrested during 1877, and again in 1879, for the same kind of offense.⁵²¹

Captain James S. Casey was another problem drinker while on duty. In 1878 he was found guilty of drunkenness on duty, but because of his war record, the President returned him to duty.⁵²² Captain J. T. Peale and Lieutenant C. T. Hall both had similar problems as did Casey and spent time in and out of the guardhouse. These officers just were returned to duty, which was not the case with Captain Thomas Garvey of the First Cavalry. His court-martial started at Fort Keogh on November 7, 1887 but was postponed until December 6. Lieutenant Tillson was Garvey's council and he was found guilty, but unlike the other cases, the President upheld the verdict against Captain Garvey and he was relieved of duty.⁵²³

The charges against Lieutenant C. E. Hargous and Lieutenant Colonel Ilges were much more serious than drunkenness. These officers were accused of duplicating pay accounts. Ilges had been found guilty of other irregularities and was given light sentences.⁵²⁴ When he left Fort Keogh in July 1883 for his trial, it was the last time he saw the Post as an officer because the President upheld his dismissal. The famed Indian fighter settled in Cincinnati and devoted himself to writing stories about the West he knew.⁵²⁵ C. E. Hargous was acquitted of the charges against him and was restored to duty.⁵²⁶

Late in 1884 several junior officers began having problems with Lieutenant Colonel Cochran. In August 1884 Lieutenant Henry Romeyn asked the Department commander to look into obscene language used and the unjust treatment given by the Colonel to Romeyn in July.⁵²⁷ A few weeks later, on August 20, 1884, a statement was signed giving details of an exchange between Lieutenant Tillson and Lieutenant Colonel Cochran that occurred on July 31, 1884. The statements agreed that Cochran gave an order to Tillson to line up his company. This process did not go as fast as Cochran wanted so he repeated the order by putting his finger in Tillson's chest and pushing him back. Tillson responded with something to the effect of "don't push me sir." Cochran then told him to put up his saber and go to his quarters. Lieutenant Miller replaced Tillson at the head of the company.⁵²⁸

Lieutenant Colonel Cochran accused Tillson of putting up his saber while on drill without a command of his superior officer. The court-martial for this offense was started in September 1884 and presided over by Judge Advocate General Blunt at Fort Keogh. The local press commented that it was a trivial matter by regulations, but, like

⁵²¹Returns from U.S. Military Posts, June, July, November 1879; Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, May 22, 1877.

⁵²²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 12, 1878.

⁵²³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 31 March 1888.

⁵²⁴The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 2 June 1883.

⁵²⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 25 August 1888.

⁵²⁶The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 3 November 1883.

⁵²⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 2, 1884.

⁵²⁸*Ibid.*, August 20, 1884.

the Union, must be preserved.⁵²⁹ Lieutenant Avis in defense of Tillson made some unfavorable comments about Cochran to the United States Commissioner and thus was also involved in this conflict on charges of conduct unbecoming an officer. Two Officers, Tillson and Avis were in and out of arrest as the months went by. Over a year after the trial of Lieutenant Tillson began, General Schofield, the Department Commander, postponed it until January 7, 1886.⁵³⁰

Lieutenant Tillson received a light sentence, as did Lieutenant Avis after the President mitigated Avis' sentence of dismissal from the Army and directed that he be suspended from duty one year on half pay.⁵³¹ It was clear from most court-martial results that a case might be brought for small matters but in order for the final verdict to be harsh, the soldier had to do much more than make a few mistakes. Boards were a big part of Army duty and thus were a big time consumer at Fort Keogh. Only a few of the many boards were for court-martials.

Promotion boards, were also regular features around Fort Keogh. A board, which met in October 1878 to consider Sergeant Major A. M. Fuller for promotion to Lieutenant, consisted of Colonel Miles, Colonel Whistler, Major Gibson, Major Baker and Major Gorden.⁵³² Fraudulent enlistment was a major problem at the Post and this ongoing problem was dealt with by forming a board to investigate each matter. Survey of loss of Army material was another matter that called for formation of a board whenever a soldier deserted. In 1878 about forty-five requests were filed for boards of survey resulting from desertions.⁵³³ For the everyday problems of discipline, a board was more trouble than it was worth, so a police magistrate had the duty of dealing with soldiers who were accused of minor infractions, such as missing parade or dodging other routine Army duties.⁵³⁴

⁵²⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 13 September 1884.

⁵³⁰Ibid., 21 November 1885.

⁵³¹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 20 March 1886.

⁵³²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 18, 1878.

⁵³³Ibid., 1878.

⁵³⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 22 November 1890.

CHAPTER VIII TRAINING AND ROUTINE DUTY

Training and Drill

Fort Keogh had all the duties such as musters, drills and parades that any other post of its size had, and under some commanders it had even more. Colonel Miles was fond of drills and formal ceremonies. While in garrison, musters were never to be missed. On muster day the whole command would turn out looking the best they could as an inspection generally followed the ceremonies of review.⁵³⁵ When a soldier missed muster or the daily reveille, he would likely have to face the police magistrate, but if an officer missed reveille, he had to explain in writing why he did not attend. Often the reason was simply that reveille was not heard.⁵³⁶

Aside from the regular daily ceremony the soldiers of the Post were expected to participate in special ceremonies for such occasions as the deaths of Presidents Chester A. Arthur and Rutherford B. Hayes. In honor of each of these men, the flag was lowered to half-mast and at reveille, a salute of fifteen guns was fired, followed by one each half hour until retreat, when the salute of thirty-eight guns was given.⁵³⁷ These ceremonies and the drills that were sandwiched in between took place under Colonel Miles in all kinds of weather. They were "regular and continuous," as Captain Snyder wrote in his diary.⁵³⁸

Later, under a different commander in 1890, bad weather became a condition on which drills and field maneuvers were cancelled.⁵³⁹ This type of fair weather training would never suit Miles, a man who took every special occasion as a pretext for a full dress parade and an hour or so of close order drill. When the first garrison flag was unfurled on April 13, 1877, Miles had another occasion for a parade. A few months later when General William T. Sherman stopped at Fort Keogh, a dress parade and review were given in his honor. Part of this ceremony given over to the presentation of the Congressional Medal of Honor to thirty enlisted men for action in the Sioux conflict then going on.⁵⁴⁰

Several important personalities made visits to Fort Keogh during its life span. Accompanying William T. Sherman on the trip of 1877 was General Alfred Terry, and on his return trip General Crook accompanied him. These visits by high-ranking military men most often meant long social functions in the evening and a day filled with ceremony.

⁵³⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh), Returns from U.S. Military Posts, April 1878.

⁵³⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands, Record Group 393, Various documents, June 16, 1877.

⁵³⁷Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter (Miles City, Montana), 21 November 1 & 21 January 1893.

⁵³⁸Don Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), p. 102.

⁵³⁹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 15, 1890.

⁵⁴⁰Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay, 106.

Carl Schurz, the Secretary of the Interior, visited Fort Keogh in September 1880. The Secretary was on official business regarding all the Indians then at the Post. Schurz was given a rousing welcome but with less than the usual military ceremony. When General Terry returned to Fort Keogh in August 1882, the atmosphere was a little more relaxed at the Post and the evening featured a serenade by the Fifth Infantry band.⁵⁴¹

A presidential visit was much different. When President Ulysses S. Grant passed through Fort Keogh in September 1883, a large chorus of cheers greeted him, led by Lieutenant Malden. With plenty of people trying to get at Grant for a closer look, the conductor did not discriminate well and refused to give Lieutenant Malden any access or information. When threats by Malden were not heeded, he proceeded to take the conductor off to jail. Before the Lieutenant got too far, Grant appeared and as the paper put it, "... by personal expostulation and entreaty induced the Lieutenant to release the conductor and allow the train to proceed on its journey."⁵⁴²

A few months later Governor John Schuyler Crosby of Montana visited the Post without incident, except for the normal cannon salute and receptions.⁵⁴³ The same type of reception was given to Secretary of War, Redfield Proctor, and the various Army division and department commanders who made trips to Fort Keogh during its remaining years.

Duty, extra duty and special duty would often conflict. Duty, that for which the soldiers existed, training for war and fighting, oftentimes was interrupted by extra duty which was needed to keep the Post running.

While musters, reveille and important visitors were a regular part of the soldier's life at Fort Keogh, there were also aspects of the soldier's life that were not so predictable. During the days before the railroads, the soldiers had to insure that the steamboats kept coming. In June 1877, a soldier, Corporal Miller, was sent with fourteen men to the assistance of the Steamer Osceola that had been wrecked below the mouth of Powder River.⁵⁴⁴ A few years later, a ferry had to be rescued by Lieutenant C. T. Hall and his troop of the Second Cavalry.⁵⁴⁵

Since the area about the Post was still wild, the soldier had to do some nonmilitary duties such as seeing to the burial of citizens who died in the country near the Post.⁵⁴⁶ Gardening was another duty that occupied the time of the soldiers as their isolation made it expensive to ship to the Fort all the necessary food stuffs.⁵⁴⁷ Besides these nonmilitary duties of most soldiers, they also had to attend to such routine military duties such as patrolling the areas around the Post, guarding workmen on the railroad, cutting logs for the mill, Post improvement, garrison police, drill, escorting public funds

⁵⁴¹The Weekly Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana) 12 August 1882.

⁵⁴²Ibid., 22 September 1883.

⁵⁴³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 29 March 1884.

⁵⁴⁴Returns from U.S. Military Posts, June 23, 1877.

⁵⁴⁵Yellowstone Journal, 31 January 1880.

⁵⁴⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 11, 1877.

⁵⁴⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, February 1881.

and ice cutting. On some occasions though the ice was contracted for and when the gardens failed, foodstuffs normally grown on the Post were contracted for as well.⁵⁴⁸

Some of the special duties that only came to a few of the soldiers were shoe testing, chimney cleaning and delivering goods. The shoe testing took place in 1879 when it was decided that prisoners at Fort Leavenworth would make shoes that would be sent to Fort Keogh for testing. An unknown number of shoes and boots were sent to Fort Keogh and certain troops were designated to wear them. Reports of how well they held up was then sent to Washington.⁵⁴⁹ The chimney work came about as a result of the fact that flues accumulate creosote and eventually catch on fire if not cleaned. Lieutenant Thompson recommended that prisoners be used for the dirty task but it was not clear which group was assigned.⁵⁵⁰ An example of delivery duty was the case of Lieutenant E. W. Casey's horse. Sergeant Christian Barthelmess a member of the Twenty-second Infantry band was assigned to deliver to Miss Sophia Swaine, the daughter of Colonel Swaine, a horse from Casey's estate (see figure 3, Barthelmess photo of the Twenty-second Infantry). Sophia Swaine, who lived in California, had counted Casey among her suitors and after the Lieutenant died, Colonel Swaine bought her his horse.⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴⁸Ibid., June 1880.

⁵⁴⁹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 26, 1879.

⁵⁵⁰Ibid., September 10, 1883.

⁵⁵¹Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 7.



Figure 3. Members of Company G, Twenty-second Infantry taken probably in 1892 or 1893. Note the small variance in the wearing of the uniform, three different types of hats, some with brass. Some coats were open, and one soldier is wearing an old buffalo coat. (Courtesy of Christian Barthelmess collection, Montana Historical Society.)

Special duty, such as testifying at a court-martial, also took away time from preparing for war. All commanders felt the pinch of time, but few were as outspoken as Lieutenant G. P. Borden who commanded I Company, Fifth Infantry at the Post. He wrote to the Fort Commander stating that he felt it important that so many extra daily duty people not be excused from regular duty such as roll calls and stables. He felt that the company commanders were losing control of their companies.⁵⁵² No doubt some had lost control because on numerous inspections the horses were found to be in bad condition. Because of all the field time this was not a problem during the early years, but later with more garrison time things were somewhat less well organized.

A glimpse of daily life at Fort Keogh was given by the Yellowstone Journal on July 24, 1879. The paper reported that things were quiet at the Post. The commander was away and new recruits were arriving. The band played at the daily guard mount and had a concert on the parade field. William O'Toole, the post trader, was away on business because of bad faith on the part of a hay contractor. Private Owens had just died and

⁵⁵²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 23, 1881.

was buried, while the paymaster was waiting at the Post for a ride to Fort Custer. Most troops were in the field and that was the way they liked it on those long summer days.

Besides the combat that few liked, there were many kinds of field duty that would get them away from the drill and routine of garrison life. Survey duty was one. Lieutenant Hunter Liggett was appointed to special duty as post topographical officer in May of 1886.⁵⁵³ Before this he and other officers were involved in surveying and map making of the area. Lieutenant Charles Lyman followed Liggett in this duty in 1887 and both men had problems keeping settlers off the reservation as many new immigrants were looking for land. Some of these settlers felt that all land was open for their occupancy.⁵⁵⁴

One group of soldiers that spent very little time off the Post during any season was the band. The Fifth Infantry band had three officers in charge and one enlisted bandmaster. Bandmaster Price led the band during the first six or seven years at Fort Keogh and was replaced by Principal Musician DiBella in late 1884. The local press reported on how the band not only played for all official functions at Fort Keogh such as musters, drills and guard mounts, but oftentimes gave concerts both at the Post and at Miles City. The Twenty-second Infantry band, which followed that of the Fifth Infantry, was said to be just as good and gave of their talent just as much. Equipment of the Twenty-second Infantry band included such instruments as the cornet, bass, alto horn, French horn, clarinet, piccolo, baritone, trombone, tambourine and both the bass and snare drum.⁵⁵⁵ In addition to playing an important official function, the band was the main form of entertainment at the Post for its entire existence.

Another skill utilized at the Post that had both an official and unofficial side was the photographer. The post photographer was assigned some Army jobs and also was allowed to work on the side for his own profit and pleasure, so soldiers at Fort Keogh often had pictures taken for their families back home. Photographer, L. A. Huffman in particular, recorded a great deal of history while he was located at the Post. The first post photographer was John H. Fouch, who started in the spring of 1877. He was replaced for a short period by Stanley J. Morrow, who reportedly was replaced by Huffman. In 1880 Huffman purchased the gallery owned by Morrow at Fort Keogh and refitted it with up-to-date equipment and cut prices in half. It was not long before he was doing a fine business.⁵⁵⁶

Huffman first traveled to Fort Keogh from Bismarck in an open buckboard, as others had done in the days before the railroad. The wind was high and the temperature low, and Huffman's clothing was far from sufficient for his comfort. A horse thief rode with Huffman and figured him for a thief as well.⁵⁵⁷ The end of the journey was a great joy to Huffman and after locating his belongings at the old photographer's quarters at Fort Keogh, he left for the buffalo hunt to record history.⁵⁵⁸ Huffman was perhaps the ideal

⁵⁵³Returns from U.S. Military Posts, May 1886.

