

The Post on the Marmaton

A Historic Resource Study of Fort Scott National Historic Site

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**By Daniel J. Holder
and Hal K. Rothman**

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United States Department of the Interior
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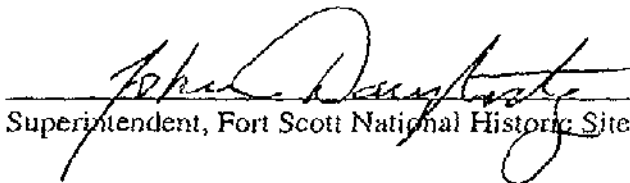
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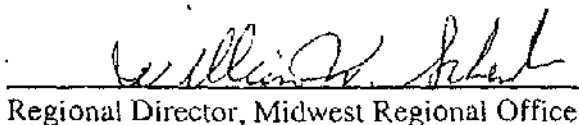
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Chapter One:

Fissures and Fractures: The World of Fort Scott

The United States Army's presence at Fort Scott always meant more than it appeared. The post was not just buildings on the rise above the Marmaton River, and not simply a supply depot or a base for troops. Built during the 1840s in what is now southeastern Kansas, the federal government conceived Fort Scott as part of the permanent Indian frontier with an important geopolitical mission: to separate Indians from the Americans moving west at a rapid pace. The fort became a catalyst of the very expansion it sought to monitor, and it maintained the frontier peace during its operation.

Remaining close to its national origins, more than one hundred and fifty years after its establishment Fort Scott is again a part of the federal government. A unit of the National Park system, Fort Scott National Historic Site is a restored representation of a frontier fort constructed, maintained, and garrisoned by the United States Army from 1842 to 1853. Its principal cultural resources include eleven original buildings and nine reconstructed structures, arrayed in a square surrounding the parade ground. Still an integral part of the adjacent town of Fort Scott whose development it fueled, the site contains three sections of restored prairie grass that illustrates the scene that once surrounded the soldiers.

The landscape surrounding Fort Scott resulted from millions of years of natural activity. Southeastern Kansas lies on the fringe of the area classified by geologists as the Ozark Plateau, the rugged terrain of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. Environmental forces created the gentle undulating hills of southeastern Kansas more than 245 million years ago, during the Permian Era, made up of limestone layers left behind by shallow seas. Further west, upheavals and erosion slowly shaped the Rocky Mountains. Shifting tectonic plates caused uplifting across the continent, raising the Rockies nearly 3,000 meters and lifting the present Mississippi River basin hundreds of meters. The higher mountains reshaped the weather patterns on the Great Plains, interrupting the usual pattern of wind and weather known as the Pacific Westerlies. Blocked from the continent's midsection, the moisture-carrying air masses heading east condensed and released their water along the mountain's western edges. The resultant "rain shadow" ended the swath of swamps and pine forests, replacing them with millions of acres of grassland and narrow lines of trees along the region's waterways.¹

Developing in concert with the grasses were animals that took advantage of the new sources of nutrition. Many resulting mammals grew larger than their modern-day counterparts. The wide expanses of prairies, the development of digestive systems with more efficient ingestion of the vegetation, and the emergence of large mammalian predators, which helped

¹ W. Brian Harland, *A Geologic Time Scale* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 23-4; Preston Cloud, *Oasis in Space: Earth History from the Beginning* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988): 121-138, 210-211; Ron Redfern, *The Making of a Continent* (New York: New York Times Book Co., 1983): 161; Frank Wilson, "Landscapes: A Geologic Diary," in *Kansas Geology: An Introduction to Landscapes, Rocks, Minerals, and Fossils* (Lawrence Kans.: published for the Kansas Geological Survey by the University Press of Kansas, 1984): 19-20; Robert W. Richmond, *Kansas: A Land of Contrasts*, 3d ed. (Arlington Heights, Ill.: Forum Press, 1989): 1-12.



The prairie landscape of eastern Kansas.

ensure development of swifter survivors, all contributed to the larger sizes. Mammoths, camels, and mastodons roamed the grasslands, along with one of the most prominent of the new species, the *Bison bison antiquus*, ancestor of modern American Bison.²

Regional plant and animal resources soon attracted human settlement. The prehistoric Paleo-Indian period began about 12,000 years ago, when now-extinct faunas were still evident across the Great Plains. Humans may have reached the Plains even before that time. The ancestors of the American Indian probably moved across the Bering Strait from Asia and down the continent, spreading onto the Plains. Paleo-Indian societies developed on the Plains and took advantage of the grasses and animals. They concentrated on hunting for large animals, supplementing their kill with gathered wild plants, including modern fauna that first appeared about six thousand years ago. Later prehistoric cultures adapted to the changing climatic conditions and improved technological capabilities. Changing weather patterns propelled social change, as increased amounts of rainfall reduced the risk of crop loss and made surplus harvests more likely. From about 1000 to 1500 A.D., societies now classified as the Middle Ceramic Period demonstrated evidence of increasing use of domesticated plants, especially the cultivation of beans, maize, sunflowers, and squash. Population groups across Kansas adapted to a more stable, sedentary lifestyle. Horticulture became a more prominent activity, although game

² Cloud, *Oasis in Space*, 387; John E. Weaver and F.W. Albertson, *Grasslands of the Great Plains: Their Nature and Use* (Lincoln, Neb.: Johnsen Publishing Co., 1956), 9; Debra K. Bennett, "Fossils," in Buchanan, *Kansas Geology*, 119-122; Brian S. John, *The Ice Age, Past and Present* (London: Collins, 1977); Paul G. Riser, E.C. Birney, H.D. Blocker, S.W. May, W.J. Parton, and J.A. Wiens, *The True Prairie Ecosystem* (Stroudsburg, Penn.: Hutchison Ross Publishing, 1981): 26-28.

animals still supplied significant nutrition.³

Contact with Europeans after 1541 revolutionized Plains societies. Across eastern Kansas, Late Ceramic groups began using the horse while retaining features of pre-horse culture. Ancestors of the horse lived in North America during earlier geological eras, but excessive hunting or climatic changes wiped out the species. Some animals evidently traveled westward over the Bering land bridge to Asia and eventually spread into Europe. Spanish colonizers brought their descendants back to the New World. The horses' reintroduction precipitated the beginning of widespread and comprehensive changes in Plains life. The horse harnessed unbelievable potential, increasing bison hunters' efficiency and people's range and creating new possibilities to augment sedentary horticulture and mobile gathering.⁴

Well before the incoming Americans reached the Plains, the region was an unstable mix of Indian societies, with the earliest communities established there centuries before. Decades before European-Americans reached the prairies, Indians across the continent slowly acquired possession of horses, providing the means for many populations who lived near the Plains to capitalize on its grasses and animals. The Kansa and Osage Indians, who shared a common Siouan linguistic background, moved west from the Ohio River Valley to eastern Kansas and Missouri in the fifteenth century. They established themselves across eastern Kansas, with the latter spread in communities throughout southeastern Kansas, southwestern Missouri, and northwestern Arkansas. Permanent villages along waterways characterized Osage and Kansa communities, and the people took part in seasonal expeditions in search of buffalo on hunting grounds to the west. Northwest of the Kansa were the Pawnee, traditional enemies of both Kansa and Osage, whose main villages were along the Platte River in Nebraska. To maintain the peace in this uncertain atmosphere, the federal officials ordered the Army to establish a line of military posts separating the two races, setting up what the government hoped was a "permanent Indian frontier."⁵

The most powerful group on the southern Plains before 1840, the Osage originally came from North Carolina or Virginia, with different groups later moving to lower courses of the Ohio River, and moving west of the Mississippi River by 1763. The Osage rise was quick and impressive. They successfully negotiated the middle ground between the French and Spanish and native peoples around them, mastering both trade and warfare. By the early nineteenth century, most Osage villages were along the south fork of Osage River in western Missouri. Explorers reported smaller settlements on the Marmaton and Missouri rivers, and near modern Ponca City, Oklahoma. In 1808, the government established Fort Osage, which included a trading post, on

³ Waldo R. Wedel, *Prehistoric Man on the Great Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961): 46-78.

⁴ John Canfield Ewers, *The Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture: With Comparative Material from Other Western Tribes* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980); Frank Gilbert Roc, *The Indian and the Horse* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955).

⁵ Willard H. Rollings, *The Osage: An Ethnohistorical Study of Hegemony on the Prairie-Plains* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992); William E. Unrau, *Indians of Kansas: The Euro-American Invasion and Conquest of Indian Kansas* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1991), 14; Elliott West, *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Reginald Horsman, *The Frontier in the Formative Years, 1783-1815* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

the south bank of the Missouri River approximately 40 miles east of the mouth of the Kansas River. About this time Tecumseh, the great Shawnee leader, visited the Osage villages to promote his vision of a pan-Indian confederacy. His vision proved futile, at least in Osage country, for also in 1808, the Osage negotiated a treaty ceding all lands north of the Arkansas River and east of a north-south line intersecting at Fort Osage, a total of fifty-two million acres. Moving to lands in southeastern Kansas, the Osage began a precipitous decline.⁶

The cession of 1808 was only the beginning of the end of Osage autonomy, as Americans coveted more of their land. The pressure continued, and on June 2, 1825, William Clark, now superintendent of Indian Affairs, negotiated a new land treaty with the Osage. They agreed to cede a strip of land between the Arkansas and Missouri rivers in the eastern part of what later became Kansas to the United States. American desire for land extended to neighboring people as well. The following day, Clark concluded a treaty with the Kansa Indians for lands north of Osage lands. Under the pressure of the expanding American republic, Indian hegemony on the Plains was quickly ending.⁷

The lands that would become home to thousands of Indians and later the state of Kansas became United States property as part of the 1803 transaction that set the tone and direction of the nation's future. Acquisition of the Louisiana Territory added more than 1,160,577 square miles to the United States, much of it not surveyed by any European. As befit a nation with limited organization and resources that lacked its own surveying organization, the federal government called upon the military to explore and map the lands recently acquired. The Meriwether Lewis and William Clark expedition of 1804-1806 provided an initial glimpse of the



Osage Indians, as drawn by George Catlin.

⁶ Rollings, *The Osage*; James R. Christianson, "The Early Osage — 'The Ishmaelites of the Savages,'" *Kansas History* 11, n. 1 (Spring 1988): 2-21; Unrau, *Indians of Kansas*, 37, 45.

⁷ Rollings, *The Osage*; H. Craig Miner and William E. Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas: A Study of Cultural Revolution, 1854-1871* (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1978), 2-24.

lands west of the Mississippi River and Lt. Zebulon Pike's mission to explore the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains soon followed. After leaving St. Louis in 1806, Pike's expedition passed through the area in which Fort Scott was later located. On September 6, when passing about ten miles north of the Marmaton River, Pike noted that "the prospect from the dividing ridge to the east and southeast is sublime. The prairie rising and falling in regular swells, as far as the sight can extend, produces a very beautiful appearance."⁸

Others were not so positive about the fringes of the Plains. When Major Stephen H. Long led an Army expedition through the unorganized territory in 1819, he offered a far less enticing vision. Long's travel report, compiled by Dr. Edwin James, described the terrain as unfit for agriculture and unsuitable for inhabitation by civilized people. Instead, James predicted, the area would provide an excellent barrier to control the country's westward expansion and "secure us against the machinations or incursions of an enemy that might otherwise be disposed to annoy us in that part of our frontier." Widely circulated in eastern newspapers, James' description made the lands described seem most suitable for relocation of Indians from eastern states. In this, the report contributed to the dominance of a military presence in the territory instead of a civilian one.⁹

Even as the expedition led by Lewis and Clark explored the breadth of the continent, Americans acquired a rough sense of their acquisition and began its division into political organizations. The Territory of Louisiana was established March 3, 1805, and given a new name — Missouri Territory — on June 4, 1812. Congress formed the Arkansas Territory within its present state borders in 1819. Missouri became a state on August 10, 1821, and the federal government designated the remainder of the original Louisiana Purchase land as the Missouri Territory. It was divided June 30, 1834, with a portion set aside as Indian Country or Indian Territory, and the rest labeled the Territory of Missouri. Part of the northern lands were set aside as the Territory of Michigan in 1834, and Arkansas gained statehood two years later. The rest of the Louisiana Purchase remained the Territory of Missouri until passage of Kansas-Nebraska Act on May 30, 1854. That controversial legislation created two popular sovereignty territories, Kansas and Nebraska. Congress, in a break with national procedure, permitted the two new territories to determine for themselves whether they would condone or reject the perplexing institution of slavery. The building national crisis over that issue took place at the same time and alongside attempts to resolve mounting frontier tensions between incoming settlers and Plains Indians.¹⁰

By the 1830s, American Indians living east of the Mississippi River faced increasingly dire circumstances. Internecine strife and the spread of white settlement pushed westward those

⁸ Elliot Coues, ed. *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, to Headwaters of the Mississippi River, Through Louisiana Territory, and in New Spain, During the Years 1805-06-07* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1965): 395-397.

⁹ Unrau, *Indians of Kansas*, 47-48; William H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the America West, 1803-1863* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959); Reuben Gold Waites, ed. *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846. Volume 17: Part IV of James' Account of S.H. Long's Expedition, 1819-1820* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1905), 147-148.

¹⁰ Robert W. Johannsen, *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism*, edited by Sam W. Haynes and Christopher Morris (College Station, Texas: Published for the University of Texas at Arlington by Texas A&M University Press, 1997).

formerly living along the eastern seaboard. Their dominance ended in 1811 at the battle of Tippecanoe. The lack of real support from the British during the War of 1812 dashed Shawnee leader Tecumseh's dream of a pan-Indian confederacy. From Tippecanoe to the Black Hawk War in 1832, native people found their lands confiscated and their choices increasingly limited.¹¹ They needed new lands to replace their traditional lands. To many concerned with the fate of native peoples, the Plains seemed the best option.

While many Indian groups were forced to look west, others who peripherally used the Plains voluntarily stepped up their occupation. A combination of factors, the horse and the mobility it provided and the open nature of much of the Plains, furthered this process. Before the Mexican War, the Arkansas River marked an international boundary between the United States and first Spain and later Mexico. Native peoples could use the Plains — essentially the contested edge area between the countries — for their own purposes. Comanches dominated the southern Plains, while Cheyenne and others moved down from the mountains to the west and onto the vast prairie covered with buffalo. The Lakota or Sioux controlled the northern Plains, making vassals of the sedentary peoples of the waterways as well as threatening competing peoples such as the Pawnee to the south and later the Crow to the west.¹² By the time that removal of native peoples from the east became a serious option, an American Indian presence was well entrenched on the Plains.

Americans had long planned to relocate eastern Indians across the Mississippi River. Even before Andrew Jackson's presidency began in 1829, removal was an oft-discussed topic. Although earlier presidents sought to move all Indians west and some issued threats and offered inducements in attempts to force various groups to move, few efforts advanced beyond the loud thundering of political speech. Most administrations generally treated Indian groups as sovereign nations and respected their right to land. Jackson professed to be the culmination of this movement when he created a new national Indian policy, but his actions spoke louder than the words he uttered with great solemnity. As he told the Chickasaws of Georgia, although the United States recognized their rights to sovereignty, the government could respect those rights only if the Chickasaws gave up their homes and moved beyond the Mississippi River. The declaration was more than just political talk. While publicly seeking a humane means of achieving his goals, Jackson had little aversion to forceful means if necessary to remove Indian peoples quickly.¹³

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 provided the legal rationale for moving eastern Indian

¹¹ Richard H. White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); John Mack Faragher, *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer* (New York: Holt, 1992); Allan W. Eckert, *Twilight of Empire* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988).

¹² Richard H. White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of American History* 65 n. 2 (September 1978): 319-43; Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998); West, *The Way to the West*.

¹³ Quoted in Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, abridged ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 82; Andrew Wallace, *The Long, Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993); Ronald Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975); Edward Pessen, *Jacksonian American: Society, Personality and Politics* (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1978), 297-301.

groups across the Mississippi River to lands west of Missouri and Arkansas. Federal government officials envisioned a permanent Indian frontier separating whites from Indians, with the expectation that partitioning the races would allow American Indians time to develop cultural practices such as agriculture. Many hoped that such restrictions would solve the question of the fate of Indian people, for agriculture was a skill that Americans of the first half of the nineteenth century deemed essential to survive in a self-proclaimed "civilized" society. Plans for removal quickly became reality. The Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834 treated the removal of Indians as an accomplished fact; it designated all lands west of the Mississippi River not already enclosed in states or territories as Indian Country. The act gave the War Department authority, under the direction of the president, to use force to end or prevent conflicts between Indians and whites. Only lines on a map separated the relocated Indians from the American settlers, and an economic-minded Congress historically maintained as small a peacetime military as possible. The need to police this relationship forced Congress to reorganize the nation's frontier defense system.¹⁴

The existing national military force was a dismal entity to pull into a situation of such geopolitical significance, typically underfinanced by Congress and its members treated with scorn by civilians. In the decades before the Permanent Indian Frontier's establishment, the Army scattered its western outposts in haphazard fashion, victim to demands from the frontier settlements lucky enough to win deployment of soldiers. The Army housed most of the garrisons in log barracks, temporary structures designed for abandonment when the frontier again moved westward. Following the War of 1812, Congress financed an army of 12,000, the largest peacetime force ever established in the young nation. The economic downturn of 1819 devastated the country and federal officials cut the army's size in half. Despite the manpower shortages, the Army's national commitments remained the same. Small and understaffed military units continued their patrol duties across the continent, trying to quell the violence all too usual in border areas.¹⁵

The American nation saw great advantages in the idea of Indian removal from Eastern states. Such a move seemed likely to reduce friction between state and federal governments, end the immediate and growing problem of deteriorating cross-cultural and race relations, and eliminate the threat of violence between incoming white settlers and Indians. Removal also solved the problems created by Georgia's demands that Washington carry out all the provisions of an 1802 compact that promised the extinguishing of all Indian title to lands in the state. Relocating Indian groups to the west also resolved the potential problem of groups such as the Cherokees, who planned to organize their own state on their lands within the state of Georgia and seek entry into the United States.¹⁶ These simultaneously imperial and pragmatic considerations

¹⁴ Prucha, *The Great Father*, 104-105; Francis Paul Prucha, *Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier, 1783-1846* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986; New York: Macmillan, 1969).

¹⁵ Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 65-9; Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 123-9.

¹⁶ Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1987), 191-193; Prucha, *The Great Father*: 64-77.

drove the policy initiatives of those who dealt with Indian issues in their daily lives.

Idealists believed the goal of removal was a good one, but for an entirely different set of reasons. Northern humanitarians saw Indian removal to the lands west of Missouri as the only means of saving Indians from the detrimental effects of association with white society. Distant homes provided time to “civilize” Indians to white standards, to keep native peoples from the dregs of American society, the gun-traders and whiskey-peddlers who flocked to the fringes of society, and to acculturate Indians to concepts such as private property and individual aggrandizement. Humanitarians harbored even greater fears than the mere corruption of Indians. Lewis Cass, governor of Michigan Territory, argued in January 1830 that removal was the “only means of preserving the Indians from that utter extinction which threatens them.” Americans felt social, economic and political pressure to move the Indians west, and that desire proved unstoppable. Eventually the federal government forcibly moved more than ten thousand Indians to what would become eastern Kansas. The new emigrants lived on lands ceded by the Kansas and Osage peoples in 1825 to some of the Eastern tribes, including Potawatomi, Miami, Shawnee and Delaware.¹⁷

The future state of Kansas was not the only destination for the forced migrations. The best-known instance of removal, Congress ordered the Five Civilized Tribes – the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles – pushed from lands in southern states between 1830 and 1835 and sent to what would become the state of Oklahoma. In this most brutal of relocations, innumerable Indians died of disease, hunger, exhaustion, and cold. The Indians had to resuscitate much of the culture and civilization of all five peoples within the new country. Almost sixty thousand refugees settled on the land the federal government granted the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory. In addition, federal officials granted the Cherokees additional territory that became known as the Cherokee Strip, to separate them from the Osage to the north.¹⁸

Fort Scott resulted from a failed vision of maintaining order in the vast chaos and space of expansion. In 1836, Cass, then Secretary of War, proposed that Congress authorize the construction of a line of forts and connecting military roads running parallel to the Mississippi River. Beginning at Fort Snelling in what is now Minnesota and stretching through Indian Territory in what is now Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and into Louisiana, the line of forts was to create a border between two worlds designed never to intersect. The reasons behind the choice to withhold so much land from white settlement were obvious in the context of the time. Americans in the 1830s regarded the Plains as useless, throwaway lands not worthy of their attention from either an economic or a scenic perspective. In 1832, following up on a generation of exploration that denigrated the Plains, the famous American artist and ethnographer George Catlin recommended making the Plains into a park for Indians and buffalo. This cession was

¹⁷ Quoted in Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1982): 62; Unrau, *Indians of Kansas*, 31; for Lewis Cass, see Willard C. Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1996); John C. Spencer, Secretary of War, November 26, 1842, 27th Cong., 3d sess., House Document 2.