⁵⁵⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 29 October 1887.

⁵⁵⁵Frink and Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule, p. 25.

⁵⁵⁶Yellowstone Journal, 15 March 1880.

⁵⁵⁷Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, Before Barbed Wire (New York: Barmhall House, 1956), p. 14.

⁵⁵⁸Ibid.

photographer; besides doing good work, he had the eye of a reporter and recorded the more important aspects of happenings at the Post.

Among the many photos of Huffman are found pictures of the buildings of Fort Keogh soon after they were built (see figures 4 and 5), along with prints of the soldiers on duty and off. Most of the soldiers' daylight time was spent on combat training, so shots of soldiers on duty prevailed. Once the Indian conflicts cooled, combat training was increased. A major aspect of it was marching. With more than ten companies at Fort Keogh, a person could, almost every day, see a unit returning from a field march or leaving for one. All such marches were made a matter of record by being entered on the Post Returns.

In 1881 it was found that the soldiers did not understand what was going on with tactics training. A circular requiring that each commander read parts of the book by Lieutenant Colonel Emory Upton on tactics was issued. Upton's tactics were practiced on the field marches, and some of the garrison time was spent learning these tactics. After the commander read paragraphs 794 and 807, a report had to be sent to the Adjutant that it was completed.⁵⁵⁹

Swimming their horses was also an important part of the training given to the Cavalry. This exercise raised much excitement with the local townspeople. The Daily Press wrote on August 6, 1883:

Much interest was excited this morning by the maneuvers of a troop of the Second Cavalry under Lieutenant Allen while being drilled in swimming their horses in the Tongue River ...⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, May 2, 1881.

⁵⁶⁰Miles City Daily Press (Montana), 6 August 1883.



Figure 4. Officers' quarters in 1880. Note the unfinished structure with the different style porch roof, located on the third lot back. This building had been damaged by fire in November 1879 as a result of a dropped candle. As of July 1981 those particular quarters were still standing. (Courtesy of Coffrin's Old West Gallery.)

In spite of this activity so close to town, most of the training was conducted in the field after a long march.

One of the longer marches took place in June and July of 1884. Troop B, First Cavalry made a movement from Fort Ellis to Fort Keogh on a practice march. This unit left Missoula on June 23, and 811 miles later reached Fort Keogh on July 22.⁵⁶¹ Almost the entire garrison left the Post for a practice march in 1888 and 1889. In 1888 only two troops of the Eighth Cavalry stayed at the Post. Even the hospital staff joined in this six day, sixty-mile march.⁵⁶² The next year two troops and eight companies left the Post toward the little Missouri. Grain for the horses was deposited three days march apart, as logistical support was also being tested.⁵⁶³ These long marches became an annual occurrence, as in April 1890 the entire infantry command numbering five hundred men covered the area west of the Tongue River.

⁵⁶¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 23, 1884.

⁵⁶²Returns from U.S. Military Posts, October 1888

⁵⁶³Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 23, 1889.



Figure 5. Cavalry barracks in 1880. The following year the second barracks back was destroyed by fire and replaced with a single story brick structure used as the guardhouse. The troopers shown are most likely from the Second Cavalry. (Courtesy of Coffrin's Old West Gallery.)

The soldiers during these training marches covered various military subjects. The Keogh soldiers were instructed in pitching camp, outpost duty, camping in enemy territory, attack and defense conveying, hasty entrenchment and breaking camp. Although these subjects were closely related to combat, the band was still sent to the field with the other troops.⁵⁶⁴

War games were a prominent part of the 1889 practice march. While the troops were on the little Missouri, Lieutenant Wainwright reported to the local press that after some drilling, the soldiers went into the hills and maneuvered to apply in practice what they had learned. Some live fire was used as troops from Forts Keogh, Custer, and Meade joined in mock battles, while for nearly a month only one company of men remained at Keogh.⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁴Returns from U.S. Military Posts, September 1895.

⁵⁶⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 3, 24 August, 8 September 1889.

Nothing like the war games of 1889 was seen again by Fort Keogh soldiers until 1903 when the Army planned an even bigger exercise. Nine thousand troops met at Fort Riley, Kansas for maneuvers. A large body of troops from Fort Keogh was loaded on railroad cars and transported south.⁵⁶⁶ This exercise occurred less than five years before Fort Keogh's closure and marked the last time that this Fort joined with another post for war games.

When returning from the adventure of the war games, the soldiers of Fort Keogh found the "same old" regular and special (extra) duties waiting. Of no small importance among these was stable cleaning. Inspections always turned up the neglect that was shown the horses and their refuse at Keogh. The poor showings on inspection caused the commander to take a good look at the problem and it was found that soldiers often were put on other duties and missed stables. In 1881 this problem of these "Augean Stables" was corrected by having the commanders report by name all the soldiers who missed stable duty and the reason they missed it.

After returning to garrison, drill also awaited the troops, but by 1889 it had been cut down from the two hours a day that General Terry had previously ordered. If a person would have stopped at Fort Keogh on any given day during its active years, the one thing he or she would be sure to have seen was drill being conducted. On special occasions it was full dressed drill. This was the case in 1886 when the superintendent of the Northern Pacific Railroad visited. The local press wrote:

About 5:30 o'clock Wednesday, by invitation of Superintendent Ainslie, of the Yellowstone division of the Northern Pacific Railroad and the people at the fort, about 250 people climbed into four coaches and were taken over, where an exhibition drill was to be given as a compliment. When the train arrived nine companies, headed by the band, escorted the visitors over to the parade ground. The band all the while was discoursing some lively and inspiring airs and kept all in good humor. The parade was one of the best ever given at the fort, and the boys participating covered themselves with glory. They went through the manual without a mistake or jar, and they never paid themselves a better compliment. Before the train departed the band serenaded the visitors with four musical numbers.⁵⁶⁷

Dress parades were fun to watch, but for the soldier they were hard work that he did not enjoy. In spite of this, the Department of Dakota ordered that a "dress parade" take place each day. Fort Keogh was able to get this order reversed in the summer of 1886 because of the mosquitoes that infested the parade grounds during that time.⁵⁶⁸ After the decline of hostilities with the Indians much more of the "fuss and feathers" became evident at Fort Keogh. This was not only true of drill and ceremonies. Marksmanship was elevated to an important place on the training agenda at the Post as well.

⁵⁶⁶Frink and Barthelmess, *Photographer on an Army Mule*, p. 133.

⁵⁶⁷*Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter*, 19 June 1886.

⁵⁶⁸*Ibid.*

Rifle Range

When it came to weapons training at Fort Keogh, Lieutenant J. M. T. Partello played a major role both in its development and popularity. The Yellowstone Journal claimed that Partello was the champion long-range shot of the world; he made 224 bull's eyes out of a possible 225.⁵⁶⁹ Partello was also known to be a fine musician and did a great deal of entertaining at the Post, but his major joy was always marksmanship. In 1880 the Lieutenant laid out improvements at the Keogh rifle range with an eye for improving its efficiency and thus making better shots of the soldiers at Fort Keogh by allowing for more practice.⁵⁷⁰

The Chief Ordnance officer praised Lieutenant Partello in May 1882 for the fine job he did on the installation of three Laidley revolving targets. The Fort's rifle range was located north of the garrison down along the river, and after Partello's improvements, could accommodate eleven companies firing in less than four hours. Results were soon seen in better scores of the troops, as Partello's improvements and his well spent hours of personal attention to training paid off. When word reached higher headquarters, the Department Commander communicated to Colonel Whistler at Fort Keogh his pleasure over the job that Lieutenant Partello was doing.⁵⁷¹

Competition was one of Partello's loves and he took the opportunities to enter all Army matches. In September 1882, he was at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, where he won the department contest before he went on to the division competition at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.⁵⁷²

The love that Partello had for marksmanship was even reflected in the friends that he had. Another man who loved marksmanship was W. Milton Farrow. He came to visit Partello in June 1884, and besides showing off the new Bullard repeating rifle that was safer and much more accurate, he managed to make twenty-four out of twenty-five shots at 500 yards.

Army marksmen at Keogh did not use repeating firearms until Lieutenant Partello had left the Post but continued with the breech loading Springfields. Montana had long winters and to prevent the soldiers from getting rusty with the Springfield rifle, a gallery was set up. The shells were loaded by the company armorer with ten grains of powder, not the normal sixty or seventy. A round ball replaced the 405-grain bullet. Target and soldier were placed fifty feet apart and the size of the target determined the outdoor range. Accidents were rare, as the shells so loaded would most likely cause only skin wounds.⁵⁷³ When indoor space was cut by more troops in garrison in 1884 and 1885, the local press commented that the "doe-boys" were pleased not to have gallery practice.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁶⁹Yellowstone Journal, 26 June 1880.

⁵⁷⁰Ibid., 31 July 1880.

⁵⁷¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, May 8, 1882.

⁵⁷²The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 2 September 1882.

⁵⁷³Yellowstone Journal, 17 January 1881.

⁵⁷⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 28 November 1885.

Each spring at Fort Keogh the cycle of full-fledged target practice was started anew. Lieutenant Hunter Liggett reported the bad showing of the Hotchkiss firing team in 1881 by writing that:

The first . . . shell fell about fifteen yards short of target . . . then guns no. one, no. two, and no. three alternated for the next eleven rounds without striking the target. Nearly all the projectiles from the Hotchkiss guns fell short.⁵⁷⁵

It was clear that the Infantry needed more artillery training, and they got it.

Regular rifle practice was a much different story. In 1882 Tuesdays and Thursdays were set aside for target practice. On these two days, the eleven companies of the Post were marched to the range and each soldier fired off five rounds.⁵⁷⁶ The top scores made the local press and became a matter of record. This policy may have inspired some riflemen to greater accuracy, but on others it had little effect. The frequency of practice bothered some of the men. A soldier from Fort Keogh, writing under the name "Judge," stated in a letter to the Billings Gazette that: "The principal occupation here at present; (May 1886) at least of nine tenths of the garrison, is target practice. We have bulls eyes for breakfast, dinner, and supper with an occasional magpie or blackbird."⁵⁷⁷

Part of the one-tenth of the garrison that was not practicing was probably the band, hospital steward, ordnance sergeant and the commissary sergeant. In 1883 it was pointed out that no systematic target practice was planned for these persons and given the nature of the jobs they performed, it is unlikely that much was done to correct their lack of target practice.⁵⁷⁸ The regular Company line soldier was afforded opportunity to decorate his uniform in similar fashion to the band members when the General of the Army established a range of winning categories and awarded different medals for each.⁵⁷⁹ The townspeople noticed, as the Yellowstone Journal wrote:

A few of the best shots at the fort can be seen on our streets occasionally wearing their hard earned sharpshooters gold-plated crosses, lately ordered by the Ordnance Department as a reward for the highest class of shooting at 200, 300, 600, 800, 900 and 1,000 yards.⁵⁸⁰

Among some of the officers that won the sharpshooter's cross were Captain Butler and Lieutenants Liggett, Partello, Sage and Perkins.⁵⁸¹

All this target practice had a cost at Fort Keogh besides the government funds spent on ammunition weapons and targets. Although no deaths were reported, some accidents

⁵⁷⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 16, 1881.

⁵⁷⁶Yellowstone Journal, 22 April 1882.

⁵⁷⁷Don Miller and Stan Cohen, Military and Trading Posts of Montana (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1978), p. 45.

⁵⁷⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 14, 1883.

⁵⁷⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 4 October 1884.

⁵⁸⁰Ibid., 20 September 1884.

⁵⁸¹Ibid., 4 October 1884.

were. A corporal was shot in the left leg in 1883. This resulted when he left the protection of the backside of the target without signaling to the shooter.⁵⁸² Less serious was the wound received by Corporal A. B. Gillette in 1884 when a bullet glanced off a target and caused a scalp wound.⁵⁸³ Two soldiers were hurt in 1886 when an explosion that occurred while reloading ammunition caused both to have badly injured hands.⁵⁸⁴

After civilians heavily populated the area, safety became an even larger problem for the Army. A new range was constructed in 1890 and notices were placed in the local paper informing the citizens that the red flags or streamers meant firing in process, and designated areas were stated to be danger areas. Civilian safety was also a concern during earlier rifle firings when various competitions would bring large numbers of local people out to the range to see the matches.

Different companies were the first to compete at the Post and they aroused local interest. From these competitions, the best riflemen were sent to Fort Snelling. In company competition, while the Fifth Infantry was at the Post, A Company most often won Regiment competition.⁵⁸⁵

When the Twenty-second Infantry replaced the Fifth Infantry at Fort Keogh, the emphasis changed from who won the department competition to where it would be held. Colonel Swaine asked for studies of costs to improve the Fort Keogh range and the local press started to count the money that the City would make from all the visitors.⁵⁸⁶ Fort Keogh, with the Twenty-second Infantry, lost both the competition and the bid to hold it at the Post.

Interest in marksmanship did not wane at the Post in spite of losses. The Miles City team accepted a challenge from officers at Keogh in 1891, and during the same month of August, the Department Cavalry competition was held making the Post and the city both busy places.⁵⁸⁷ The next year the Department Rifle matches were moved from Fort Snelling to Fort Keogh. In 1893 not only were the matches held at Keogh, but Sergeant Chapias of Company A, Twenty-second Infantry won the gold medal and left for Chicago and the Division competition.⁵⁸⁸

Competition for the Department was also held at Fort Keogh in 1884. Horace Bivins of the Tenth Cavalry was the best shot during competitions at Fort Keogh during 1892, 1893 and 1894. Bivins at one time was offered a job in Buffalo Bill's show for \$100 a month but preferred the Army. Fort Keogh saw many such great soldiers since many of the Department of Dakota competitions were held at Fort Keogh up until 1903.⁵⁸⁹

Inspections

⁵⁸²Miles City Daily Press, 25 July 1883.

⁵⁸³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 4 October 1884.

⁵⁸⁴Ibid., 19 June 1886.

⁵⁸⁵Ibid., 31 July 1886.

⁵⁸⁶Ibid., 23 February 1889.

⁵⁸⁷Returns from U.S. Military Posts, August 1891.

⁵⁸⁸Stock Growers Journal, 1893-1894, 2 September 1893.

⁵⁸⁹Returns from U.S. Military Posts, August 1903.

Inspection after inspection was generally as much a part of garrison life at Fort Keogh as target practice was after 1880. Inspectors from the Department checked various areas. One function of the inspections was to keep the priorities of the local commander in line with those of the headquarters commander. An idea of how these priorities might diverge was seen in an inspection of the band of the Fifth Infantry. The band was at the center of social activity at Fort Keogh and in town, so the local commander gave more attention. In 1883 an inspector found that the band was far over the authorized number of members. As was pointed out, Paragraph 159 of Army Regulations stated that a regimental band would have one sergeant, one chief musician, two principal musicians, and eleven private musicians. The Fifth Infantry had fourteen more privates than those authorized for duty with the band.⁵⁹⁰ With fancy paper work, this practice no doubt continued as the band continued to play a vital role in the social life of the Post.

This problem of improper manpower utilization did not subside after the inspection of 1883, which was indicated in the inspection of 1885. Company E, Fifth Infantry was found to have had twenty men report for regular duty and eighteen reported on special, extra and daily duty. Over one-third were not doing regular duty, which meant that the mission was not getting done.⁵⁹¹ Part of the problem was identified a few months earlier when civilian workers were found to be below the number authorized. Thus soldiers were taken away from soldiering skills.⁵⁹² It was hard to get and hold employees on the mobile American frontier.

Record keeping was never much of a problem at Fort Keogh but all the normal mistakes such as unsigned documents were always pointed out. As new equipment came into the inventory and new policies were introduced with them, the local officers had to be told on occasion that names and numbers had to be put on bunks and barracks; security items had to be utilized and so on.⁵⁹³

Oftentimes soldiers at Fort Keogh did not like new directives regarding uniform and numerous examples of bayonets or revolvers not being worn appeared in the records.⁵⁹⁴ An inspection report made September 25, 1885, points up further violation of proper uniform and equipment:

... a number of men in all the companies with shoes not issued by the Quartermaster Department ... officers not in proper uniform— their sleeves still disfigured with the obsolete gold lace: the commanding officer of the Cavalry troop not equipped with the regulation sabre⁵⁹⁵

At Fort Keogh, as with the frontier Army elsewhere, convenience and comfort often dictated fashion.

⁵⁹⁰Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 14, 1883.

⁵⁹¹Ibid., January 8, 1885.

⁵⁹²Ibid., October 26, 1884

⁵⁹³Ibid., June 26, 1882.

⁵⁹⁴Ibid., July 1883.

⁵⁹⁵Ibid., September 25, 1885.

Many problems were also found with the habits of the soldiers at Fort Keogh in the 1885 inspection. The inspector from the Inspector General's office reported:

Dress parade held only on Sunday, Officers not required to attend roll calls. The men are not required by orders to bathe. Company messes not inspected daily. Men are not required to have two pairs of boots or shoes in their possession. Muster Rolls incomplete in a few cases. Troop horses are used for private purposes although "not generally." Horses not generally shod. Haversacks were not carried. Articles of furniture made by Quartermaster's Department in the possession of Officers have not been taken up on return of public property.⁵⁹⁶

It was clear that the Fifth Infantry's strong suit was Indian fighting, not garrison life and attention to detail. It is perhaps safe to say that if the Indians had possessed more attention to detail, the Indian Wars in Montana might have been prolonged.

Lieutenant F. W. Sibley, who had done so well on the Rosebud with General Crook in 1876, by 1882, was found to be unable to drill his troop in the saber exercise. This meant that the troop did not get drilled. Lieutenant Sibley was ordered to perfect his own drilling every spare minute and then drill his troop until the exercise was perfected.⁵⁹⁷

Sibley was not the only commander who was weak at drilling. Certain infantry commanders had the same problem, but overall drilling was an activity in which Fort Keogh could "show off." In 1887 the inspector commented that the drill was found to be done well, with all mistakes addressed. The horses and equipment were also found in good order.⁵⁹⁸

Medical Care

Health, which was much more important than the other conditions inspected, was often found to be in capable hands. Fort Keogh had a good-sized hospital with a professional staff to run it. When the cantonment was built, a small log hospital was constructed, but with hostile actions in process, the hospital was soon overtaxed. Late in 1877, the new large frame structure was completed in time to accommodate the wounded soldiers from the Nez Perces fight.⁵⁹⁹ A replacement was talked about in 1900, and bids were called for, with a Miles City firm bidding the lowest, but little action was taken on these plans.⁶⁰⁰

Doctor (Captain) A. C. Girard was the first head surgeon at the hospital of some fame. Girard was ordered to Fort Keogh in June 1878. A few months later he requested that Mrs. Johanna Busch be appointed hospital matron, and this was done. Dr. Girard and

⁵⁹⁶Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷Ibid., June 26, 1882.

⁵⁹⁸Ibid., July 23-25, 1887.

⁵⁹⁹Ibid., October 15, 1877.

⁶⁰⁰The Miles City Weekly News, 3 May 1900.

the hospital not only served the Army. The local people also benefited from their medical care. John Pratt a local Miles City man "took sick" in 1880, and the paper reported that "Dr. Henry" (a tonic that the paper advertised) had restored his health. The paper received a letter from Pratt stating that Dr. Girard at Fort Keogh not "Dr. Henry" was responsible for his health.⁶⁰¹

Miles City benefited from the Post hospital in other ways as well. In September 1881, Dr. Redd, who was the assistant surgeon at Fort Keogh, resigned his commission and went to work in a drug store in Miles City that he had started with Harry Gerrish sometime earlier.⁶⁰² Dr. Girard not only cared for the town but also talked a physician friend of his into coming to the Yellowstone to practice medicine with him. Girard's friend joined him and thus Miles City had a physician of its own. Girard was transferred to the Department in May 1884, and left the hospital at Fort Keogh in other capable hands.⁶⁰³

While at Fort Keogh, Dr. Girard had to deal with many diseases, as did the doctors that followed him. One major way in which Girard helped was with education. He advised the city that filth caused typhoid fever and attempts were made to clean up.⁶⁰⁴ Filth was the main enemy that all medical personnel at Fort Keogh fought when Typhoid fever was discovered in July 1880, and Girard traced it to Sergeant Strong's quarters, located in the laundresses' quarters area (soap suds row), where he kept pigs near his house. The pigpens, which had not been cleaned in months, were even closer to other houses. Girard recommended to the command that the pigs be relocated at least one hundred yards away from any human dwelling and that the pens be cleaned.⁶⁰⁵

Scarlet fever was the next major problem that Dr. Girard had to face. In reaction to the problem, the doctor quarantined the laundresses' quarters and the Indian camp. It was later discovered that a child of the Ryans had acquired the fever in the Indian camp, and from this child it spread. Before the scarlet fever was gone, all the Ryan children had died. The total number of deaths at the Post was thirteen people, one of these being the daughter of Lieutenant F. H. Logan.⁶⁰⁶

Miles City had a smallpox infestation that resulted in a ban on visits to the city by persons from the Post in April 1882. Five people in the city died before the ban was lifted in May.⁶⁰⁷

Diseases were often on the minds of the medical personnel at Fort Keogh as they wrote the monthly sanitation reports. Some of the first such reports dealt with the severe problem of overcrowding. As early as 1879 it was stated that part of the command might have to be put "under canvases" because of the coming cold weather. It was felt that the troops would insist on closing all doors and windows tightly. This would

⁶⁰¹Yellowstone Journal, 10 July 1880.

⁶⁰²Ibid., 3 September 1881.

⁶⁰³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Report, 31 May 1884.

⁶⁰⁴Yellowstone Journal, 22 May 1880.

⁶⁰⁵Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 7, 1880.

⁶⁰⁶Ibid., November 30, 1880.

⁶⁰⁷Ibid., April 27, 1882.

create ideal conditions for disease to spread if it should appear. Ten by ten-inch holes in the roofs of the company sign rooms and vents in the doors were the solution.⁶⁰⁸ A return of attention to this problem came in 1890 when Doctor (Captain) P. F. Harvey noted that the air space for each man was only 445 cubic feet. This meant the air had to be completely changed six and three-fourths times per hour to supply three thousand cubic feet per man. It was felt that much ventilation was required to achieve this amount of fresh air for each man.⁶⁰⁹

Dr. Girard took great pains to see that the soldier's diets had plenty of vegetables and that the men were not unnecessarily exposed to unhealthy work conditions. In 1879, during the heat of summer, he recommended that guards not be made to "pull their duty" in the shako helmets and dress coats. The doctor felt that this could cause "headaches, nervous depression and threaten sunstroke." For the benefit of the patients in the hospital, he requested that large vehicles be banned from passing in front of the hospital as the dust was effecting the comfort of his patients.⁶¹⁰ During the summer of 1882 the doctor requested that school be suspended until cooler weather set in for the comfort of the children.⁶¹¹

Toilet sinks (privy pits) located around Fort Keogh were another constant health hazard that the doctors had to deal with. In 1882 the hospital got a new privy and in 1883 it was pointed out in a sanitation report that nearly all toilets were in need of new holes. The band sink had been in use for three years.⁶¹² Oftentimes when the sinks were covered up, gravel was used, as it was closer at hand. This caused seeping. The doctors ended the practice.

Lack of proper drainage added to the problem of seepage in some areas of the Post. Drainage ditches were dug in the area of the laundresses' quarters in 1879, which corrected the last major drainage difficulty, but slop still remained.⁶¹³ As many slop and ash pits were located around the Post, attending to them was a problem. Sometimes this garbage would plug drainage, if allowed to be spilled or left to leak. In 1883 Doctor Girard identified this unattended slop as a problem. Six years later Lieutenant Edward Casey submitted a report in which he stated that all around the Post slop was found surrounding the slop barrels and polluting the ice and snow. Even at the officers quarters slop was found being dumped in the back yards and at other locations cattle were dumping the barrels.⁶¹⁴

Keeping the soldiers clean was no easier than keeping the Post clean. Hard work was required to get water in the early years and as a result washing was a real chore that was not indulged in much. The items that were often at the bottom of the "must wash" list were the bed sacks. These sacks were filled with hay, and, during the first two years

⁶⁰⁸Ibid., July 31, 1878.

⁶⁰⁹Ibid., January 1, 1890.

⁶¹⁰Ibid., August 31, 1878, July 21, 1879, January 18, 1880.

⁶¹¹Ibid., June 30, 1882.

⁶¹²Ibid., April 11, 1883.

⁶¹³Ibid., February 28, 1879.

⁶¹⁴Ibid., January 11, 1883, January 6, 1889.

of the Post's existence, were washed about every eight months.⁶¹⁵ An inspector from headquarters recommended changing the hay and washing the sacks every month. Blankets presented the same problem and this infrequency of cleaning caused a "vermin" problem in the barracks. The company laundresses wanted more money for the extra cleaning and this aggravated the problem.⁶¹⁶

The soldier's person was not often washed either. During an inspection conducted in 1882, the washrooms were found sufficient but no facilities for bathing were offered. This in spite of the department commander wanting each soldier to bathe his entire body once a week; Fort Keogh still had no bathing facilities in 1885.⁶¹⁷ Later additions were constructed onto the barracks for this purpose.

Policing trash was no doubt necessary from the time mankind first formed an Army, and this duty came to Fort Keogh with the troops. Shortly after Dr. Girard arrived at the Post, he determined to do something about the poor police around the buildings. He found that rags, cans and bottles had been thrown from windows of the barracks, and in the vicinity of laundresses' quarters. An officer was put in charge of police who brought about improvements in 1882, but by 1883 things had fallen back to "normal."⁶¹⁸

Montana has rattlesnakes in most parts of the state and this created concern, especially for the children. The hospital had to attend to snakebites and other medical problems that the garrison presented. The dental needs were attended to by a "circuit riding" dentist who cared for all problems before moving on to the other posts in the Department of Dakota.⁶¹⁹

Insanity was a medical concern about which little could be done at Fort Keogh. Isolation, poor diet, combat pressure and lack of good hygiene practices took their toll on mental health. Mentally ill people were treated at Keogh by committing them to the hospital where the environment was somewhat controlled.⁶²⁰

On many occasions the mental problems of some soldiers were not addressed in time. November 1879 marked the suicide of the Quartermaster Sergeant Marks. He shot himself after losing money. This suicide was only one of six that occurred at the Post in about three year's time.⁶²¹ Suicides continued but the number subsided as the years passed. The various conditions that triggered the suicides were generally identified, as illustrated by the case of Private Patrick Hoagarty. Hoagarty was an old soldier who had been with his unit for fifteen years. After every discharge, he would squander his money on "his usual failing," drinking, and then reenlist. While on guard duty he had a gun and the local press reported that depression hit him and he went into the coal shed and shot himself.⁶²²

⁶¹⁵Ibid., July 31, 1878.

⁶¹⁶Ibid., October 31, 1878.

⁶¹⁷Ibid., January 8, 1885.

⁶¹⁸Ibid., August 17, 1878, July 14, 1883

⁶¹⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 22 October 1887.

⁶²⁰Yellowstone Journal, 31 July 1879.

⁶²¹Ibid., 27 November 1879.

⁶²²Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 22 September 1888.

Although some causes of mental illness were vaguely understood, the treatment varied greatly. While the Fifth Infantry was at the Post, a mentally ill soldier would be confined to the hospital, and if no improvement came he would be shipped east.⁶²³ In the case of Private Frank Fitzsimmons, the Twenty-second Infantry had to take a different approach. Fitzsimmons, a well-known ballplayer in the area of the Post, went insane and because of his violence was put in the guardhouse, since the hospital could not control him. While there waiting to go to a government insane asylum, Fitzsimmons gouged out both of his eyes with his right thumb; one eye ball landed on the floor and the other hung from the socket. Fortunately, according to Dr. Harvey, the insanity suffered by Fitzsimmons was of a character that the brain was not susceptible to sensing of physical pain.⁶²⁴ After a few months, in August 1889, Dr. Harvey sent Fitzsimmons to St. Paul, Minnesota. He was still bedridden, and was chained down to the bed with his feet bound together and four-ounce boxing gloves were placed on his hands.⁶²⁵

Lieutenant George B. Backus of Fort Keogh was also removed to an asylum after his problems mounted. Backus was with the First Cavalry, and after sending a letter to the War Department stating that he would kill himself and even wagered with other officers of the Post that he would, Backus disappeared. About a week later, he was found in New York City in, as the Yellowstone Journal put it, "... a demented condition." Money problems, a court-martial and related matters were said to be the causes of his long-standing sickness.⁶²⁶

Living on a frontier with all the associated dangers from man, beast and nature, the Fort Keogh hospital and medical staff played vital roles in advancing that frontier. Education was the main concern, as preventive medicine was the best path to good health. During the first half of the hospital's existence, it was the only one in a large area and made Fort Keogh an important medical center for all eastern Montana.⁶²⁷

⁶²³Returns from U.S. Military Posts, July 1884.

⁶²⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 22 June 1889.

⁶²⁵Ibid., 17 August 1889.

⁶²⁶The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 9 April 1892, 23 April 1891.

⁶²⁷Hospital had 32 beds and a brick foundation.