¹⁸ Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail*.

telling. Catlin, like his nation, could see no practical economic use for the region.¹⁹

One other Indian group was forced into the population mix in the ostensibly vacant space in southeast Kansas, although mainly in legal machinations. A treaty signed January 15, 1838, at Buffalo Creek, N.Y., between the U.S. government and Oneida, Tuscarora, Seneca, Cayuga and other smaller bands granted the group, classified by the document as New York Indians, 1.824 million acres in what would become Kansas just west of the Missouri state line. The Osage lands were immediately north of the Cherokee Strip and south of this new reservation. Another treaty provision provided that the president could reclaim any lands not used by New York Indians who refused to move there from their existing homes in New York and Wisconsin. The Seneca nation sold their New York reservations — at Buffalo Creek, Cattaraugus, Allegany, and Towanda — to Thomas Ogden and Joseph Fellows for \$202,000 in preparation for a move to Kansas. Business difficulties derailed the sale, and by a new contract negotiated on May 20, 1842, the Seneca regained rights to the Allegany and Cattaraugus reserves. This regaining of New York lands, along with “the unlimited right to remain thereon,” stopped their departure to the Indian Territory.²⁰

The legal maneuvers of the other groups continued. Under terms of the 1838 treaty, which went into effect by presidential proclamation on April 4, 1840, the New York Indians had five years to move to the lands set aside for them. Although in 1846 Dr. Abraham Hogeboom persuaded about two hundred New York Indians to move to their land in an action that lacked government sanction, no general movement of New York Indians followed. Many in Hogeboom’s group died shortly after reaching their lands, a few settled on the reservation lands, and the rest returned to New York. After the failure to shift the Indians west, the Department of the Interior protected the reserved New York Indian lands and sought to guard them against the encroachment of white settlers until the agency resolved their legal status. Commissioner of the Office of Indian Affairs George Manypenny informed the U.S. Senate in December 1856. Only thirty-two New York Indians remained in Kansas in 1860, when the federal government had restored all but 11,000 acres of the grant to the public domain.²¹

Located at the fringe of the American nation of the 1840s, the Army built Fort Scott on those mostly vacant New York Indian lands, sentry to a vision of social management that was disastrous from its inception. Consigned to the dispossessed American Indian peoples from east of the Mississippi River, the land that would become eastern Kansas and Oklahoma seemed ripe

¹⁹ George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians. Written During Eight Years' Travel amongst the Wildest Tribes of Indians in North America. In 1832. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, and 39.* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1965; New York, Wiley and Putnam, 1841); Earl Arthur Shoemaker, *The Permanent Indian Frontier: The Reason for the Construction and Abandonment of Fort Scott, Kansas, During the Dragoon Era* (Omaha: National Park Service, 1986): 6-22.

²⁰ George Manypenny to R. McClelland, Secretary of the Interior, Dec. 23, 1856, published in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior, communicating, In compliance with a resolution of the Senate on the 17th instant, information respecting the title of the United States to certain land in Kansas set aside to the New York Indians.* Serial doc. 878, Senate Ex. Doc. 13, 34th Cong., 3d sess., 1-4.

²¹ *Ibid.*, “Brief on Behalf of Settlers in Kansas upon Public Lands in which it is claimed that certain New York Indians have an interest under the treaty made with the Six Nations of New York Indians, January 15, 1838.” Charles and William B. King, Attorneys for the Settlers, Kansas State Historical Society, micro negative No. 2.

for these refugees from an earlier world, torn apart by the expansion of the new nation. Their chance at "civilization," in the parlance of the time, depended on being kept away from the dregs of American society, the whiskey peddlers and the other low types who seemed to the affluent to embody moral decay and social ruin. Most Americans deemed the lands assigned the Indians useless. That decreased the chances white settlers would flood in as they had across the rich farmlands of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, new states that made up the Old Northwest.

The federal government held a clear conception of Fort Scott's role in the nation's political picture, but the reality of its mission became far more complicated than anyone anticipated. Originally the Army designed it to assist with the protection and policing of the Permanent Indian Frontier. The federal government detailed the military to stand guard, keeping settlers and avaricious traders away from native peoples and policing a line of separation as much like an international border as could exist within a nation that embraced the philosophy of Manifest Destiny. This idea that God had given the continent to the American nation had been in the air since the end of the War of 1812. John L. O'Sullivan, the editor of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, first defined it in 1845, when he called for the United States to assume control of the entire continent. This powerful vision of a nation flexing across the continent also contained a real arrogance, one that permitted Americans to look past and then cast aside all who inhabited the continent before them. The section of Military road running south from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Gibson in the Indian Territory was near the boundaries of Missouri and Arkansas that separated the two societies. Military leaders sought to place a base halfway between those two established posts, to prevent illegal white settlements on Indian land and prevent Indian depredations from occurring in Missouri. The rise above the Marmaton River offered advantages for both purposes, a view overlooking the road and the high ground to defend in case of attack. The speed of construction did not match the enthusiasm for the location. Started in 1842, Fort Scott required almost eight years to complete.²²

Built a few miles from the western edge of Missouri, Fort Scott overlooked thousands of prairie acres apparently perfect for farming, yet off-limits to white settlers. Artificial political constraints – the Missouri state line and the federal government's Indian frontier – made this desirable territory unavailable to the settlers who salivated for good land. The advance guard of land speculators pushed ever westward by the young and boisterous nation's growth soon coveted these lands, but the chain of Indian treaties denied speculators' plans for a quick conquest. Temporarily blocking the nation's expansion westward may have fueled land and political passions and contributed to the heightened emotions unleashed in Kansas from 1854 to 1861.

Army garrisons in the territory that became Kansas played a key role in national development during the first half of the nineteenth century. Troops carried out the dictates of federal leaders and acted as a counterbalance to land-hungry settlers and the local governments they established. Even before the facilities were finished, the fort's initial purpose, policing the

²² White, *The Middle Ground*, 413, 415-18; Bernard W. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1973); Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); Haynes and Morris, *Manifest Destiny and Empire*, 8-10; William E. Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 40-78.

line of separation between Indian country and westward-moving settlers, became obsolete. After 1853, as expansion pressed westward, Fort Scott no longer guarded a boundary between settlers and native peoples

Military action aimed at subduing American Indians became a common feature of antebellum life, but the Army could not ignore developing international issues. During the era of expansion across the continent, the United States also sought to define its Manifest Destiny in global terms, grappling with Spain, Mexico, and Great Britain. Assuming new missions, the post's garrison supported American military expeditions on the Plains before 1846. In that year, when war with Mexico erupted, troops from Fort Scott turned away from Indian patrols and joined other Army regiments pursuing what many Americans saw as their national destiny. With the frontier line far to the west in 1853, the Army abandoned the post of Fort Scott. Following the public sale of the former government buildings two years later, the town that kept the military name occupied the same buildings and began its rise to regional economic power.

First established to help maintain peace on the frontier between whites and Indians, the Army outpost at Fort Scott became more than a military response to western problems. During the nineteenth century, Americans continually looked westward. The country's frontiers expanded at a faster pace than did the ability of political leaders to plan for expansion, and national ideas about western development and the handling of Indian peoples inevitably lagged behind settlement. Other issues soon eclipsed those frontier problems. The time's social, political and economic issues reached across the Plains and engulfed Fort Scott's officers and soldiers. Their post stood at the convergence of the country's three main sections, where South, North, and West met. National problems compelled decisions and debates in cities and along the nation's peripheries, in the Astor Hotel bookstore in New York City frequented by such luminaries as Edgar Allan Poe and the aging Albert Gallatin, and on the overlook above the Marmaton River. The frontier mixing of regional tensions, caused by immigrants who often brought along their political philosophies as they moved into the new lands, shaped the territory of Kansas.

In all of the national struggle over slavery, no place came to epitomize the inhumanity of human to human more than "Bleeding Kansas." There, zealots of all persuasions inflicted violence upon one another in the name of causes that each side believed just. Regional strains finally grew together into the Civil War, the culmination of three-quarters of a century of tension within a national structure built upon inherent fissures. The compact fort above the Marmaton River built on land close to the slave-holding states of Missouri and Arkansas offered a clear view of the various trajectories that collided as mid-century approached. As tensions over the status of African-Americans heightened, the regional farming community of what would become Bourbon County grew up around the border town of Fort Scott, developing such a sizable infrastructure that by 1861 the return of a much larger Army presence became possible. Built in a location where it could provide security for two different culture groups, Fort Scott proved to be a key regional player in the much larger national conflict over the future of a third.²³

The conflict over slavery, fundamental to the nation's future, gave the town of Fort Scott a new importance after the Army's mission to control American Indians in eastern Kansas faded.