CHAPTER IX OFF DUTY: SOCIAL LIFE ON AND OFF THE POST

Families

For those soldiers who had them, families were the major determinants of the use of off-duty time. A large percent of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Fifth Infantry were married. Most of the families arrived at the Post at the first opportunity, which was in June of 1877. Before the boats arrived, the married soldiers did what they could to get their living quarters livable. Most of them still lived at the old cantonment.⁶²⁸

Many of the men were away in the field when their wives and families arrived. Mary Miles, the wife of the Post Commander, had a very hard trip. She had started out aboard the Cameron that hit a snag forty miles down river from Sioux City, Iowa. The Sherman saved the passengers but they got off the Cameron with only what they wore.⁶²⁹

Even after they reached the Post, wives still did not get to see very much of their husbands, because the country was still full of hostile forces. For those wives who had been married some years, such as Mrs. Frank Baldwin, the pain was not as great. Mrs. Baldwin wrote that, ten years before she had come to Fort Keogh, she became hysterical when her husband took the field from Fort Wingate. At Fort Keogh she was well composed when her husband left, as were most of the other wives at the Post.⁶³⁰

As the hostilities slowed, life improved for the officers' wives. They could have almost anything they desired shipped to them.⁶³¹ Many of them often had visitors and would engage in horseback riding, hunting, boating and visiting.⁶³² Mrs. (Captain) Webster in 1894 returned east to the family's resort, although this was rare. The ladies at Fort Keogh often dressed in their "gayest" summer clothing and played croquet and other slow sports.⁶³³

Life was much harder for the enlisted men's wives. They were sometimes far from other families and had little money. If their husbands deserted or were killed, the wives had no protection and received nothing from the Army. In 1878, a soldier named Charles White deserted because of debt and drinking. His wife Margaret was left with no help and had to move into town and get whatever work she could to support herself and her children.⁶³⁴ If the husband stayed around, the wife's job was still a hard one.

⁶²⁸Virginia Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles (Boston, 1962), p. 169.

⁶²⁹Ibid., p. 178.

⁶³⁰Oliver Knight, Life and Manners in the Frontier Army (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), p. 193.

⁶³¹Miles City Daily Press (Montana), 11 June 1883.

⁶³²Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 84.

⁶³³Stock Growers Journal (Miles City, Montana), 13 October 1894; Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter (Miles City, Montana), 12 June 1886.

⁶³⁴John I. White, "D. J. 'Kid' O'Malley Montana's Cowboy Poet," Montana the Magazine of Western History 17 (Summer 1967):63.

The November 4, 1882 edition of the Yellowstone Journal, listed some of the duties of a soldier's wife as follows:

... (1) get up at reveille, (2) cook breakfast, (3) clean weapon and equipment, (4) chop firewood, (5) do forty sets of underwear, (6) play piano and sing, (7) attend to sexual needs of husband, (8) have money on the side to make do, (9) overlook husband's faults, and (10) do without quarters.⁶³⁵

Oftentimes the wife of an enlisted man also took in laundry. Most of the laundry done belonged to the soldiers, but many civilians also sent their laundry out to Fort Keogh. In one instance, a risky romance was uncovered with laundry. A bartender from town had his laundry returned to him by an angry laundress. The laundress was the mother of the bartender's girl friend and happened to find some of her daughter's "unmentionables" mixed in with his.⁶³⁶ This type of premarital sex was not unheard of but it was, insofar, as can be determined, totally unacceptable to most people of that period.

Marriage, not pre-marital sex, was the norm, and weddings were a community happening, not just a family event. When Private Knaor married Nellie McEvouy, the troops kept the "chivaree" up for two nights until the bride made a deal with them that she would give them wine and cake if they would go away.⁶³⁷

Often the officers married relatives of other officers. In June, Lieutenant Hunter Liggett, who would later serve immediately under General John J. Pershing during World War I (and, incidentally, get a Fort named after himself), married Hallie Lane who was Lieutenant F. W. Sibley's sister-in-law.⁶³⁸ A year and a half later Lieutenant Edward S. Avis married Fannie Carter, the daughter of Captain Mason Carter.⁶³⁹

When the Twenty-second Infantry replaced the Fifth Infantry at Fort Keogh, it was reported that most of the young officers were not married. Some would find out how easy it was to get married at a large post like Fort Keogh, as the case of Lieutenant Alvin H. Sydenham illustrates. The Lieutenant received a "Dear John" letter from his fiancée six months after he graduated from West Point. Five months after he got the letter he married the sister of Lieutenant Joseph A. Gaston at Fort Keogh.⁶⁴⁰

After marriage, the officers at Fort Keogh were able to provide their wives with reasonably comfortable living accommodations. Thirteen officers' quarters were built at the Post, not including the commanding officer facility. Each of these officers' quarters was a two story building with a mansard roof. The quarters measured 58'-6" by 48'-6". A major or colonel was given one entire set or one entire building. Captains had to live

⁶³⁵Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), 4 November 1882.

⁶³⁶Ibid., 10 April 1880.

⁶³⁷Ibid.

⁶³⁸Ibid., 19 March 1881.

⁶³⁹The Weekly Yellowstone Journal (Miles City, Montana), 9 December 1882.

⁶⁴⁰Knight, Life and Manners in the Frontier Army, p. 141.

in one half of a building and Lieutenants were housed four to each building.⁶⁴¹ Before an officer could occupy his quarters, he had to write to the post quartermaster requesting quarters by number. At the end of a request, the officer would add a proviso "... provided that no officer my senior desires such quarters."⁶⁴²

Quarters were no small matter to the officers at Keogh and disputes over them often reached the Department level for clarification of regulations. Departing for a leave of absence, Lieutenant H. Romeyn surrendered his quarters hoping to get better ones when he returned. The quarters he left in 1884 were still available on his return, in 1885, so he was directed to reoccupy them. Romeyn argued that Major Whipple, after surrendering his quarters was given an opportunity to select new ones on his return, even though his were still vacant. Colonel Wilkins refused the Lieutenant's request for new quarters because Whipple's leave of absence had been the result of an action by the Department Commander. This logic no doubt escaped Romeyn, but as a soldier he accepted it.⁶⁴³

The policy where "rank has its privileges" was not only utilized when it came of officers forcing other lower ranking officers out of quarters. It was used and abused to the point where if a senior officer wanted barracks for his men, and the men of a junior officer occupied them, he could force the junior officer's men out and possess the barracks for his troops.⁶⁴⁴

Enlisted men who were married faced a much harder time than did officers. Married enlisted quarters were located east of the garrison surrounding the parade field and were called "Soapsuds Row." Later soapsuds Row was relocated to the northern part of the Post. The first married enlisted quarters were made of logs; at some of these quarters the logs were placed horizontally and others vertically. All the roofs were covered with dirt. Aside from the problem of dirty surroundings (which probably led to disease), the married enlisted quarters also presented a problem of distance. Five enlisted men complained in a letter dated October 1, 1878, that the bugler should move closer to Soapsuds Row so that they could hear reveille. This request came as a result of several missed roll calls.⁶⁴⁵

Soapsuds Row not only contained married enlisted men, but it had civilian employees at the Post. In an 1883 census, quarters of married enlisted men were found to have eight non-commissioned officers, six privates, five married and five unmarried civilian employees, two men not employed at the Post, nineteen wives, three single female employees, one widowed hospital matron, one servant girl and fifty children.⁶⁴⁶

Quarters in Soapsuds Row were located only about fifteen feet apart, and not surprisingly, contact between the residents was regular. At times this had troublesome consequences. Mrs. Kremer filed a complaint in August 1879 against Mrs. Jennie Hogan

⁶⁴¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands 1821-1920, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 7, 1879.

⁶⁴²Ibid., September 9, 1880.

⁶⁴³Ibid., April 7, 1885.

⁶⁴⁴Ibid., May 27 and 30, 1881.

⁶⁴⁵Ibid., October 1, 1878.

⁶⁴⁶Ibid., February 24, 1883.

because Mrs. Hogan was said to be much too friendly with several Sergeants. Mrs. Kremer's complaint was not the only one against Mrs. Hogan.⁶⁴⁷

Another incident that was remembered for some time, was the encounter between two wives across the property line. The argument resulted from one soldier's wife burning her trash too close to the other wife's clothes that had been hung out to dry. The trash burner was threatened with a bat and Lieutenant Foy, the "Officer of the Day" was notified. In an effort to quiet the trouble, an off-duty private was assigned to walk the line between the quarters with an old outmoded rifle and rusty bayonet. This action resulted in the ladies redirecting their anger from each other to the originator of the peace plan.⁶⁴⁸

Some soldiers who were widowers with children were preoccupied with worry about their children during much of their on-duty time. Fort Keogh had several such fathers since the frontier was a hard environment; death was accepted with a "continue to march" attitude. Captain Simon Snyder lost his wife shortly after his daughter was born. Snyder's mother offered to housekeep for the two of them but he felt that his mother would not adapt to the West, so he hired other women at the fort to care for his daughter.⁶⁴⁹ Hiring a housekeeper was also the solution for Sergeant Terrill and for other soldiers left widowed at Keogh. In 1884 Bandmaster Price died soon after his wife's death, leaving several children. Major Beard showed the concern he had for the men in his command by making application to guardianship of the Price children. The probate court granted his request and the children were properly cared for.⁶⁵⁰

Mary Lillian was Captain Snyder's daughter and he planned for the possibility that he would not return from a battle. It was his intention that Mary Lillian be sent East to his mother and that his mother be given guardianship and if Mrs. Snyder were to die she was to have chosen another guardian. Keepsakes were to be kept for Mary Lillian and she was to be educated in a convent and become a "consistent member of the Roman Catholic Church."⁶⁵¹ Even as a single parent who had to attend to military duties, Captain Snyder was able to give Lillie a good deal of attention. He noted in his diary her activities on the various holidays and her birthday which indicate that Lillie had an active social life at Fort Keogh, where nearly 150 children lived while the Fifth Infantry was stationed at the Post.⁶⁵²

Dr. Girard had perhaps the largest family on Fort Keogh and was always careful to provide activities for them. An annual event at the Post was the Christmas play in which the children acted the parts. The performances were well advertised in the local press and many civilians from town made it part of the Christmas celebration to see the

⁶⁴⁷Yellowstone Journal, 21 August 1879.

⁶⁴⁸Maurice Frink and Casey E. Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 94.

⁶⁴⁹Patricia Y. Stallard, Glittering Misery (Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1978), p. 77.

⁶⁵⁰Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, (Miles City, Montana), 25 October 1884.

⁶⁵¹Stallard, Glittering Misery, p. 80.

⁶⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 84.

play.⁶⁵³ Dancing was another children's activity at the Post. When the dancing class put on a performance, it was a well-attended social event.⁶⁵⁴

Lieutenant Colonel Cochran did much the same type of social organizing in 1885 after Dr. Girard had gone. Along with Lieutenant Chalfield, the Colonel prepared a Mother Goose musical party and other children's activities.⁶⁵⁵ As the children grew, the social life at Fort Keogh could not keep pace with expectations and since the railroad had come, travel became a common pastime.⁶⁵⁶

Damage caused by vehicles was a problem not addressed very well at the Post as conveyances both official and private created roads almost everywhere on the Post, even across the parade field. This lack of traffic control enforcement was indicative of the general lack of enforcement of written ordinance governing interpersonal affairs at the Post for non-military matters.⁶⁵⁷

Since the Post had few fences, dogs and other domestic animals had free run and often bothered people. A sanitary report dated April 11, 1883 stated that, "The dogs in the garrison are increasing to such an extent, that it is dangerous for man or beast to pass in the vicinity of the barracks..."⁶⁵⁸ E. Butler, a civilian at the Post, was said to have been attacked on numerous occasions. He made an issue of it over a year after the sanitation report.⁶⁵⁹ The problem was still with Fort Keogh two years later, in May 1886, when a depot employee G. B. Horsfull, was attacked by a pack of dogs near Keogh, He managed to solve the problem for himself in part by shooting most of the pack.⁶⁶⁰ Dogs did not attack most people but the noise was cause for concern about the Post. The noise of barking and fighting hindered sleeping, but in December 1887 the whole Post was aroused at 9:00 on Saturday morning when the big gun used to sound an alarm was fired. A dog at the Post fired the gun by pulling on the firing cord after the wind had blown it down. The local press, in commenting on this false alarm wrote: "... a properly licensed city dog would never have so misbehaved but that garrison dog has lost all his freshness."⁶⁶¹

Despite the regular enforcement of ordinances, interpersonal affairs, cooperation among and consideration for others was evident at the Post, as not everyone was selfish. Collections were often taken up for soldiers found to be in need. Frequently officers who had the capability would see to the major needs of their men. The help given took many forms as in the case of Bandmaster Kenneth Price after his wife died. Paymaster Baird and Captain Hathaway both chipped in to help him out.⁶⁶² After Price himself died, Baird received full responsibility for his children.

⁶⁵³Miles City Daily Press, 28 December 1882.

⁶⁵⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 17 May 1884.

⁶⁵⁵Ibid., 10 January 1885.

⁶⁵⁶Ibid., 5 April 1884.

⁶⁵⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, December 20, 1881.

⁶⁵⁸Ibid., April 11, 1883.

⁶⁵⁹Ibid., June 20, 1884.

⁶⁶⁰Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 15 May 1886.

⁶⁶¹Ibid.

⁶⁶²The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 8 April 1882.

Some activities welded the bonds between the people of Fort Keogh and gave them a sense of responsibility for each other. The Fort had many daily as well as periodic events that brought people together. Major MacQueen, the post trader, had a beautiful hot house (green house) where many rare and lovely flowers were grown. He would often give away flowers, and this encouraged visitors to the Post.⁶⁶³

Reassignment sales and estate sales were periodic events. These showed the concern that the soldiers had for one another as a fair price was given for most of the soldiers' goods enabling them to start again at this new station after reassignment. Appraisers often helped this process along.⁶⁶⁴

School

Although nearly 100 children lived at Fort Keogh, they were rarely mentioned as a problem to anyone. Education of the children was of prime concern. Before 1879 a Reverend Horsefall conducted school in Miles City, and the Fort Keogh children had to ride to school in a mule-drawn wagon.⁶⁶⁵ By April 1879 a school was started at Fort Keogh with thirty-five students in attendance. There were seventy-eight enlisted men's children of which sixteen attended school. Of the thirteen officers' children, all attended, and from an unknown number of civilian children, six attended the school. Independent and Monroe's Readers were used, McGuffey's Speller, Guyot's Geography, Fasquelle's French, Harkness' Latin, Barnes' U.S. History, Olney's Algebra, Webb's Charts, Harvey's Grammar, Feller's Arithmetic were all the texts used at the Fort Keogh school in the early years.⁶⁶⁶ Late in 1879 a new school building was constructed and in the next year Father Lindesmith as Post Chaplain was supervising the well-rounded education given at the Post. Schoolteachers were often privates in the Army and classes were segregated for officers and enlisted men's children.

Enlisted men also had classes but these were poorly attended owing to the embarrassment by some and feeling of superiority by others.⁶⁶⁷ In 1891 the school attendance of the enlisted men clearly did not improve with the advancement of civilization. Of the 270 enlisted men, only twenty-four were enrolled. Of the forty-one children over five years old, only twenty-two attended school.⁶⁶⁸

Military schools were another matter. Orders were issued that impelled non-commissioned officer to attend classes on tactics, regulations and other military subjects both in the field and while in garrison.⁶⁶⁹ Officers were often sent away to various military schools. The Infantry and Cavalry schools established in 1881 at Fort Leavenworth Kansas were widely attended by the officers of Fort Keogh. This school would usually take the officers away from the Post for two years and often followed a promotion.⁶⁷⁰

⁶⁶³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 3 December 1887.

⁶⁶⁴Ibid., 28 March 1891.

⁶⁶⁵Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, Before Barbed Wire (New York: Bramhall House, 1956), p. 226.

⁶⁶⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 1879.

⁶⁶⁷Rev. E. W. I. Lindesmith Diaries (Montana Historical Society: Microfilm Collection #301, vol. 9, 15 March 1881; Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, June 26, 1882.

⁶⁶⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 31, 1891.

⁶⁶⁹Ibid., October 15, 1890.

⁶⁷⁰Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 25 July 1891, 22 August 1891; Yellowstone Journal, 25 June 1881.

A person interested in independent study would frequently find Fort Keogh a rich field compared with other frontier posts. The library had 1,208 volumes and on average was visited by ninety-five people per day. Its limitations were a shortage of chairs and insufficient light, but the soldiers would still come. Reading could be done in the various native languages of the soldiers and these books were an enjoyable pastime.⁶⁷¹ Other popular items for reading were the many eastern papers and magazines to which the Post subscribed. In 1879 the Fort subscribed to no less than sixteen periodicals.⁶⁷²

Religion

In the same room where the library was located, church services were held at Fort Keogh. At Fort Keogh religion and Chaplain Lindesmith were almost synonymous. Eli Washington John Lindesmith was a Catholic priest who became a chaplain on July 1, 1880 and was sent to Keogh to serve not only the two-thirds of the Post who were Catholic, but those who were not Catholic as well.⁶⁷³ Father Lindesmith, after a request by his Bishop to become an Army Chaplain, left Ohio and traveled to Washington, D.C. where he was commissioned by a Probate Judge named W. G. Wells. His assignment to Fort Keogh took him to St. Paul, Minnesota and on to Bismarck by rail. There the Chaplain boarded a boat and about two days up the river he saw his first Indian.⁶⁷⁴

When Lindesmith reached Miles City, Colonel Otis, who took him to meet Colonel Miles, met him. Miles received the priest warmly and invited him to stay the night. Lindesmith stayed the night and had breakfast with Miles the following morning. That same day he requested as his quarters the former home of the schoolteacher.⁶⁷⁵

Shortly after his arrival at the Post, Father Lindesmith put to paper a list of things he had to remember to do. On August 22, 1880 he wrote:

1. Mass next Sunday at 8
2. Will teach Catechism
3. Will have confessions
4. Elect a building committee
5. I will assist in making a plan of a church
6. Began soon to build
7. Don't go into debt
8. Take account of all income and outgo, form an accounting committee
9. Read expenses off at mass.⁶⁷⁶

⁶⁷¹The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 4 November 1882; Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. :Various documents, June 26, 1882.

⁶⁷²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 30, 1879.

⁶⁷³Lindesmith Diaries, July 1, 1880, p. 47.

⁶⁷⁴Ibid., August 2, 1880, p. 60.

⁶⁷⁵Ibid., August 11, 12, 1880, pp. 75-76; Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, August 21, 1880.

⁶⁷⁶Lindesmith Diaries, August 22, 1880, p. 77.

The Chaplain acted on his list and a committee was formed to see to the building of a church in town. This sideline did not keep him from his duties as Chaplain at the Fort. The priest still had his reports on the moral condition of the Post and matters related to teaching and the history of the Post. As Chaplain, Lindesmith also had to make the rounds to help keep the spirit of the soldiers high.⁶⁷⁷ Other ministers of the gospel would visit Fort Keogh, but to a large extent it was Father Lindesmith who attended these duties on a daily basis.

The Chaplain took his duties seriously. When it came to his attention that the Band was made to play while church services were going on, he made a point to stop the practice.⁶⁷⁸ The priest preached the importance of confessions but was disappointed with the results.⁶⁷⁹ Lindesmith had more success getting people to attend services. Singing in church was important to Lindesmith and civilians from Miles City often attended church at Fort Keogh to enjoy the singing.⁶⁸⁰

Extra duties were also an important part of the chaplain's life, as they were for any soldier. Oftentimes Lindesmith was given the task of taking up a collection for some charity or function. One example was the collection in 1881 for the Christmas tree and gifts. From four officers he reported that he received twelve dollars.⁶⁸¹ Some extra duties were off limits to the Chaplain. In 1881 he was assigned duty as a member of a Board of Survey. The priest never did serve on the board, because when the Department command found out about his selection to the board, the Father was removed.⁶⁸²

Father Lindesmith had various side interests and in his diary he made notes on some of them. Eating out at the MacQueen mess house in Miles City was a special event for the priest. Drinking coffee was another one of life's little pleasures that he mentioned in his diary. In January 1881, Lindesmith wrote that he started to drink coffee after thirteen years because the diet at Fort Keogh was occasionally lacking in vegetables and fruits. A year later he quit coffee and tea because he felt they interfered with his sleep and good health.⁶⁸³ The priest also looked after his health by attending to his garden.⁶⁸⁴

It was important for Lindesmith to keep his health because in the frontier area in which he found himself, he was called on to be much more than just the Chaplain at Fort Keogh. He gave lectures at various local civic functions and held the duties of chaplain for the Ursuline Convent at Miles City and the position of parish priest of the Sacred Heart Church in the same town. In his capacity as chaplain of the Ursuline Convent, Lindesmith was preoccupied by the departure of a nun from that order. After Mother Sacred Heart left for the Pacific Northwest, Lindesmith spent a great deal of time and

⁶⁷⁷Ibid., October 5, 1880, p. 84.

⁶⁷⁸Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, March 12, 1883.

⁶⁷⁹Lindesmith Diaries, December 27, 1882, vol. 2 p. 101.

⁶⁸⁰Miles City Daily Press, 29 January 1883.

⁶⁸¹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, October 17, 1881.

⁶⁸²Washington, D.C., National Archives, microfilm rolls 572, 573, 574 (Fort Keogh), Returns from U.S. Military Posts, April 1881.

⁶⁸³Lindesmith Diaries, February 16, 1883, vol. 2, p. 109, June 10, 1881, June 14, 1881, p. 103.

⁶⁸⁴Ibid., January 19, 1882, vol. 2, p. 109.

money trying to find out where she was, what her problem was and why she left the convent.⁶⁸⁵

Aside from the setback of Mother Sacred Heart's departure, the Ursuline Order made great strides with the help of Father Lindesmith. A most worthwhile and long-lasting contribution made by the Ursuline Order was the mission it established at the Lame Deer Agency. In this endeavor, the United States Army from Fort Keogh was of some help. During the spring of 1884 an Army escort was sent with two nuns to establish the mission. After a site was chosen,

. . . the soldiers unloaded the wagons, built an alter from rough boards, made a kitchen table and a few stools, repaired the stove, chopped firewood carried water from the river, cleared a trail to the stream, brought hay from the nearest ranch for the nun's bed ticks, and then returned to Fort Keogh.⁶⁸⁶

While the nuns were having great success with the Cheyenne, Father Lindesmith was having much success with the soldiers. One success story he made note of in his diary was that of Peter Schloer. As the priest put it:

Peter Schloer, First Sergeant, Co. A., 5th In. U.S.A. left here on the N.P.R.R. train at 1:50 a.m. Tuesday April 13, Feast of St. Hernunegilduz to go to St. Ignatius Indian Mission, Montana, To be a Christian Brother with the Jesuits. He is a German thirty-two years of age. He was intended by his family for the priesthood; was educated in German, French, Latin, Music I.E. Then entered the German Army, became an officer, then resigned, came to America, joined the Regulars raised from the rank to first Sergeant, Soon became proficient in English and excellent drill master and was one of the largest and finest looking soldiers in the Army. Two years ago I told him about the Jesuits, the Christian Brothers, and told him that he looked like one and that he had every quality to make him one, and that when his term of service expired I would get him into the order of the Jesuits if he liked it. Some weeks ago as he would soon be discharged, I wrote to the Jesuits about him. They accepted him and my eccorsiondation; on last Monday he was discharged and on Tuesday morning at 12:30 he received Holy Communion in St. Ann Chapel in my quarters and at 1:50 he took the train for St. Ignatius Indian Mission.⁶⁸⁷

In 1891 Father Lindesmith left Fort Keogh and returned to Ohio. He had made a lasting impression on the Fort and it had made an impression on him. The paper often noted letters received by the local press from Lindesmith and the content were revealed. On one occasion it was reported that the former chaplain was giving lectures on Montana, reflecting on his many good experiences at Fort Keogh.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁵Ibid., June 1, 1886, vol. 5, p. 72

⁶⁸⁶Frink, *Photographer on an Army Mule*, p. 126.

⁶⁸⁷*Lindesmith Diaries*, April 13, 1887, Vol. 5, p. 148.

⁶⁸⁸*The Weekly Yellowstone Journal*, 19 March 1892.

About a year after Lindesmith's departure, the Yellowstone Journal reported (April 16, 1892) that Reverend I. Newton Ritner had arrived to discharge the duties of chaplain. Ritner was chaplain for about five years, less than half the time that Lindesmith had been at the Post. Ritner was a Baptist minister who had come from Philadelphia and like Lindesmith, he left a big impression owing largely to the years that he spent at the Post.⁶⁸⁹

In Town

Not only did both Reverend Ritner and Father Lindesmith have an impact on Fort Keogh, but their presence was strongly felt in Miles City as well. Part of the Fort Keogh story was acted out on the streets of nearby Miles City. On the whole, the relationship between the two places was one that neither could have been proud of. For all their efforts, Reverend Ritner and Father Lindesmith had little effect on the drinking problem at Miles City.

Earlier in the life of the Post, Miles City citizens located as close to Fort Keogh as they could. When the government opened land up to settlement just east of the Tongue River in 1878, Miles City, which had been located along the Yellowstone, picked up and moved even closer to the Fort Keogh garrison.⁶⁹⁰ At first the only element catered to in Miles City was the soldiers, and some of them remained on Post to do their drinking, thus few problems were evident between citizen and soldier. By 1880, when other civilian elements such as teamsters, hunters and some cowboys started to show up in greater numbers, the problems started to surface. Whiskey was the root of most of the difficulties. On March 13, 1880 the Yellowstone Journal wrote: "We have 23 saloons in our town, and they all do a good business. We are to have one church soon."

During the early part of Fort Keogh's first full decade the Journal was full of stories about drunken soldiers. In 1881 an executive order prohibited liquor on military reservations so the soldiers shifted all their drinking activities to Miles City.⁶⁹¹ With the incidence of drunkenness in town on the increase, Dr. Girard at Fort Keogh decided to experiment with an idea that had been tried at Fort Vancouver by General Marrow. Dr. Girard started a canteen in the Fort Keogh library where coffee and a ham sandwich were sold on a credit basis and the bill was taken from the consuming soldier's paycheck. This idea was a success and did lessen drinking, although it did not stop it.⁶⁹²

Other factors also helped somewhat to reduce the drinking problem. On January 27, 1883 the Yellowstone Journal reported that Charles Brown, who ran a big saloon in town, was closing his doors on Sunday night. Mr. Brown also started closing every night at a certain hour. Another factor was that as different types of people settled in Miles City with the coming of the railroad, demands were made to punish drunkenness

⁶⁸⁹Frink, Photographer on an Army Mule, 6th photo after p. 88.

⁶⁹⁰History of Custer, Powder River, Garfield Counties (Miles City, Montana: Einar Berge, 1931), p. 6.

⁶⁹¹Yellowstone Journal, 26 March 1881.

⁶⁹²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 3, 1882.

severely and this was done. In February 1883 John S. Lynch was fined \$19.40 for drunkenness and when he could not pay, he spent several days in jail.⁶⁹³

The railroad brought other changes to Miles City and the pastimes of the soldiers. As "civilization" made gains in the city, prostitution became a problem. At times all parties concerned in the houses of ill repute did not reach an agreement. When this happened, trouble followed, as it did on the night of September 5, 1884. At eleven o'clock soldiers and cowboys attacked a house run by "Fannie French." Broken bottles and rocks were thrown at Fannie's house that was called the "coon dive." This riot resulted when a girl who worked at the place cut a cowboy named Block Lane. After shots were fired and windows broken, the riot was stopped by the sheriff deputies and a night watchman.⁶⁹⁴

This was one rare occasion when soldiers and cowboys were on the same side. The local press always sided with the cowboys and rarely would report on cowboy drunkenness and misconduct but reported on and editorialized on many cases of soldier misconduct.⁶⁹⁵

The Commander of Fort Keogh, in an effort to cut down on the part that the soldiers were playing in Miles City's crime problem, instituted new rules for visiting the city. These rules were well accepted by the citizens of Miles City and had the desired effect. The rules required that each soldier visiting Miles City must have a pass. Besides this he must be dressed in full regimentals that included side arms, gloves all marking and shined boots. An inspection was given and had to be passed, before a pass was issued. These rules instituted by Colonel Gibson in 1887 were a radical change from the lack system of discipline that was practiced at the Post during the preceding years.⁶⁹⁶

Added to these new rules for passes, a system of patrols was set up to keep the soldiers in line while they were in town. It consisted of a commissioned officer and some non-commissioned officers patrolling the trouble spots to stop misconduct of the soldiers. This system was so effective that it was continued until the last few years of the Post's existence.⁶⁹⁷

These patrols helped to reduce the amount of drunkenness by those soldiers who merely wanted to "unwind" but they had little effect on the soldiers with criminal intent. Some shootings and fights were still a part of Miles City life as sometimes the soldiers could not deal with their problems, and other times they chose not to back down from a troublemaking cowboy or bull whacker.⁶⁹⁸

Rivalry between soldier and citizen expanded to more than a city affair in 1888 when the Northern Pacific Railroad became a victim of the fighting. Along side the rail line in Miles City was located a beer garden which was popular with the soldiers. On April 15, 1888, some troublemakers from town boarded the train. As the train passed the beer

⁶⁹³The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 3 February 1883.