²³ C. E. Cory, "Slavery in Kansas," *Kansas Historical Collections* 7 (1901-1902): 229-242; Elmer LeRoy Craik, "Southern Interest in Territorial Kansas, 1854-1858," *Kansas Historical Collections* 15 (1919-1922): 334-450.

National conflict over slavery periodically brought federal troops back to southeast Kansas during the second half of the 1850s for short periods as peacekeepers. The outbreak of the Civil War then brought the Army back to the town of Fort Scott, where it leased buildings and lots to house personnel, supplies, and animals. The Civil War in western Missouri, Kansas, and the Indian Territory was an extension of the vicious conflict of "Bleeding Kansas," the anarchic violence between free-staters and slave-staters that catapulted the fiery abolitionist John Brown to national prominence and did much to bring on the war itself. The Civil War years were even more complicated. The Army's presence served as a counter to the shifting allegiances of various Indian peoples, who often used the pretext of the war and the alliance of their historic friends or enemies, as the determining factor in their choice of sides. Leased and newly constructed buildings served as supply and training centers for federal troops from 1861 to 1865, and also housed a military hospital, guardhouse and military prison, playing an integral part in this poorly understood dimension of the Civil War.²⁴

After the bloody conflict ended, the site again lost its significance and the Army left the area in 1865, only to return four years later. The demand for land that underpinned so much of westward expansion also pulled in Fort Scott, creating a call for soldiers who reestablished a military presence in southeast Kansas. The construction of rail lines across the checkerboard lands given the railroads met with sometimes fierce local resistance. Squatters, people who saw unsettled land and made it their own without regard for preexisting claims, saw possession as more than nine-tenths of the law. When rails appeared, complete with rights-of-way, claims on sections, and other legal eventualities, displaced squatters reacted with venom. Fort Scott soon contained the military headquarters of the federal troops protecting railroad crews that built a line south of the city. The troops confronted white settlers who squatted on lands owned by the railroad company and refused to give way. Massive federal intervention quelled the violence, and railroad construction through the area continued.

The military presence ended in 1873 with the Army's final withdrawal, and the town continued to develop. Fort Scott the town replaced and eclipsed Fort Scott the military post. The era of federal influence that also dominated the region's economic and political spheres also closed, replaced by local and state influences.²⁵

²⁴ Alvin M. Josephy Jr., *The Civil War in the West* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1991); Kevin (Brother Mathew) Ast, *Divided We Stand: Osage Leadership Before Removal* (M.A. thesis, Wichita State University, 1991); James A. Rawley, *Race and Politics: Bleeding Kansas and the Coming of the Civil War* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1969).

²⁵ Leo Oliva, *Fort Scott: Courage and Conflict on the Border* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1984); William C. Davis, *Three Roads to the Alamo* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998) discusses land speculation in great detail.

Chapter Two:

The Fort on the Frontier

The new lands acquired by the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 challenged the governed and the governors. After the United States Army established Fort Scott in 1842, its officers experienced a unique predicament. Most of the Indians with whom they dealt were for the most part as foreign to the territory as were they. Both were refugees. The federal government exiled many of the Indian populations by forced reassignment to what would one day become Kansas and the military men assigned to maintain peace on the border had to serve at this undeveloped outpost. Circumstances quickly dashed both groups' dreams of finding happiness in the new location, Indians by displacement from their homes and ways of life on the unfamiliar Plains, military men by the reality rather than the romance of frontier life. Later, both showed a significant flexibility in their new environment and the changes that they faced in the years that followed.¹

One important proof of the adaptability came in the form of the respect that many post officers and soldiers felt for the Indians who surrounded them. In writing about the 1844 expedition to Pawnee villages in what is now Nebraska, Lt. James Carleton of the First Dragoons noted that "Chief Charachaush's speech was delivered with natural eloquence and grace for which the Indians are so celebrated. ... We were all impressed with his truly beautiful delivery." Other instances in which officers especially showed that they accepted the characterization of native peoples as noble savages abounded.²

Some held more conventional views of the natives who seemed to both dog the post and somehow menace it by their very existence. Richard Ewell, a Dragoon lieutenant stationed at Fort Scott, wrote his sister in 1842 that "The Osages (are) a pack of sheep stealing vagabonds. We must be set to work building log cabins & government must be put to an expense of \$4000 on out of transportation instead of shooting the Indians like the beasts they are."³ With this point of view, Ewell encapsulated the negative views that many soldiers held of the native peoples in the Fort Scott area.

One constant fact about American frontier life was that the federal government and local

¹ Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); Brian Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middlebury: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), 47-8; Francis Paul Prucha, *Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier, 1783-1846* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 193-210; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 458, 469-70.

² John Mack Faragher, *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994); Edward M. Coffin, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford Press, 1986), 34-5, 70-8, 180-82; William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 314-18; Daniel J. Holder, *Changes in Attitude: Army Officers and Indian Policy in Kansas During the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (M.A. thesis, Wichita State University, 1991), 15-39.

³ Richard Ewell, letter to Rebecca L. Ewell, April 10, 1842. Richard Ewell file, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archive.

councils had different concerns and beliefs about problems involving Indians, international borders and white settlements. Today the decisions made in Washington, D.C., touch the majority of Americans just about every day. However, in the early nineteenth century a relatively small federal government had little contact with most citizens, an influence that diminished even further along the frontier. Militia units, run by the states, tended to reflect the passions of local residents, including settlers' demands for more lands during conflicts across the Old Northwest (Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois) in the first two decades of the century. Many times, calling out the volunteers made a tense situation between Indian and white even worse. Driven by demands for a neutral force that could enter and defuse frontier situations, Army officers began a push to professionalize their ranks by increasing training and demanding loyalties to the national government, showing the first blush of improvement in the First Seminole War of 1818-19. The revived officer corps would show the effects of reforms in again fighting the Seminoles in the 1830s, and also during the Mexican and Civil wars. Another type of military lesson came from frontier service in posts such as Fort Scott.⁴

American officers were not prepared for conflict against Indians groups. Instead their formal educational experiences at the U.S. Military Academy were mainly directed for war against a "European" style enemy. This left most officers unready for frontier service. Officers saw campaigns against the Indian peoples as diversion from real duty of countering an invasion, a distraction that offered little chance for promotions or glory. Senior officers, without reliable lines of communications to the isolated posts, could only offer guidance on how to handle frontier situations, mainly simply issuing orders to enforce various trade and intercourse acts. Commanders on the scene had broad discretion on how to deal with frontier problems. The growing professionalism of the officer corps imparted a nonpolitical stance to their attitudes and actions — as the uniformed men interacted with frontier groups, they typically sought to balance the rights of the Indians and whites. Unified federal responses to frontier conflicts helped prevent uncoordinated responses, often brought on as different states followed their own strategies. Local attitudes did influence Army officers, especially when complaints reached a state or territory's member of Congress. Fears of civil lawsuits, compounded by the usual tendency of civilian juries to rule against soldiers, also played roles in the decision process. Societal beliefs about Indians carried by officers also influenced their actions. In spite of these negative factors, officers trained for war gradually replaced amateur leaders. This professionalism would prove decisive in the latter years of the 1850s, when violence erupted across the eastern half of Kansas.⁵

Many Regular Army officers who served in the Civil War acquired a large part of their military experience on the American frontier. One consequence of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 was a federal commitment to keep the Indian and white races separate. President Andrew Jackson signed a bill July 2, 1836, providing for a line of outposts along the western frontier of

⁴ Richard Bruce Winders, *Mr. Polk's Army: The American Military Experience in the Mexican War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), 68.

⁵ John C. Fredriksen, comp., *Shield of Republic/Sword of Empire: A Bibliography of United States Military Affairs, 1783-1846* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 305-13; Allan Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 126-28, 134-37; Holder, *Changes in Attitude*, 40-54; Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 144-172.

the United States, with a road to provide communications and support for the forts. A lack of qualified officers delayed the project until 1837, when an Army party left Fort Coffee, near Arkansas' western border on the Arkansas River, and headed north to Fort Leavenworth, which they reached October 8, 1837. The accomplishment, a significant achievement with the soldiers blazing timber and placing mile markers, represented only about a third of the entire proposed route, that stretched from the upper Mississippi River to the Red River. If the War Department's proposal for frontier defense was completed as planned, a cordon of military posts would line the eastern edge of the Permanent Indian Frontier, connected by a road designed to allow quick passage of troops and supplies.⁶

As May 19, 1837 dawned, the United States Army found itself with new administrative responsibilities. On that day, the Department of War reorganized its command structure, shifting the frontier boundaries that marked its departments and divisions. The former demarcation line that divided the nation east and west passed from the western edge of Lake Superior south to the tip of Florida. An increasing number of emigrant Indians and white settlers forced the military to expand its purview. The Mississippi River became the new dividing line, with a new boundary running from the mouth of the Mississippi to Cassville, in the Wisconsin Territory, and then north to the Canadian border. The May 19 adjustment also split the new western unit into two military divisions at the 37th degree of north latitude, a few miles south of the bluffs on the Marmaton River where Fort Scott later stood. The federal government intended this new department's frontier boundary, pushed west two months later when Missouri adjusted its state borders, to act as the permanent dividing line between Indian and Anglo-American cultures. Instead it produced a mixed society that created a host of unique problems.⁷

Construction of the middle section of the frontier military road began a year after the Army party finished its survey. The Army's acting quartermaster general, T. Cross, suggested using soldiers to built the bridges and clear the route to avoid moving large numbers of uncontrollable civilian workers to the Indian Territory through which the road passed. However, the federal government instead turned to the private sector and after advertising the proposal, let out contracts on October 15, 1838. The Army awarded the contract for construction of the 72-mile section between Fort Leavenworth and the Marais des Cygnes to the firm of Aaron Overton and Daniel Morgan Boon. Overton and Lewis Jones won the contract for the road between the Marais des Cygnes and the Marmaton River.⁸

⁶ Letter from the Secretary of War, March 24, 1838, 25th Cong., 2d sess., Document no. 278 (serial 328), House of Representatives; Eloise Frisbie Robbins, "The Original Military Post Road Between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Scott," *Kansas History* 1, n. 2 (Summer 1978): 90-100; Louise Barry, "The Fort Leavenworth-Fort Gibson Military Road and the Founding of Fort Scott," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 11, n. 2 (May 1942): 115-129.

⁷ Prucha, *Sword of the Republic*, 255; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 54-5; Henry Putney Beers, *The Western Military Frontier, 1815-1846* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1975), 122; Raphael Thain, comp., *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States, 1813-1880* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 141-142; Leo E. Olivia, *Fort Scott: Courage and Conflict on the Border* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1996), 3-4; David T. Childress, *The Army in Transition: The United States Army, 1815-1846*, (Ph.D. diss., Mississippi State University, 1974); Robert Leckie, *From Sea to Shining Sea: From the War of 1812 to the Mexican War. The Saga of America's Expansion* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).

⁸ House Document 94, 25th Cong., 3d sess. (Serial 346); House Document 89, 26th Cong., 1st sess. (Serial 35); Robbins, "The Original Military Post Road."

Western Frontier Military

R O A D

THE undersigned having been directed to put under contract that portion of the Western Frontier Military Road extending from the Murais de Cygne, to Spring River, about

85 MILES,

invites all those who may be desirous of becoming Contractors for any portion of this work, and wish to become acquainted with the topography of the country through which the survey passes, to meet him at Westport, Mo., on THURSDAY, the 19th inst. & accompany him in an examination of the Route.

The whole distance will be divided into sections of convenient lengths, and each section offered for contract separately. Detailed plans of the different sections will be prepared as soon as the route shall have been examined, and due notice given of the time when the contracts will be let.

The following extract from the act of Congress, defines the mode of construction:

"The timber shall be cut down to a reasonable width, and the wet and marshy places shall be causewayed or otherwise rendered passable; cheap bridges shall be erected on the smaller streams not having good fords across them; and when it may be found necessary, the road may be thrown up in the centre."

THOS. SWORDS, Capt. A. Q. M.

Ast. Qr. Master's Office,
Fort Leavenworth, Sept. 10, 1839.

An 1839 solicitation seeking contractors for one of the later road sections to be built between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Gibson.

Scott had to react to conflicts among the divided nation. Split between those who accepted removal to Indian country and those who resisted the dictates they received, the Cherokee were capable of violence directed at one another. To the southwest of the post was the Osage reservation, and to the northwest lay the Potawatomi lands.⁹ The closest large white settlements were to the north, around Fort Leavenworth, Westport and Independence, and along the Oregon and Santa Fe trails. Southwestern Missouri remained a land dotted by small farms and villages. At the juncture of these many conflicting groups, Fort Scott stood as an exemplum of the military's role in the antebellum West, one of the harbingers of society established in isolation.

Before the Civil War, the military was one of the few federal institutions with a national reach, and Congress called upon the Army to fulfill a host of commitments. Not the least of these were obligations to the Indian peoples removed to the West. In 1840, Secretary of War Joel Poinsett outlined the military's complicated and sometimes contradictory obligations in the West. Reporting to Congress, Poinsett stated that treaties bound the country to several obligations,

The nation looked to the War Department for an answer to many of its frontier problems and the Army responded with troops, posts and military roads. One example of the Army's reaction was Fort Scott. Located on land reserved for the New York Indians who never moved west, the Army established Fort Scott between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Gibson to protect and control the permanent Indian frontier. It was also isolated from the major white settlements far to its north and east. South of the post was an 800,000-acre tract of land known as the Cherokee Neutral Lands. This tract was supposed to remain unsettled and serve as a buffer zone between the Cherokee reservation to the south, Missouri to the east, the Osage reservation to the west and the New York Indian lands to the north. The most significant of the emigrant groups that were pushed west by the oncoming white settlements, the Cherokee suffered from great internal tension. Along with maintaining the peace between Indian and white cultures and protecting the emigrant groups in their new homes, soldiers at Fort

⁹ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, abridged edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 86-7, 94-104; G. Raymond Gaddert, *The Birth of Kansas* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications, 1940), 60, 86-8.

including protecting the displaced groups from other newly arrived Indians as well as longtime Indians already on the Plains. In addition, he reminded the legislators, the Army was at the same time responsible for guarding the lives and property of American citizens. The nation could only properly meet this obligation, Poinsett averred, by maintaining several advanced positions deep inside Indian country that housed sufficient military force to counter intertribal warfare and depredations against and by settlers living on the western frontier of the United States. A second series of forts along the western border of Arkansas and Missouri would support the frontier forts, by helping "restrain the intercourse between the whites and the Indians, and serve as rallying points for the neighboring militia in times of alarm." The federal government ordered construction of Fort Scott as one of this second tier of auxiliary posts.¹⁰

As planning for Fort Scott began, the frontier situation made the need for such a post imperative. The Army and the federal government perceived a serious threat to white settlements in the nation's western border states and territories, with numerous calls for a military presence coming from settlers on the frontier. Illegal liquor sales to Indians compounded the problem, with whiskey often lubricating the tension that led to capricious violence. After an economic downturn in 1837 forced many small farmers off their lands in the South, significant numbers headed west, into Arkansas, Missouri, and beyond in an attempt to acquire new holdings. Unlike their northern counterparts who could venture to unclaimed lands in Iowa and Minnesota, southern farmers found their way blocked by the Permanent Indian Frontier. Their migration increased tension along the boundary. On the other side of the frontier, the removal of Indian people from the Southeast and upper Midwest opened land for white settlers but also created a concentration of armed and experienced warriors on the Plains. A military presence seemed essential if the tensions this mix created were to be kept in check.

For the military, the number and martial experience of such men was a cause for concern. The Office of Indian Affairs determined in its March 17, 1840, report that emigrant groups west of Missouri and Arkansas included 16,310 warriors. Cherokees were the most numerous, the report calculated, with 5,182, followed by the Creeks with 4,908. Indigenous groups in the area immediately west of the Missouri-Arkansas line tallied 1,544 warriors, and another 43,385 warriors from groups native to the Plains lived within striking distance of the two states. In comparison to the staggering number of potential Indian warriors, the entire United States Army from 1840 to 1853 remained consistently at 10,000 soldiers in uniform, a number that could easily be overwhelmed if inappropriately deployed when warfare began.¹¹

From a military perspective, federal officials perceived some Indian groups as more dangerous than others. During an inspection tour of western outposts in 1841-42, Major Ethan Allen Hitchcock of the Eighth Infantry noted that the Cherokees "without questioning their bravery, have too much intelligence to disturb the peace even under the great wrongs inflicted by

¹⁰ "Defense of the Western Frontier," Letter from the Secretary of War, April 1, 1840, 26th Cong, 1st sess., House Document 161 (Serial 366).

¹¹ "Defense of the Western Frontier." According to Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army. From its Organization September 29, 1789 to March 2, 1903* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), the United States had 10,570 officers and enlisted men in December 1840. The Army's maximum strength came during the Mexican War when it reached 21,686 in November 1847, a jump from two years earlier when it was 8,349.

the whites." Small groups settled north of the Cherokee Neutral Lands had not initiated conflict since their forced removal. The Choctaws, he wrote, "have never Killed a white man in war and are proud of it." Hitchcock regarded others as more hostile. The Osages were Hitchcock's nemesis. He called them "the greatest thieves near the frontier" and warned that "these are the Indians ... that require to be over-awed by the presence of a Military force." North of the Osage were the Potawotomis, who Hitchcock believed were hostile, dissatisfied, and likely to fall into an anti-white scheme.¹² This situation demanded a military presence.

White settlers and their continual grasp for land offered another explanation for a military presence. Plans to keep the Indian and white cultures separate collapsed as ongoing encroachment on Indian land, a source of conflict since before the American Revolution, became a daily reality. Survival on the periphery required a callous approach to cultural interaction. Americans living along the nation's western boundaries adopted the xenophobia of the age, especially after the battle of Tippecanoe. On November 7, 1811, William Henry Harrison, the governor of the Indiana Territory, commanded a force of federal soldiers, militia, and volunteers to victory over the confederacy led by Tecumseh and his brother, Tenskwatawa, colloquially known as the Prophet. White settlers represented a culture that saw itself as a civilizing force and met with ferociousness any resistance and indeed variance from its goals. Nor did harsh living conditions breed humanitarian sentiment for Indians. Worse, many people on the periphery represented the most unsavory elements of American society. Secretary of War John Spencer explained the dangers of mixing the Indians and whites along the border in 1842, calling for the isolation of Indian groups to protect them from "the vices of a semi-civilization. Scarcely capable of self-government, [the Indians] are quite incompetent to protect themselves from the frauds and from the violence of the white man." In a harsh characterization that stood out for its clear assessment of culpability, Spencer believed that "the cupidity of the white man, boasting of his superior civilization, stimulates his craft in devising the means of evading the laws, and still further brutalizes his ignorant, weak, and yielding red brother."¹³ With whites looking to secure land and make money, the military was essential if Indian people removed for their safety were to survive the onslaught of settlement.

The Permanent Indian Frontier of the 1830s followed the general trend in Indian-white relations begun about two decades earlier. As early as 1809, state and government directives pushed Indians from North Carolina into the area that today is Arkansas. Treaty provisions provided for their protection from Osages already dominant in the region and led to the establishment of Fort Smith on the Arkansas River on the state's western border in 1817. The removal of Indians from the east side of the Mississippi River began in earnest in 1821, when Missouri was admitted to the Union and led to the establishment of Fort Leavenworth, to the northwest of present Kansas City on the Missouri River in 1827. Simultaneously, advancing white settlements in Arkansas pushed the western boundary further west, and in response the

¹² Ethan Allen Hitchcock, *A Traveler in Indian Country: The Journal of Ethan Allen Hitchcock, Late Major General in the United State Army* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: The Torch Press, 1930), 247.

¹³ John C. Spencer, Secretary of War, 27th Cong. 3d sess., House Document 2, Report of the Secretary of War, November 26, 1842: 188-89; William E. Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 79-91.