⁶⁹⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 6 September 1884.

⁶⁹⁵Ibid., 26 March 1887.

⁶⁹⁶Ibid., 3 September 1887.

⁶⁹⁷Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, November 16, 1902.

⁶⁹⁸Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, *The Frontier Years* (New York: Bramhall House, 1955), p. 134.

gardens, they threw rocks at the soldiers in the beer gardens. In response to this the soldiers returned the stones, throwing them, breaking some windows and causing much damage. Colonel Gibson stated that the Miles City boys were causing the trouble and, he felt that soldiers would not do it because they would lose the right to visit Miles City. This type of activity was stopped by the railroad that increased security near Miles City.⁶⁹⁹ Occasionally trouble that developed at Fort Keogh spilled over into town. Not an isolated case of this type took place in 1883, as the Yellowstone Journal reported:

A shooting affray occurred Thursday night between 12 and 1 o'clock, in which one man was painfully, but not mortally wounded. From an eyewitness of the affair, we learn that those who engaged in the quarrel were soldiers, all belonging to Company C, of the Fifth Infantry. Corporal R. Terrill and Private E. Daniels had some trouble at the post sometime ago, and from what information we could gather regarding the affair, last night was the time set by the corporal to seek revenge on his enemy. Daniels had been working out at the government sawmill, and came to town in company with two other men. He was attacked by Terrill and a companion near the Cottage Saloon, Terrill drew a knife, and threatened that he would kill him. Daniels walked away from them saying "to leave him alone, as he did not want to raise any trouble." While near the Cosmopolitan theatre, he was again attacked in the same manner. This time he went and got the loan of a revolver, and then told the attacking party if he made another similar attack, he would kill him. Terrill made the third attempt to down his victim, but this time received the contents of a revolver in the abdomen. Daniels and one of the party were arrested and lodged in jail, and the wants of the wounded man were attended to by Dr. Redd, who afterwards sent him to the hospital at the post.⁷⁰⁰

This case ended with Private Muller, who had been assaulting Privates Daniels and Terrill, being fined ten dollars. The victim recovered and the case was closed without further incident. All Daniels received was some time in jail.⁷⁰¹

Some years later, differences between soldiers were still being settled in Miles City. In 1888 a conflict cost Sergeant Whitney \$23.60 because he assaulted another soldier in a Miles City saloon.⁷⁰² About five years later a fight between soldiers from Fort Keogh ended in the wounding of Private Brage who was struck by a bandman. Brage was taken back to the Post, but refused to enter the hospital. He felt that rest was all he needed, but the next day he fell dead after exiting his quarters.⁷⁰³

Trouble was not only imported by the soldiers from Fort Keogh into Miles City. In the second part of the decade of 1880 some citizens of Miles City felt that there was profit in ambushing soldiers as they returned to Fort Keogh. Usually the robbers were out of

⁶⁹⁹Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, April 17, 19, 24, 1888.

⁷⁰⁰The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 19 May 1883.

⁷⁰¹Miles City Daily Press, 30 May 1883.

⁷⁰²Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 15 December 1888.

⁷⁰³Stock Growers Journal, 15 July 1893.

luck, because the soldiers had little money but on a few occasions money was taken or the soldiers badly beaten. Most of the attacks took place at the west end of the railroad bridge.⁷⁰⁴

Three years after this first rash of attacks in 1889, assaults were in the news again. They became so bad that Colonel Swaine of the Twenty-second Infantry directed that all suspicious looking characters on the reservation be arrested. Those seized were brought before an officer and examined for specific charges. This strictly enforced policy was quickly effective.⁷⁰⁵

Incidents of other types of crime, such as rape, were rare in the Fort Keogh area, but they occurred on a few occasions. In 1883 Dr. Girard's male servant thwarted a rape attempt when he heard some noise and investigated. When he drew near, the noise he made scared the rapist off. Twelve-year-old Annie Rosch was freed from the attacker and the rapist, Patrick Eulden of Company B, Fifth Infantry was later captured.⁷⁰⁶ Eight years later a soldier named Condrey tried to lure a ten year-old girl down to the river with lies of a picnic and then by force, but she escaped and ran to neighbors.⁷⁰⁷

It is logical that part of the reason that the Yellowstone Journal saw fit to give bad press to the soldiers from Fort Keogh was because the servicemen were for the most part foreign and voted Democratic. The officers were Republican and the action of at least one of them was attacked after the 1882 election. The Daily Press, the Miles City Democratic paper, charged that Major Borchardt stood outside the polls and recorded names of those who did not vote his way.⁷⁰⁸ A different type of election pressure was used in 1888 when, as the Yellowstone Journal and Livestock Reporter reported: "An order has been issued at Fort Keogh prohibiting the soldiers from visiting Miles City on election day. A good order as Republicans want a square deal and no illegal soldier votes."⁷⁰⁹ In effect this kept the soldiers from voting and meant that they had no voice for the most part. The Democratic press condemned this and the Republican press praised it.

Despite all the problems between the citizens of Miles City and the soldiers of the nearby Army post, for the majority of the citizens and soldiers the relationship was a good one. Officers and enlisted men alike would visit Miles City to shop or see a show as well as visit friends. The people of Miles City would often visit Fort Keogh to visit friends, see a show or listen to the band.⁷¹⁰

Blacks at the Post

The towns' relation with the Black soldiers was not on the whole bad but they were not always good. Elements of the Twenty-fifth Infantry and Tenth Cavalry arrived at Fort Keogh in late 1890 and early 1891. They were housed in tents behind the barracks.

⁷⁰⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 9 January 1886.

⁷⁰⁵Ibid., 29 June 1889.

⁷⁰⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 9, 1883.

⁷⁰⁷Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 22 August 1891.

⁷⁰⁸Miles City Daily Press, 25 November 1882, 14 November 1882, 15 November 1882.

⁷⁰⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 3 November 1888.

⁷¹⁰Ibid., 9 August 1884.

These units had white officers, but all the enlisted men were Black. An indication of the general attitude toward the Blacks was evident in the December 27, 1890 issue of the Stock Growers Journal (Miles City). In reproducing a letter from Lieutenant G. P. Ahren the paper printed:

We have a strong force of Infantry and Cavalry here on the northwest corner of the war. Our "cullud" battalion here is under canvas and in fine shape for a winter campaign, and when Jack Frost freezes the mercury out of sight, the gay and festive coon will be found ready to dance the Virginia essence and sing as joyfully as ever.⁷¹¹

The Yellowstone Journal and Live Stock Reporter wrote on December 6, 1890:

Two companies (colored) from Fort Missoula arrived at Keogh yesterday morning and three of the same darky hues from Fort Shaw are expected today.⁷¹²

One man who did have an interest in the Black soldiers and said so was Father Lindesmith. On December 5, 1890 he took dinner with them and ate baked beans, bacon, boiled beef and rice. A soldier who was a Baptist preacher had invited him to the dinner. After the meal religion was discussed and the priest made more friends. A few years earlier Lindesmith expressed his opinion of the soldiers in the Twenty-fifth Infantry, writing in his diary that they were a credit to their officers and themselves.⁷¹³

Interpersonal affairs at Fort Keogh were not different than they might have been at any other post or location; there was a mixture of friendships and conflicts. Much more press was given to the conflicts than to the friendships, but a strong undercurrent of community was clearly visible at Fort Keogh.

Social Activity

The areas that showed the strongest sense of community at Fort Keogh were the various and always-active clubs, parties and sports activities. They provided an important part of the social life. Among the first clubs at the Post was the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), organized in 1878 with a membership of about forty-five people. Most of this chapter located in Miles City, and called the General U.S. Grant Post, were from Fort Keogh.⁷¹⁴ As time passed the number of Union Civil War veterans at Fort Keogh diminished and the Post's involvement in the G.A.R. ended. In place of the G.A.R. other military clubs were formed during the later years. The Sons of Veterans was organized in 1892.⁷¹⁵ This was followed a few years later by the Army-Navy Union that was active with dances and lunches.⁷¹⁶

⁷¹¹Stock Growers Journal, 27 December 1890.

⁷¹²Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter.

⁷¹³Lindesmith Diaries, 30 May 1888, vol. 7, p. 81, 5 December 1890, vol. 11, p. 14.

⁷¹⁴Yellowstone Journal, 30 October 1879.

⁷¹⁵The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 12 November 1892.

⁷¹⁶Stock Growers Journal, 13 January 1894.

Regardless of their primary reasons for existence, most of the clubs concentrated heavily on dancing. Some clubs were formed purely for social reasons. In 1882 the "Jolly Boys" dancing club was formed. It held a grand ball every Wednesday evening.⁷¹⁷ Its dances were well attended and ambulances were sent to Miles City to pick up groups of dancers.⁷¹⁸

Drama was as much a favorite pastime as dancing at the Post. The Fort Keogh Dramatic Company was known and enjoyed by people far and near. Most of the dramatic groups' leaders were Army officers at the Post and worked hard to produce fine plays. In 1884 Captain Edmund Butler resigned as the group's manager after three years of successful production. His replacement was Colonel Cochran who had the support of other Army officers to keep the groups going.⁷¹⁹ This organization was so well run that it was producing plays well into the decade of the 1890s.

Fort Keogh had a large population of German-American soldiers and it was not surprising that a Carl Schurz Club was formed. This group also put on plays that were given both in German and English.⁷²⁰ The Club also conducted testimonials and dances. Many other clubs, mostly of a social nature, graced the Fort Keogh social scene and the Fort had an Army-wide reputation as a party post.⁷²¹

The clubs were not alone in sponsoring dances and parties. Many parties were planned and conducted by committees made up of soldiers or their wives. Almost any occasion was made a reason for a ball. During the early years of the Post, Indian scares ended a few balls, but new occasions were planned for the following day or soon thereafter. Social functions were usually well publicized in the local press. Such organized affairs were rare in Miles City and citizens of the City would often join in the fun at Fort Keogh.⁷²²

Army officers at the Post made it a practice to attend parties as much or more than any other group. In 1880 the commissioned personnel of Fort Keogh had a regular Tuesday evening "officer's hop" at which a string band performed.⁷²³ Dinners and other socializing often followed the hops. Along with the regular parties, the officers would celebrate any number of different occurrences. Examples of reasons for parties were the return of Lieutenant James Pope and his wife from another assignment, promotions, and Washington's birthday as well as any Fort Keogh officer's birthday. Even Martha Washington was honored.⁷²⁴

The performing arts were also a big pastime at Fort Keogh. On many occasions the artists were military, as was discussed before, but often-professional troupes would visit the Post. The arts were given official support at the Post, causing a large

⁷¹⁷The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 14 October 1882.

⁷¹⁸Miles City Daily Press, 24 October 1882

⁷¹⁹Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 10 May 1884.

⁷²⁰Ibid., 31 May 1884.

⁷²¹Ibid., 10 November 1888, 24 November 1888, 15 December 1888, 18 January 1890.

⁷²²Yellowstone Journal, 14 August 1879.

⁷²³Ibid., 3 April 1880.

⁷²⁴Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 16 February 1884.

storehouse to be turned over for conversion to a ballroom with furniture and pianos for various types of shows.⁷²⁵ A proprietor of the European Female Brass Band and Minstrel Company was one of many group representatives who made their way through Montana and wanted to play at Fort Keogh. In requesting permission from the commander, the owner of the European Female Brass Band stated:

Will you allow me to play the above company at your post in March, everything first class. Nothing obscene or vulgar tolerated. How many will your hall seat and what are your terms.⁷²⁶

Entertainment by the regimental band was a regular event. Great effort was put into building a music hall at the Post, since it was known that it would be well used. "The academy of music," as the band was called, would play at almost every function and also held regular concerts. Colonel Miles said of this entertainment group:

The band is a source of great enjoyment in the garrison, and I think they play nearly as well as they did at Leavenworth although the surroundings are quite different . . . they are putting up quite a music hall.⁷²⁷

Circus entertainment was a great joy to the people of Fort Keogh but circuses did not stop in the area often. They were always sellouts when they arrived in spite of the "high culture" that was known at the Post.⁷²⁸

Winter activities were also popular. In the early years sleigh rides were not only considered a form of transportation but also of recreation. Colonel Miles and other officers would race the trotters that pulled their sleighs and citizens of Miles City would join in the competition.⁷²⁹

Ice-skating was another winter activity for organized recreation. Lieutenant Edward Casey and a squad of men labored hard in 1889 to bank an area so it could later be flooded. When the cold came much pleasure was taken on the ice, the weather permitting. The Yellowstone Journal carried a story of a typical day at the Post in the cold of winter. Entitled "A Trip to the Post," the article read:

Yesterday we shouldered our Faber No. 2, and seated behind a swift steed, left for Fort Keogh. In about twenty minutes we pulled up before MacQueen & Young's (Post traders) store. As usual, we found the proprietors and clerks busy in waiting upon their numerous customers and filling orders for their patrons up the Yellowstone. All the companies at the Post have filled their icehouses for next summer's use and Co. H of the Fifth Infantry, being detailed to put up the supply for the trader's

⁷²⁵Brown and Felton, The Frontier Years, p. 127.

⁷²⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 18, 1884.

⁷²⁷Johnson, The Unregimented General: A Biography of Nelson A. Miles, p. 157.

⁷²⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 26 September 1885.

⁷²⁹Miles City Daily Press, 22 December 1882.

store. The garrison seemed very dull, nearly every man being housed up and waiting for warmer weather to make its appearance.⁷³⁰

The dull garrison that the author of this article observed was not the Fort Keogh that those who lived at the Post saw. Winter activities abounded although much of the activity was indoors.

When the weather was very cold, the soldiers would enjoy reading, telling stories and jokes, playing games and gambling. One form of entertainment that became a fad in 1880 was the "15 game." Few details could be found, but according to the local press, playing the game was a "fever" and in 1880 it hit epidemic proportion at the Post.⁷³¹ Holidays were far from a fad at Keogh. They were most often traditional. During the Post's first year, while it was still in the cantonment mode, for New Year's the Commander assembled the regiment with the band on the parade field and had the instrumentalists play the old year out and the new one in.⁷³² Most New Year's days were celebrated by a reception given by the Commander for all officers. In 1886 the Post Trader, Major MacQueen, had an open house and all that came were well "treated."⁷³³

St. Valentine's Day was celebrated with various rounds of parties that drew citizens and soldiers together for a day of general enjoyment. St. Patrick's Day was the holiday that brought the Irish and non-Irish of the Post and the town together for a day of celebration and politics. In the City Park the celebrants would join to express their support of the Irish cause. Flags were flown and speeches made followed by heavy drinking and other festivities. The Yellowstone Journal reported in 1882 that a fine time was had on St. Patrick's Day:

... at precisely 2 o'clock p.m. enlivening strains of music from the direction of the Fort crossing of the Tongue River, announced the coming of the Fort Keogh delegation, which soon filed into the park, numbering some two hundred strong with appropriate colors flying together with a beautiful white banner on which was inscribed in letters of green "The Soldier's Gift to the Irish Sufferers, . . ."⁷³⁴

Examples of activity on other St. Patrick's days were musters held at the Post to honor the day and occasionally a lecture by Father Lindesmith on the Irish cause.⁷³⁵

Great fun was reported on April Fool's Day as the soldiers who were natural practical jokers were "let loose."⁷³⁶ Later in the year when the Fourth of July rolled around the soldiers had a chance to show what they had learned during the rest of the year. Nearly every year the Army would fire a salute of as many guns as there were states in the

⁷³⁰The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 10 February 1883.

⁷³¹Yellowstone Journal, 3 April 1880.

⁷³²Rickey, Jr., Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay, p. 207.

⁷³³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 9 January 1886.

⁷³⁴The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 25 March 1882.

⁷³⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 21 March 1885.

⁷³⁶Yellowstone Journal, 3 April 1880.

union. The salute was followed by a day of parades in town and games both in town and at the Post. In 1880 even the Indians who were located at the Post joined in the fun.⁷³⁷ Nearly ten years later it was clear that little had changed as in 1889 the day was filled with the following.

- Horse races
- National salute of 38 guns for the states
- Infantry beat cavalry at baseball 17 to 9
- Indian war dance was planned but didn't come off
- Exercises during the evening
 - Father Lindesmith said prayer
 - Sergeant Webster read the Declaration of Independence
 - John Fairfield gave oration.⁷³⁸

The final holiday of each year was Christmas and most often the military activity was low, but the soldiers did more eating. Typical of the giving during this season was the case of Mary R. Heistand. During the threatened uprising at Poplar River, Mrs. Heistand offered Christmas dinner to ten soldiers who were away from their garrison spending Christmas at Fort Keogh. Mrs. Heistand, the wife of Lieutenant Henry O. Heistand, served soup, salmon, egg sauce potatoes, sweet breads, canned peas, roast beef, potatoes, cabbage a la cauliflower, prairie chicken and currant jelly tarts, canned asparagus salad, cheese and crackers, sherbet, homemade cake, and candies.⁷³⁹ In 1888, as with many other Christmases, Santa Claus arrived and pleased the children of the Post. An immense tree was set up and decorated for the added pleasure of the youngsters.⁷⁴⁰

The soldiers and their families never rested long between the searches for ways of having fun. From one holiday to the next they kept up a steady pace of social and physical activities. Sports were a big part of life at the Post and competition was all-important. Baseball competition between Fort Keogh and Miles City was reported as early as 1879. Miles City won the game by a score of 23 to 14.⁷⁴¹ Four years later the Fort Keogh team was playing more distant teams such as Fort Custer and still finding it hard to win.⁷⁴² A year later a better Fort Keogh baseball squad beat the Princeton College team. The winning team consisted of Lieutenants Tillson, Avis, Sage, Perkins, and Charles and Henry Butler, with Privates Connors, Bugden and Richardson.⁷⁴³ By 1886 the Fort Keogh team was regularly winning over the local Miles City team. This trend continued and Fort Keogh had a winning season for most of its remaining years.

In 1899 the new game of football was explained to the readers of "The News." In the few years that followed for Fort Keogh, the game was played with bad results for the Post. In 1904 when Keogh was a small garrison and getting smaller, a game of football was

⁷³⁷Ibid., 10 July 1880.

⁷³⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 6 July 1889.

⁷³⁹Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, p. 43.

⁷⁴⁰Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 29 December 1888.

⁷⁴¹Yellowstone Journal, 24 July 1879.

⁷⁴²Miles City Daily Press, 5 June 1883.

⁷⁴³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 8 July 1884.

played with the local reform school, resulting in a victory for the latter, five to zero. This score indicated a different system of scoring from the modern game.⁷⁴⁴

Foot racing was also enjoyed at the Post and this was one sport in which the soldiers had the edge on the Miles City competitors. The local press said of the Fort Keogh runners: "The garrison has two or three fleet footed lads at the post who will be ready shortly to meet the 70L [local runners] or any other ambitious young men. They are working hard to get themselves in trim."⁷⁴⁵

Fort Keogh also saw runners who were just passing through. In 1891 a couple of tourist families from Cleveland, Ohio, numbering eight people, stayed at the Fort. This group was jogging through the Yellowstone valley in route to the Yellowstone Park.⁷⁴⁶

Horseracing was also a much-talked about sport. In 1880, \$500 was paid for a race at the Post and a few weeks later \$330 was paid to Captain Hamilton when his horse was the victor.⁷⁴⁷

Tennis and bowling were two other activities that consumed many hours at the Post. Lieutenant Colonel Cochran converted an old stable into a gymnasium and bowling alley. In 1885 this alley was placed under the control of Lieutenant Bailey and boasted a canteen, which offered coffee and a sandwich for a nickel, drawing a crowd every time it, was opened. Officers also often joined in on the fun at the bowling alley.⁷⁴⁸

Boxing matches were another well attended function in the area. In 1880 contestants from Forts Keogh and Custer put the gloves on and the boxing continued for a few nights in a row.⁷⁴⁹ Prizefights between soldiers occurred on several occasions and wrestling was also a great crowd pleaser that continued for most of the Post's existence.⁷⁵⁰

The majority of soldiers and officers were by nature outdoors people and as such loved to hunt and see the countryside. In 1879, while wild game in the region was still abundant, Colonel Miles along with Major Dewees, Captain Baldwin, Dr. Redd and Lieutenants Liggett, Miller and Brett traveled sixty miles on a hunt and had to return because they could not preserve or carry any more game. They had bagged 61 deer, 17 buffalo, 6 elk, 2 antelope, 1 mountain sheep, 5 ducks, 74 prairie chickens and 2 sage hens.⁷⁵¹

Not long after this hunt Captain Baldwin was out exploring for timber. With him were Lieutenant Long and L. A. Huffman, the photographer. When they spotted some bull elk, the hunt was on. As Lieutenant Long directed fire with field glasses by noting the dust that the bullets caused, Captain Baldwin hit an elk. The bullet hole he must have

⁷⁴⁴The Miles City Independent, 17 November 1904.

⁷⁴⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 28 November 1885.

⁷⁴⁶Ibid., 8 August 1891.

⁷⁴⁷Yellowstone Journal, 15 May 1880.

⁷⁴⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 17 January 1885.

⁷⁴⁹Yellowstone Journal, 11 September 1880.

⁷⁵⁰Stock Growers Journal, 8 July 1893.

⁷⁵¹Yellowstone Journal, 30 October 1879.

made could not be found. Later it was discovered at the base of the elk's horn.⁷⁵² Even young boys got into the hunting craze as reported in 1881 by the Yellowstone Journal. The account stated that during the previous winter, two boys, the sons of Colonel Whistler and Major Logan, went hunting with deerhounds and knives. During the season they had killed ninety-three antelopes by having the dogs run them down and hold them while the boys finished the job with their knives.⁷⁵³

When hostile activity was low, officers were often given permission to go off on a hunt. Oftentimes the hunt was part sport and part mission as the officers would return with detailed topography maps that the Army needed. All the edible meat was prepared and used as food at the Post, adding to the diet and saving the government considerable money. At times entire companies were sent out with the mission of procuring meat for the Post.

⁷⁵²Brown and Felton, Before Barbed Wire, p. 227.

⁷⁵³Yellowstone Journal, 3 September 1881.

CHAPTER X THE MARK LEFT

Officer Impact on Business

A foretaste of things to come in the Yellowstone region occurred soon after the cantonment was established. John Burgess had a plan to move a flock of sheep from western Montana into the Black Hills area of Dakota for the miners. In late 1876 Colonel Miles convinced Burgess that he should stay at Fort Keogh and supply the troops with mutton. The following spring Burgess made his profit and moved on as Captain Frank Baldwin and George M. Miles, the nephew of Colonel Miles, bought the 1007 head for \$2,000 cash. Thus an officer from Fort Keogh was one of the first ranchers in the area.⁷⁵⁴

Captain T. H. Logan followed Captain Baldwin's example to some degree in 1882. Logan had two-year-old heifers shipped from Minnesota and let them graze on the grasses near Little Dry Creek. After the Northern Pacific Railroad unloaded the heifers, Captain Logan had them branded THL and built a ranch house about sixty miles northwest of Miles City. Logan sold out a year later but not until he had become one more of the pioneers in the cattle industry.⁷⁵⁵

Other officers who invested in cattle were Lieutenants Hunter Liggett in 1887 and Edward Casey in 1890. Girard Whistler, formally of Fort Keogh, became a rancher near Buford. These were but a few examples of Fort Keogh capital building the local economy.⁷⁵⁶

Banking was another area of the local economy in which Army officers played a part. Some, such as Colonel James S. Brisbin were elected to officer positions of Miles City banks. With \$10,000 invested in the First National Bank of the town, Colonel Brisbin was elected its President.⁷⁵⁷ Investment in development projects was an area that most often received financial support from Fort Keogh officers. An irrigation project was started on land east of the Tongue River a few miles south of Miles City. Among the larger investors in the project were Major Simon Snyder, Joseph Leighton and Dr. Girard. All these men took personal interest in their project and invested time and money in an effort to see the Yellowstone region grow, and yield a large profit.⁷⁵⁸

Among the most important contributions of a Fort Keogh officer to the town of Miles City was that of Lieutenant E. K. Gilman. In September 1886 electric lights came to Miles City in large part because of Gilman. The first equipment (engine and dynamo) for making electricity in the area was owned by the Lieutenant who also owned the

⁷⁵⁴Mark H. Brown and W. R. Felton, *Before Barbed Wire* (New York: Bramhall House, 1956), p. 71.

⁷⁵⁵John I. White, "D. J. 'Kid' O'Malley . . . Montana's Cowboy Poet," *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 17 (Summer 1967):64.

⁷⁵⁶Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter (Miles City, Montana), 25 June 1887, 3 May 1890, 10 May 1890.

⁷⁵⁷Miles City Daily Press (Montana), 1 August 1882.

⁷⁵⁸Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 19 January 1884.

building where it was located. The Yellowstone Journal and Live Stock Reporter praised Gilman in the September 18, 1886 issue in these words:

... no one has been more active in the matter (electric lights) than Mr. Berthold Ullman and when a happy circumstance brought him in business connection with Lieut. E. K. Gilman, of Fort Keogh, the consummation of our wishes followed as a natural result. Lieut. Gilman shortly after his arrival here, less than a year ago invested largely in city property and at once became actively interested in the welfare of the town. In conjunction with . . . [several names], the Miles City Electric Light & Water Works Company was organized and early in the summer Lieutenant Gilman went east to examine the merits of the various electric light systems. He visited all the large cities and eventually selected the Thompson-Houston system. . . .⁷⁵⁹

When the Electric Light Company commenced operations, the officers of Fort Keogh were invited to the opening, and Colonel Cochran offered to have the band play at the celebration.⁷⁶⁰ Lieutenant Gilman, after leaving Fort Keogh, brought electric lights to Bismarck, Jamestown, Grand Forks, Moorehead, Fergus Falls and St. Paul.⁷⁶¹

Construction was also an area of involvement for Fort Keogh officers. Captain Edmund Butler was the force behind the construction of the Schmalsle's building located on Main Street, Miles City.⁷⁶² L. A. Huffman, the post photographer, and Lieutenant Gilman built other major buildings in the town.

Real estate investment was the major area that attracted the Army officers' dollars. In 1882 Major F. H. Logan invested \$3,000 in Miles City. That same year Captain Butler paid the same amount for other real estate in town.⁷⁶³ A year later, on January 5, 1883, a meeting of a military syndicate was held at Fort Keogh. Some of the officers in attendance were Colonel John D. Wilkins, Colonel Brisbin, Major Casey, Dr. Girard, Lieutenants Forbes, Allison, Allen and others. This group owned a large development that was named the Wilkins addition. When it was placed on the market each lot sold for \$50 and an entire block cost \$1,000. The officers had a motto that they lived up to: "quick sales and small profits."⁷⁶⁴ Miles City also had a Snyder addition in which Major Simon Snyder was an investor. The city was not the only area for officer investment, as officers such as Major Logan traveled to Terry, Montana to invest in real estate.

Many officers took leaves of absence to attend to business. Major Logan and other officers had various Montana real estate, and the officers formally stationed at Fort Keogh, such as Lieutenant R. P. Page Wainwright and Major Snyder, often returned to Fort Keogh to attend to their investments. Even Father Lindesmith invested in the

⁷⁵⁹Ibid., 18 September 1886.

⁷⁶⁰Ibid., 23 October 1886.

⁷⁶¹Ibid., 12 November 1887.

⁷⁶²S. Gordon, Recollections of Old Milestown (Miles, City, Montana, 1918), p. 7.

⁷⁶³The Weekly Yellowstone Journal, 29 July 1882, 18 November 1882.

⁷⁶⁴Ibid., 6 January 1883.

future of Miles City in 1885 by buying lots 8, 9, and 10, block 73, from the agent of the Northern Pacific Railroad.⁷⁶⁵

Cattle

A few years after Fort Keogh began, the local stockman coveted post real estate. The large size of the military reservation caused cattle drovers to cross portions of it moving their herds. Miles City by the middle of the year 1883 was becoming a center for the cattle industry in Montana and the railroad was the major reason. Because of rough waters upstream on the Tongue River, herders requested permission to cross reservation land to save cattle.⁷⁶⁶ Montana's representative supported the desire of the cattle interest to cross the Post in 1884, but a year later the question was still being debated.⁷⁶⁷ It was felt that the livestock kept on Post could not be prevented from mixing with private livestock and thus interfering with Post official business. From the start livestock was allowed to run free destroying Post gardens and eating Army hay. The government was not paid for the losses.⁷⁶⁸ In arguing the case of the cattlemen, it was pointed out that a great deal of land was given to the railroad and so why should they be the only industry to benefit from the government.⁷⁶⁹

For some years the cattlemen were given the privilege to cross the military reservation with their stock, but this program presented problems. Lawless cowboys created the major difficulty as in the following that the local press pointed out:

The privilege of crossing cattle on the Keogh military reservation is just now likely to be withdrawn on account of the lawless actions of the N-N cowboys within post limits during past two days that they have been camped on the reservation . . .⁷⁷⁰

Crossing cattle on Post land was only part of the Fort's involvement with the cattle industry. In 1883 Martin Maginnis, the Montana representative to Congress, pushed for the construction of a stockyard on the Post east of the garrison.⁷⁷¹ The War Department did not like the idea and felt that the stockyard should have been built on the east side of the Tongue River.⁷⁷² This resistance by the War Department caused Maginnis to push the plan through Congress and the stockyard was ordered built on Fort Keogh land in December of 1886.⁷⁷³

This stockyard and livestock crossing was a sign of things to come for Fort Keogh. The area to which the Fort soldiers had brought peace was to become cattle country. Cowboys became the main features around Miles City and the soldiers were to fade

⁷⁶⁵Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 8 August 1885.