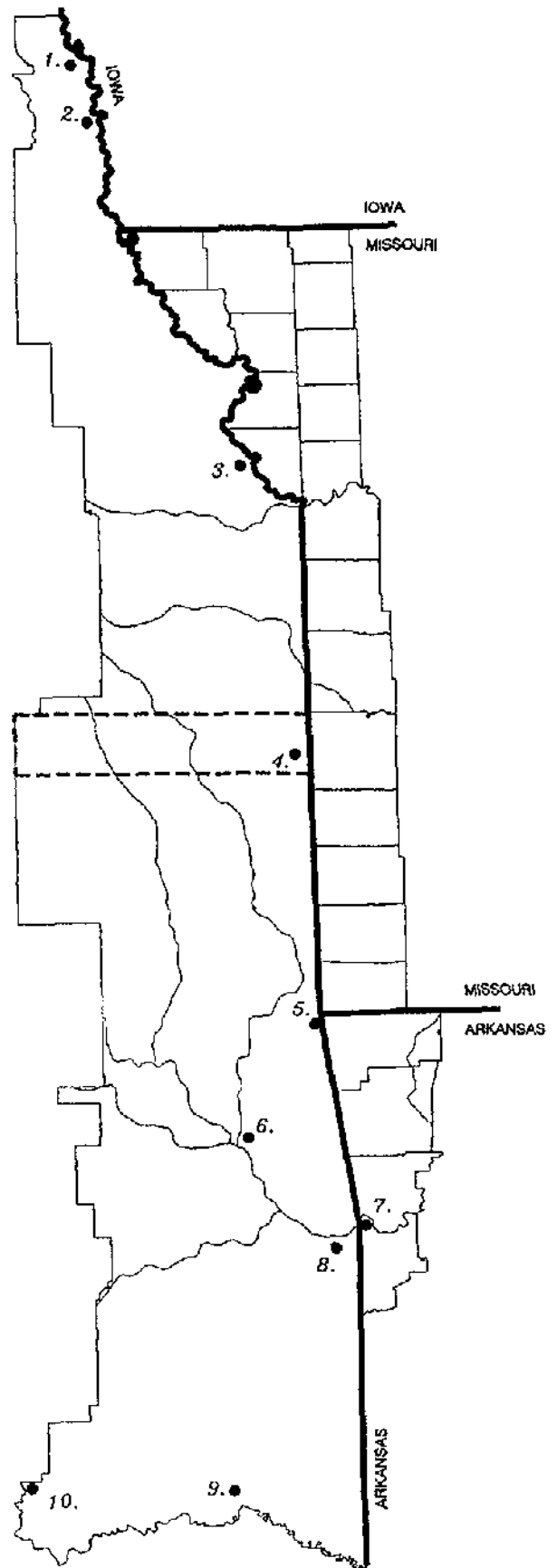
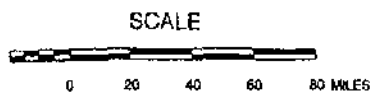
THE FRONTIER 1846



LEGEND

COUNTY LINE	— — — — —
STATE LINE	—————
NEW YORK INDIAN RESERVATION	- - - - -
FORTS	•

1. FORT ATKINSON (1819-27)
2. FORT CROCHAN (1842-43)
3. FORT LEAVENWORTH (1827-)
4. FORT SCOTT (1842-53)
5. FORT WAYNE (1838-42)
6. FORT GIBSON (1824-90)
7. FORT SMITH (1817-71)
8. FORT COFFEE (1834-38)
9. FORT TOWSON (1824-54)
10. FORT WASHITA (1842-61)



Army moved most of the men previously based at Fort Smith about sixty miles to the northwest in 1824, and senior officers ordered creation of Fort Gibson inside Indian country. During the same year, the Army established Fort Towson about 110 miles due south of Fort Gibson on the Red River to fight slave trafficking over the U.S.-Mexican border and illegal trade with Indians. Following the removal of the Choctaws early in the 1830s, the military established Fort Coffee (1834-38) fifty miles east of Fort Gibson on the Arkansas River to assist in the Indian group's resettlement and to combat the traffic in illegal liquor. In 1834, soldiers from Fort Smith garrisoned the post. To monitor the influx of Cherokees in 1838 and 1839, the Army established Fort Wayne north of Fort Gibson on Spavinaw Creek near the Arkansas border late in 1839. In 1842 the Army established Fort Scott on the Marmaton River and Fort Washita on the Washita River, which was southwest of Fort Gibson. Fort Leavenworth, on the Missouri River in what was to become northeast Kansas, remained one of the Army's main posts. The concentration of posts across from the Arkansas border assured a sizeable military presence, but the location of the forts left a large gap across the Permanent Indian Frontier that threatened settlements in southwest Missouri and northwestern Arkansas, and provided opportunity for purveyors of whiskey and other ardent spirits who were willing to risk the wrath of the military.¹⁴

The infantry regiments that formed the backbone of the federal military structure since the nation's founding were unsuitable for use away from the forested areas along the Eastern Seaboard. The Army's military structure underwent a revolution following the War of 1812, when large-scale white settlement began to spread toward the Great Plains. Congress had always supported the smallest possible army since the country's founding, based on fears that a standing army might lead to tyranny. These fears, added to the nation's minuscule federal budget and its geographic isolation from European threats, led to continual small military budgets. During America's first fifty years, the two major branches of the federal Army were the infantry and artillery. Americans considered troops mounted on horseback — either cavalry, dragoon or lancer in the European tradition — as much more expensive than foot soldiers, impractical in the dense forests of the nation's eastern lands, unnecessary against the unmounted Indians of the region, and as too aristocratic for a democratic republic.

Despite the bias against them, mounted horse units were prized for their utility in Plains warfare. Four mounted regiments of dragoons fought in the Revolutionary War, and the Army reorganized them in 1792 as "Light Dragoons." The military dropped the designation temporarily when the country decided to mold its Army on the model of the Roman legions, but by 1798 the Army revived its cavalry only to see budget cuts force its termination early in the nineteenth century. Tensions with Great Britain brought about a new dragoon regiment, but again public outcries about the expense of the military ended the unit's existence. Once its commitments extended to the Great Plains in the decades following the War of 1812, the United States Army relied on mounted troops as its principle offensive weapons. The cavalry squadrons immortalized in scores of Hollywood epics began on the Plains as the Army's six-company battalion of mounted rangers. Their immediate predecessors were mounted militia units from Illinois and Michigan that fought successfully in the Black Hawk War of 1832. Their commander, Colonel Henry Dodge of Michigan, received a commission in the Army to lead the battalion, but before

¹⁴ Beers, *The Western Military Frontier*, 94-121; Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 130-132.

the unit organized, Congress authorized an expansion to a full regiment on March 2, 1833. This became the First Dragoons, an elite unit that traveled on horseback but dismounted to fight. The Army selected Dodge to lead the new unit.¹⁵

The new threats encountered on the Plains in the 1820s and 1830s led to Congress authorizing the formation of a new dragoon regiment on March 2, 1833, under the Act for the More Perfect Defense of the Frontier. The legislation called for ten mounted companies of sixty privates. Unlike the infantry and artillery units of the time, which relied on immigrants for a significant portion of their strength, dragoons had to be American citizens "whose size, figure, and early pursuits may best qualify them for mounted soldiers." Recruiting stations were set up across the country in an attempt to draw from all regions, eliminating any sectional biases. Many horse-mounted troops received higher pay than their infantry and artillery counterparts. The Army paid Dragoon privates eight dollars a month in 1841, a dollar more than privates in the other branches, while the colonel of the dragoon regiment received ninety dollars a month, as compared with the seventy-five dollars infantry and artillery colonels received. First sergeants and sergeant majors alike received sixteen and seventeen dollars a month respectively.¹⁶ Dragoon duty was advantageous financially for most soldiers, as well as more prestigious.

The troops stationed at Fort Scott and other posts in the Indian Territory presented a rainbow of colors when wearing dress uniforms for ceremonial parades and full inspections. Dragoon uniforms were trimmed in yellow piping, with brass buttons on coats and jackets. Uniforms bedecked with white wool piping and pewter buttons distinguished infantry officers from their counterparts. Even the buttons distinguished the individual branches, with all infantry uniforms bearing an eagle clutching a shield with the letter "I" stamped in the center; artillerymen wore the letter "A" and the dragoons bore the letter "D." Later, when another horse-mounted unit, the Regiment of Mounted Rifles, served on the Plains, its members were set apart by their dragoon-style jackets with eagle buttons with the letter "R" and dark-blue wool trousers. Officers and sergeants also sported one-and-a-half-inch-wide stripes on their pants marking their branch: yellow for dragoons, white for infantry and red for artillery. Enlisted men received the clothes from the government, while officers were responsible for buying their own uniforms.¹⁷

The regular Army played a leading role, but it was not the only military power on the frontier. The United States long relied upon citizen-soldiers in times of crisis. Militia units drew upon the colonial tradition that obligated all males to military service during emergencies. During extended periods of peace, the general obligation dissipated, and in its place cities, trade organizations, and friends created militia units that used private funds for equipment and clothing. The militia units were the nation's main source of reserve strength for the regular Army until after the Mexican War, when military leaders came to rely on volunteer units raised by the states for federal service. Inadequate training and lack of professional leadership left both militia

¹⁵ Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, 158-59.

¹⁶ Prucha, *Sword of the Republic*, 245-248; Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*; John Philip Langellier, "Sabers, Saddles and Shakos: The Formative Years of the Regiment of Dragoons, 1833-1846," *Gateway Heritage* 4, n. 1 (1983): 38-48; Winders, *Mr. Polk's Army*, 122.

¹⁷ Winders, *Mr. Polk's Army*, 104-106.

and volunteer forces far behind regular Army troops in quality and effectiveness. In many cases, activating these irregular units was more expensive than dispatching federal forces.

Circumstances filled frontier life with many opportunities for the militia to serve and just as many occasions to clash with the regular military. Local people comprised the militia, the same people who might be involved in the liquor trade, illegal land speculation, or other activities that could draw federal attention. Militia leaders often resented the presence of the regular Army, regarding it as an occupying force that threatened local control. Military officers recognized the pitfalls of interacting with the state volunteer units and often found militia activities an exasperating interference. As the regular Army grew more professionalized and more reluctant to accept local attitudes toward Indians, relations with local militias and indeed locals became tenuous. One cause was increased military involvement in combating the illegal liquor trade.¹⁸

Uncontrolled introduction of liquor across the frontier accentuated the prospect of Indian uprisings. Economic opportunities drove Americans to the frontier in search of fortune, and one of the most dependable means of acquiring riches was by selling alcohol to Indians. The whiskey made from corn grown across the Midwest cost twenty-five cents a gallon at St. Louis in the 1830s; that same gallon sold at Fort Leavenworth brought thirty-four dollars.¹⁹ With such profits for merely transporting the liquor, anyone with a little money and fewer scruples joined the trade. The cash annuities many emigrant Indians received as compensation for their eastern lands intensified the liquor trade. Between 1825 and 1847, more than seventy thousand Indians moved west of Missouri and Arkansas. By 1845, Indian treaties obligated the federal government to almost \$27 million in tribal and individual payments. The government held some of these funds in trust for the Indian groups or paid for in animals or agricultural supplies sent to the tribes, but federal officials distributed most of it in hard specie.²⁰ A good portion of that money found its way into the hands of liquor traders.

In a maneuver typical of the time, Congress sought to control the traffic in liquor traffic with legislation that governed commerce and interaction. These trade and intercourse laws were the solution of an era in which leaders assumed that people obeyed the law. Thomas Jefferson passed the first such legislation. Concerned with alcohol sales to several tribes, he asked Congress to modify earlier trade laws and in 1802 a new law that restricted the sale of liquor to Indians passed Congress. It required traders in Indian country to hold a license and post bond. Federal officials could seize any goods taken illegally into Indian country. This, the framers hoped, would compel traders to observe the new rules. Later amendments authorized the use of the military to enforce trade laws.²¹

¹⁸ Winders, *Mr. Polk's Army*, 68-69.

¹⁹ Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water*, 35.

²⁰ Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water*: 18; Peter Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995), 169-80.

²¹ Elvid Hunt, *History of Fort Leavenworth, 1827-1927* (Fort Leavenworth, Kans.: General Services Press, 1927); Joy Leland, *Firewater Myths: North American Indian Drinking and Alcohol Addiction* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Center for Alcohol Studies, 1976), 1-9; Otto Frovin Frederickson, *The Liquor Question among the Indian Tribes in Kansas, 1804-1881*.

Lax enforcement and the sheer burden of reaching much less managing the vast reaches of the Louisiana Purchase made terminating the liquor trade impossible. Even if a frontier official was so inclined, enforcing the unpopular law was difficult. People on the peripheries did not take kindly to seeing their neighbors prosecuted to protect Indians. Judges and frontier juries blanched at convicting defendants for violating a federal law. When the policy did not deliver the desired results, the government responded with new rules that further restricted trade. An 1822 amendment imposed stricter controls, and in 1824 Congress ordered trading limited to designated sites. It also authorized Indian agents and military officers to search all traders for liquor.²²

Traders and frontier businesses, including boat companies, continued to find loopholes in the laws. Many companies evaded the liquor restrictions by claiming the alcohol being shipped into Indian country was solely for the use of employees, or argued that most Americans on the frontier considered certain roads, such as the Oregon and Santa Fe trails, as being outside Indian country. As part of the legislation establishing the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Congress in 1832 expressly prohibited the introduction of "ardent spirits" into Indian Country "under any pretense." The law authorized no punishments and included no specific definitions of Indian Country, creating a typically antebellum situation: government expressed its desire in no uncertain terms, but the mechanisms to compel that behavior did not accompany the law.²³

The Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834 imposed a new set of restrictions on traders who trafficked in alcohol. For the first time, Indian country received a legal definition, which replaced the vague descriptions of changing treaty boundaries used by earlier regulations. All lands west of the Mississippi River outside of Missouri and Louisiana and lands east of the Mississippi not within state or territorial boundaries to which Indian title had not been extinguished became "Indian country." Indian agents received greater regulatory power over traders within their jurisdiction, and the legislation authorized the War Department to use force to fight or prevent Indian wars. The president also received the power to withhold trade goods from Indian groups and revoke licenses to trade with them, and government officials received specific guidance on punishments for various liquor offenses.²⁴

The new round of federal regulations proved just as ineffective as previous efforts, and some officers advocated direct military intervention to stop illegal trafficking. Col. Stephen Watts Kearny, commanding officer of the First Dragoons, the horse-mounted soldiers, became disgusted with the lack of effective civilian control of the alcohol trade, blaming the chaotic situation on the long distances to civil courts and difficulties in securing trial witnesses. Kearny believed that if Congress enacted legislation requiring that offenses against the 1834 Trade and Intercourse Act in Indian Country fall under the jurisdiction of military courts, "such authority

Bulletin of the University of Kansas, Humanistic Studies, Vol. 4, n. 4 (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1932).

²² Prucha, *The Great Father*, 33-34.

²³ Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water*, 35-36.

²⁴ Prucha, *The Great Father*: 103-105; Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water*: 37-39.



Col. Stephen Watts Kearny, commanding officer of the First Dragoons.

would do more to preserve peace on the frontier than many additional regiments.”²⁵ Despite protests such as these, the civilian sector retained jurisdiction over suspected liquor traders.

Officers from Fort Scott were involved in the campaign to stop the cross-border liquor trade almost from the moment that the Army established the post. When the dragoons moved from Fort Wayne, they charged two men driving wagons for the Army with transporting whiskey. One of the teamsters was found with ten gallons of liquor on his wagon, and the other was suspected of selling his whiskey to soldiers at Fort Scott. Their wagons were seized under Captain William Armstrong’s interpretation of the Trade and Intercourse Act of 1834, which called for the confiscation of “goods, Boats, packages and pelteries.” The law failed to list wagons, and the owners claimed that the men had transported the liquor without their knowledge and if the Army kept the wagons, one wrote, “the innocent will be made to suffer for the guilty.” Military boundaries compounded the incident’s complexity, since the men owning the wagons

lived near Fort Wayne and complained to the southern district’s commander, but officers assigned to the territory’s northern district handled the arrests. Time and again the lax authority of frontier society came into conflict with the rigid structure of the Army’s organization, and the latter usually finished second.²⁶

As the case of the wagons illustrated, the principal weaknesses of the Trade and Intercourse Act were its imprecise language and the fact that it gave jurisdiction over offenses to civilian courts, which limited the effectiveness of Army officers making arrests. In this case, two Indian agents, R.H. Calloway of the Osage agency and John B. Luce of the Neosho office, acknowledged the severity of transporting alcohol. Luce and Calloway would be the last people to support “the infamous practice of smuggling liquor into the Indian Country, wither for sale to Indians or to Soldiers,” but they were less sanguine about the success of the federal restrictions, noting that laws that penalized the innocent were unlikely to be effective. The owners of the wagons were opposed to the whiskey trade as any government officials could be, the Indian agents averred, ending by saying that “such persons are so scarce in this country that we sincerely

²⁵ S.W. Kearny, Colonel, First Dragoons, to Rep. L.F. Linn and A.G. Harrison of Missouri, June 20, 1837, 25th Cong., 2d sess., House Document 276, Serial 328: 10.

²⁶ Capt. William Armstrong to Gen. Zachary Taylor, June 30, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; Daniel McPhail, personal statement, June 26, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

hope Genl. Taylor may be induced to interfere in their behalf in time to prevent the sacrifice of their property."²⁷ Taylor, commanding the southern military district, recommended to Capt. Benjamin Moore at Fort Scott that the wagons and teams be restored to their owners, writing that "the power to seize wagons is certainly not expressly given in the intercourse law." The idea was merely a suggestion to a fellow officer, Taylor wrote, who sought to keep Moore from the "unpleasant consequences of a civil suit," a frequently used option in a frontier environment that opposed federal intervention in what it saw as a local affair.²⁸ The Trade and Intercourse Acts never successfully stopped the liquor trafficking across the permanent Indian frontier, a situation that hampered Fort Scott and all other Army posts throughout the West.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, changing borders and circumstances resulted in new needs and declining uses for the Army's posts. Fort Scott followed a cycle of use and abandonment, a feature common to western military posts. The optimal location of forts along the frontier depended upon local needs, Army requirements, and perceived defense requirements. This meant that the military built forts hastily and usually abandoned them with equal speed. Communities did spring up around forts, but they had no more guarantee of permanence than did the forts themselves. Instrumental and tactical rather than harbingers of a future, military forts were among the most transitory institutions created on the frontier.