⁷⁶⁶Washington, D.C., National Archives, Records of United States Army Continental Commands 1821-1920, Record Group 393. Various documents, January 27, 1883.

⁷⁶⁷Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 8 July 1884.

⁷⁶⁸Miles City Daily Press, 7 July 1883.

⁷⁶⁹Ibid., 5 December 1885.

⁷⁷⁰Ibid., 8 September 1888.

⁷⁷¹Miles City Daily Press, 11 June 1883.

⁷⁷²Washington, D.C., National Archives, Record Group 393. Various documents, July 5, 1883.

⁷⁷³Yellowstone Journal, and Live Stock Reporter, 18 December 1886.

away. As early as 1894 plans were afoot to secure mounts for the cavalry, and Fort Keogh, because of its location in good grazing land, and its proximity to a main line of the railroad, was suggested.⁷⁷⁴ Despite such plans Fort Keogh continued as a military post until 1908.

In 1907 the few remaining troops at Fort Keogh had the job of checking and listing property that was to be shipped to other posts. The Fort was due to be closed down.⁷⁷⁵ On September 2, 1907, Troops L & M of the Sixth Cavalry departed for the Philippines following the other units that had shipped for foreign soil. The last detachment of troops at Fort Keogh departed the Post by Special Order No. 146, Department of Dakota, October 27, 1908, leaving a small caretaking detachment to maintain the silent buildings and grounds.⁷⁷⁶ In 1908 the graves of all those buried at the Post were removed, most going to the Custer battlefield National Cemetery.

Fort Keogh After the Army

New life came to Fort Keogh a year after the Army abandoned it. In 1909 the Army decided to use it as a remount station. Horses were bred, raised and trained on the grounds and shipped to points where they were needed. At one time the old post had 1,661 horses and this number rose as war came to Europe sending the total upward to 1,773 horses in 1916. During this period the Post was modernized with electric lights and steam heat. Its structures were painted and new machinery was added to make it easier to tend the horses.⁷⁷⁷

After the First World War, Fort Keogh was again converted, this time into a livestock and range experiment station under the control of the Department of Agriculture.⁷⁷⁸ Most of the station's employees during the 1920s lived in the old officers' quarters.

As the Great Falls Tribune described Fort Keogh in 1968, it was still rather active in its new form:

The entire station is fenced into 52 pastures of 30 to nearly 4,000 acres as range for each season and for research work with cattle. The station breeds more than 1,000 cows in nearly 50 herds, using individual sires and artificial insemination.⁷⁷⁹

During its short life, Fort Keogh repaid the American taxpayer many times over. Its worth was made evident every time new emigrants entered the area. Each mile the railroad advanced without trouble along the Yellowstone River was a credit to the Post. All the Indians who were aided in their move into the American culture at Fort Keogh meant that peace was close and this saved dollars and lives. This very active Post was

⁷⁷⁴Stock Growers Journal, 8 December 1894.

⁷⁷⁵Returns from U.S. Military Posts, September 1907.

⁷⁷⁶Frink and Barthelmess, Photographer on an Army Mule, p. 135.

⁷⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁷⁸Don Miller and Stan Cohen, Military and Trading Posts of Montana (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1978), p. 45.

⁷⁷⁹Great Falls Tribune (Great Falls, Montana) 14 April 1968.

at one time one of the larger Posts in the United States and from its beginning, the Post was busy reshaping the region. This installation helped expedite the development of eastern Montana, and while it existed, Montana went from a vast unmapped territory to a settled state with farmers and ranchers replacing the soldiers as the dominant force in the Eastern Montana. The farmers and ranchers could not have moved into this region without the soldiers leading the way and agricultural success in eastern Montana is in many ways a direct result of the soldiers at Fort Keogh.

Fort Keogh had made it possible for the United States government to gain control of a vast agricultural region. With the peace that the soldiers of the Post won, large numbers of farmers and ranchers were able to help feed the world. More than any other segment of the American people the soldiers and officers of Fort Keogh brought to the Yellowstone valley most of the civilization that later attracted other Americans. With all its consequences, the people who were most impacted by the Post were the soldiers who built it, the Indians whom they defeated, and fought along side of.

Memories of Fort Keogh lived on for years after the Post was abandoned and many were handed down to the children of those soldiers who were at Fort Keogh. Perhaps the most vivid memories that were perpetuated were those of Casey Barthelmess

Casey's memories recall the bandstand in front of the commanding officers quarters, the lofty flagpole on the parade ground, the cannon that was fired each evening at retreat--and always started a deaf dog barking. He remembers the honeywagon making its daily rounds to clean the latrines and collect the garbage. He sees Lieutenant McCabe sparking his girl in a fancy four-wheel buggy drawn by two white ponies hitched tandem, and sees, in the twilight, Larry Howe touching into brightness the kerosene lamps along the wooden sidewalks.⁷⁸⁰

Ed King who had served there between 1905 and 1907 best summed up what the Post meant years later to the troops. In 1951 he recorded:

The last time my wife and I took a vacation, something drew me back along the old trail, and so we drove through Montana and past old Fort Keogh. I took my hat off when we reached there, and got out of the car stood a long time alone. My wife did not break the silence. I just looked across the plains and imagined that I heard horses snorting the dust from their nostrils. I was sure I saw men riding by in column of twos, and heard bugles. Would you believe it, Casey, I caught myself reaching in my left shirt pocket for Bull Durham and papers, and getting ready to roll a cigarette, as I had not done then for forty years. Then my wife said, "so this is it," and I said "yep," and we drove on.⁷⁸¹

⁷⁸⁰Frink and Barthelmess, *Photographer on an Army Mule*, p. 92.

⁷⁸¹Ibid., p. 137.

APPENDIX
UNITS AT FORT KEOGH

1876 - General Staff (.5), Casually at Post (.4), 5th Infantry (29), Field & Staff, Bud (.8), A (3), B (4), C (3.5), D (3.5), E (3), F (4). G (3.5), H (3), I (3), K (3), 22nd Infantry (16.5).

1877 - General Staff (2), Casually at Post (9), Indian Scouts (4), ad Cavalry (23), 5th Infantry (334), 7th Cavalry, B (3.5), 11th Infantry, A (3), H (5) , 22nd Infantry (46).

1878 - General Staff (3), Casually at Post (6), Indian Scouts (17), 2nd Cavalry (170), 5th Infantry (320).

1879 - General Staff (3), Unassigned (4) 9 Casually at Post (1.5), Convicts (.5), Indian Scouts (28), 2nd Cavalry (141), 5th Infantry (328).

1880 - General Staff (3), Unassigned (2), Casually at Post (8), Convicts (3), Indian Scouts (24), 2nd Cavalry (145), 5th Infantry (293).

1881 - General Staff (3), Attached to Post (.1), Casually at Post (3), Indian Scouts (12) , 2nd Cavalry (37), E (15), 5th Infantry (309).

1882 - General Staff (3), Attached to Post (1), Casually at Post (5), Indian Scouts (7), 2nd Cavalry, E (25), 5th Infantry (135), Field & Staff Band (13), A (23), B (25), C (23), D (8), E (24.5), F (23), G (22), H (16), I (3), K (6).

1883 - General Staff (3), Attached to Post (.5), Unassigned (.5), Casually at Post (3), Indian Scouts (6), 2nd Cavalry, E (43), 5th Infantry, Field & Staff, Band (17), A (32), B (32), C (29), D (37), E (35), F (34), G (35), H (23).

1884 - General Staff (2), Unassigned (.5), Casually at Post (5), Convicts (5), Indian Scouts (3), 1st Cavalry, B (27.5), 2nd Cavalry, E (17.5), 5th Infantry (208), Field & Staff, Band (8), A (15), B (16), C (16), D (18), E (17), F (17), G (17), H (12).

1885 - General Staff (4), Attached to Post (.1), Casually at Post (3.5), Convicts (6.5), 1st Cavalry, B (17), 5th Infantry (331), 7th Cavalry, G (35)

1886 - General Staff (4), Attached to Post (.2), Unassigned (.6), Casually at Post (1.5), Convicts (2), Indian Scouts (.2), 5th Infantry (299), 7th Infantry, G (46.5).

1887 - General Staff (4), Unassigned (.5), Casually at Post (6), Convicts (1), Enlisted Indians (2), Indian Scouts (1.5), Hospital Corps (.4), 5th Infantry (270), Field & Staff, Band (1.5), A (3), B (3.2), D (3-5), E (3-5), G (3.2), H (3.5), I (3.4), 7th Cavalry, A (45).

1888 - General Staff (11), Casually at Post (2), Convicts (1.5), Enlisted Indians (11), 5th Infantry (100), 7th Cavalry, A (20), 8th Cavalry, H (18), Lt. Casey's Troop) (17.5), 22nd

Infantry (.1), Field & Staff, Band (11), A (21) , B (20) , C (20), D (21), F (22), H (21), K (20), 25th Infantry (3).

1889 - General Staff (10), Casually at Post (.4), Convicts (1), Indian Scouts (12), 8th Cavalry, H (52), L (Casey's Troop) (53), 22nd Infantry, Field A Staff, Bard (18), A (36), B (35), C (36.5), D (35), F (37), H (37), K (38).

1890 - General Staff (10.8), Casually at Post (.2), Convicts (1), Enlisted Indians (20), Indian Scouts (4), 1st Cavalry, B (4), C (.1), F (5), G (.2), H (.2), 4th Artillery (.3), 8th Cavalry, H (31.5), I (.2), K (10), L (Casey' a Troop) (26), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Band (19), A (27), B (32), C (35), O (31), F (34), H (29), I (.1), K (17.5), 25th infantry, C (7), D (.1), E (7), F (8), H (8).

1891 - General Staff (12.5), Casually at Post (.5), Convicts (1), Crow Enlisted (5), Capt. Ewer's Scouts (7), Enlisted Indians (8), 1st Cavalry, B (4.5), C (5), D (26.5), F (5), G (4), H (5), K (4), 6th Cavalry, I (.2), 8th Cavalry, H (21), K (23), L (Casey's Troop) (9), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Band (18), A (16), B (41), C (41), D (43), F (15.5), F (32), G (20), H (27.5), 25th Infantry, C (3), D (.1), E (3.5), F (4), H (3.9).

1892 - General Staff (12.4), Unassigned (.2), Convicts (1), 1st Cavalry, D (11), 8th Cavalry, L (Casey's Troop) (17.5), 10th Cavalry, D (21.5), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Bud (17), A (36), B (44), G (26), I (27.5), E (18), F (37), G (37.5), H (25).

1893 - General Staff (12), Casually at Post (6), 8th Cavalry, L (Casey's Troop) (37), 10th Cavalry, A (53), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Hard (18), A (47), B (35), C (49), D (51). F (41), G (49.5), H (50.5).

1894 - General Staff (11), Unassigned (2), Casually at Post (3), 8th Cavalry, L (Casey's Troop) (38.5), 10th Cavalry, A (51), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Bard (17.5), A (28), B (54), C (42), D (54), F (45.5), G (28.5), H (41).

1895 - General Staff (10), Attached to Post (.3), Unassigned (.1), Casually at Post (.1), Convicts (.3) 8th Cavalry, L (Casey's Troop) (9), 10th Cavalry, A (55), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Band (21), A (38), C (30.5), F (55), G (55), H (56).

1896 - General Staff (10), Casually at Post (.3), 2nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Band (9), A (20), E (19), F (24), H (21), 8th Cavalry, A (14), 10th Cavalry, A (36), 22nd Infantry, Field & Staff, Band (10), G (21.5), F (21), G (22), H (23).

1897 - General Staff (10), Casually at Post (.2), Convicts (.25), 2nd Infantry (40), Field & Staff, Hand (19), A (39), E (36), F (43), H (41), 8th Cavalry, A (39), 10th Cavalry (22).

1898 - General Staff (7), Casually at Post (.4), 1st Cavalry, F (14), 2nd Infantry (68.5), 3rd Cavalry (1) vol. (.8), 8th Cavalry, K (23), 10th Cavalry (46).

1899 - General Staff (6), Casually at Post (.25) 9 1st Cavalry, F (65), 2nd Infantry (4), 8th

Cavalry, K (2), 10th Cavalry (.8).

1900 - General staff (6.5), Casually at Post (.16). 1st Cavalry. F (67). 2nd Infantry, A (.75).

1901 - General Staff (8), Casually at Post (.3), Convicts (1), 1st Cavalry, Field & Staff (.2), F (36), H (11), 13th Cavalry (31), E (11), F (12.5).

1902 - General Staff (12), Unassigned (.1), Casually at Post (1), 1st Cavalry, Field & Staff (.6), H (27), 13th Cavalry, Field & Staff (.5), E (44), F (56), G (22), H (29), 21st Infantry, A (13), D (6), K (18.5), L (18).

1903 - General Staff (11), Casually at Post (1), Convicts (1), 6th Cavalry (5), Field & Staff (.4), B (14), D (14), I (22), K (22), L (22), M (22), 13th Cavalry, Field & Staff (.3), E (10), F (20), G (20), H (11), 21st Infantry, Field & Staff (.25), K (52), L (50).

1904 - General Staff (10), Casually at Post (1), Convicts (5), Hospital corps (3.5), 6th Cavalry, Field & Staff (1), I (57), K (58), L (57), M (58), 21st Infantry, Field & Staff (.25), K (47), L (45).

1905 - General Staff (3), Unassigned (.4), Convicts (4), Hospital Corps (8), 6th Cavalry, Field & Staff (1), I (31), K (28), L (54), M (52.5).

1906 - General Staff (3), Casually at Post (3.5), Convicts (2), Hospital Corps (7), 6th Cavalry, Field a Staff (.2), L (46), M (51),

1907 - General Staff (2), Casually at Post (10), Hospital Corps (5), 4th Cavalry (7), 6th Cavalry (.1), L (36), M (35.5), 6th Infantry (1).

1908 - Hospital Corps (.25), Post noncom staff (.8), 6th Infantry (3).

*All figures shown are an average for each year.

*Subordinate unit such as Field & Staff, Band or Letter Companies, Troops or Batteries, always follow their parent units.

*All data was taken from Reports from Military Post (Fort Keogh) and are as complete as possible.

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