Through all these transitions, Fort Leavenworth remained the bulwark of the military presence on the frontier. In 1826, William Clark, superintendent of Indian affairs, recommended building a post just west of the Missouri border to protect the Osage and Kansas Indians, calling the fort one of the obligations derived from the treaty the Indians signed the previous year. At the same time, traders demanded military escorts for caravans heading to Santa Fe. Sen. Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri took up their cause, and on March 7, 1827, the Army's adjutant general ordered the establishment of a post near the mouth of the Little Platte River. Col. Henry Leavenworth selected a site on the western bank of the Missouri River near the Little Platte and his soldiers began construction. Outbreaks of disease forced temporary abandonment in 1828 and 1829, but the Army quickly reactivated the post. The Sixth Infantry initially garrisoned Fort Leavenworth, but Col. Henry Dodge and his dragoons joined the soldiers in 1834. It remained one of the Army's principal supply posts for exploration parties and military expeditions throughout the nineteenth century.²⁹

Unlike Fort Leavenworth, Fort Scott could never claim permanence. It was an outlier that grew out of earlier forts that wound their way west. The Army abandoned Fort Coffee, about two hundred and twenty miles south of Fort Scott on the Arkansas River, on October 19, 1835. The command shifted to a new post, Fort Wayne, first established in 1838 as Camp Illinois near the spot where the Illinois River crossed Arkansas's western boundary. As the area filled with whites and Indians, the Army relocated the fort on Spavinaw Creek. The Army designed the post to

²⁷ R.H. Calloway and John B. Luce to Capt. William Armstrong, June 26, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²⁸ W.W.S. Bliss, Assistant Adjutant General to Capt. B.D. Moore, July 18, 1842, M1302, Roll 1, Frame 0749, B71842, DD, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²⁹ Beers, *The Western Military Frontier*: 94-95; Maurice Matloff, general editor, *American Military History* (Washington, D.C., General Printing Office, 1985; Washington, Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army; 1973), 161.

protect white settlers in Arkansas from Indian attacks and to maintain peace among several factions in the Cherokee nation moving into the area. The location of the post contributed to new problems. General Winfield Scott, one of the most renowned military men of the era, observed that "the better class of Indians" opposed the post, because of the "difficulties and fracas between the dissipated of the Indians and the soldiery."³⁰

Fort Wayne was the direct antecedent of Fort Scott. The unhealthy location of the post forced the Army to move again within two years, and local commanders selected a new site in the middle of the Cherokee reservation. The Army compelled several Cherokees to relinquish their farms and stores when it set up a two-square-mile reservation around the post, drawing immediate protests. Nearby white settlers agreed with the Indians, but for different reasons. They wanted the post moved closer to Arkansas, ostensibly for protection. Lt. Col. Richard B. Mason, commanding officer of the First Dragoons, observed other motivations, noting that "the removal of Fort Wayne deprives them of a market for very many articles of produce, and has a tendency to lessen in some degree the value of lands in its vicinity, and hence all their clamor and noise."³¹ While the Army used it, the fort remained an important economic and social anchor for settlers, and its movement to another location threatened the neighboring community's very existence.

In the end, the War Department followed its own dictates instead of those of the settlers. Ignoring protests, the military continued construction of the new post on the Cherokee reservation. By August 1840, with several log cabins and one large building completed, lack of funds drove the Army to abandon the site and move the garrison to Fort Gibson. The Army assigned one caretaker to remain and guard the government property, but just before the troops left, a rumor circulated that a group of Cherokees planned to burn the building. Instead of one man, an entire company of soldiers remained.³²

Indians opposed the new location as much as did the settlers. In April 1841, a delegation of Cherokees traveled to Washington, D.C., and presented a request calling for the fort's removal. Major Ethan Allen Hitchcock, who was in the area investigating Indian affairs on the frontier for the War Department, later confirmed their sentiments. He recommended building a new post west of the Missouri state line and abandoning Fort Wayne, which he reasoned had little military value. Fort Gibson was near enough to the Arkansas border to supply protection, and officers at Fort Wayne argued that life in the poorly maintained buildings fostered bad morale. Washington policy makers finally concurred, and the War Department ordered Fort Wayne abandoned on February 10, 1842, although not without a threat. Army officers reminded Cherokee leaders that although soldiers had abandoned the post, in the event of conflict the Army was prepared to reoccupy it. On May 26, 1842, the garrison left for its new post on the Marmaton

³⁰ General Winfield Scott to the Secretary of War, February 19, 1844, 28th Cong., 1st sess., Senate Report 136 (Serial 433).

³¹ Lt. Col. R.B. Mason, First Dragoons, to Brig. General R. Jones, Adjutant General, Washington, D.C., June 25, 1840, M1302, Roll 4, Frame 0814, MA62540, III, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

³² Daniel Littlefield and Lonnie Underhill, "Fort Wayne and Border Violence, 1840-1847," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 36, n. 1 (Spring 1977): 3-13.



"In view of all the facts upon the subject under consideration I respectfully recommend the abandonment of this place [Fort Wayne] and the establishment of a post in what has been called the neutral ground (now belonging to the Cherokees) between the Osage Indians and the State of Missouri – at some point about 100 miles south of Fort Leavenworth; perhaps near where the Military road crosses the Marmiton would be a good site."

Maj. Ethan Allen Hirschcock, Eighth Infantry
to J.C. Spencer, Secretary of War, January 9, 1842

River, reaching the spot May 30.³³

Fort Wayne was not alone in facing relocation on the frontier during the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1836, Congress and the War Department evaluated another of the seemingly endless reorganizations of the frontier. The constant shifting of the line of settlement meant that even as earlier forts were completed, some became obsolete. Fort Leavenworth remained in a favorable location in 1836, but the westward movement of white settlements and new immigrant Indian communities meant that forts Towson, Gibson, and Coffee lost their usefulness. They too faced closure and relocation.

The saga of Fort Gibson, one of the strongest points on the southern end of the line of frontier posts, typified the reasons forts moved to new locations. Established in April 1824, when the garrison of Fort Smith moved eighty miles upstream to a site three miles from the mouths of the Grand and Verdigris rivers, Fort Gibson was named in honor of George Gibson, Commissary General of the United States. With a garrison of about 250 men of the Seventh Infantry under the command of Col. Matthew Arbuckle, the post was a formidable presence on the Indian frontier. Yet there was a genuine problem with its location: the Army had sited the fort in the swampy lowlands that settlers typically avoided because of the risk of bilious fever. During the nine years from its founding to 1833, almost five hundred soldiers died of illness at Fort Gibson, which acquired the sobriquet "the graveyard of the army." This phenomenal mortality rate suggested that Fort Gibson might be more effective were it moved to a location where its soldiers were less likely to succumb to disease.

Western settlers agreed that the Army should move Fort Gibson, but for an entirely different set of reasons. On March 21, 1836, the Arkansas legislature offered the House Committee on Military Affairs a memorial that favored the movement of Fort Gibson to the boundary between that state and Indian Territory to the west, as area residents sought increased protection against what they perceived as an Indian threat. On May 14, the Quartermaster

³³ R. Jones, Adjutant General, to Brig. General Zachary Taylor, February 10, 1842. National Archives, Record Group 94, Records of the AGO, Letters Sent, Vol. 18: 7-8; Grant Foreman, ed., *A Traveler in Indian Territory: The Journal of Ethan Allen Hirschcock* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press, 1935); Littlefield and Underhill, "Fort Wayne and Border Violence," 8-13.

Department received an authorization for \$332,000, part of which was specifically designated for moving Fort Gibson closer to the Arkansas state line.³⁴ Local persistence paid off. The combination of disease and local desire led to the search for a new and healthier location for the fort.

Finding the best site required effort. Major Charles Thomas and Captain John Stuart left Fort Smith on Sept. 25, 1838, to scout for a new location between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Coffee. The Army evacuated Fort Coffee at the end of October and sent the men to a new site near the Illinois River. The new fort, initially called Camp Illinois, proved to be as unhealthy as its predecessors. Stuart and many of his men died soon after their arrival. A company of the Fourth Infantry arrived in February 1839; in April four companies of dragoons commanded by Col. Richard Mason arrived at the post. Men continued to fall sick, and construction of the fort went slowly. In the fall, the fort was moved further north and dragoons began building log cabins and blockhouses at this new site, designated Fort Wayne. Its main purpose was to monitor the Cherokees, whose removal west in 1833 and 1839 sparked numerous incidents with the Army. A possible civil war among different Cherokee factions in 1839 required a military presence. The Army sent 1,650 men to the frontier, 335 of whom were stationed at Fort Wayne. After several councils, the government resolved the Cherokee conflict and reduced nearby Army forces reduced, but military concerns did not diminish.³⁵ As winter approached in 1839, thousands of eastern Indians arrived in the lands around Fort Gibson. The Army moved to increase its garrison there, drawing soldiers from its less-threatened neighbor to the northeast, Fort Wayne.

Against this backdrop of military expansion and construction, plans for Fort Scott began to take shape. This newest of the forts along the mid-nineteenth century line between the expanding American nation and the domestic dependent peoples it shipped beyond its boundaries was a necessity, a crucial connection point in the large gap along the Missouri border. Government planners still envisioned a permanent Indian frontier separating the two cultures, but increasing white expansion threatened that objective at the same time that frontier traders continued to profit from illegal liquor trafficking. Across the nation, a growing pessimism about the eventual fate of Indians influenced American policy; the only alternatives available to the Plains people were to adapt to white culture or face extermination, and while many Army officers favored the first option, the second increasingly seemed more likely. Officers' attitudes began to shift toward protecting the society that would survive.³⁶ The threat of Indian and white unrest along the border, both real and perceived, forced the Army to maintain its defenses along a string of outposts and the frontier military road that connected them.

The location selected for Fort Scott presented the Army with a problem. The Second Military Department, which administered Fort Wayne, was responsible for all posts south of the 37th parallel of north latitude, the dividing line established in 1837. The site on the Marmaton River chosen for the fort fell under the jurisdiction of the First Military Department. Brig. Gen.

³⁴ Beers, *The Western Military Frontier*, 69, 104-5, 118-19.

³⁵ Beers, *The Western Military Frontier*, 133-35.

³⁶ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 315-17; Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*; Dippie, *The Vanishing American*, 130-32.

Zachary Taylor, the commanding officer of the Second Military Department, noted the problem and advised his superiors in Washington, D.C., that even though he began preliminary work on the new post, he decided against "a personal examination." The potential political ramifications were too great to risk the trip.³⁷ On March 13, 1842, Taylor sent Col. Mason of the First Dragoons from Fort Gibson to lead a reconnaissance patrol that sought to establish a post on the road between Fort Gibson and Fort Leavenworth. The health problems that plagued forts Gibson and Wayne inspired Taylor to order a medical officer, Capt. Jacob Rhett Motte, to accompany the expedition and assist in finding a healthy location for the post. Under a new set of orders issued two months later, Taylor's headquarters instructed dragoon Captain Benjamin Daviss Moore and Motte to assess a location on Spring River, which crossed the Missouri state line just north of Kansas's present southern boundary, and purchase it for less than \$1,000.³⁸ If that site could not be secured, Moore was to examine the surrounding area for a suitable location. In the event none were found, he was to continue to scour the area for possible sites within the boundary of Taylor's Second Military District. If he still could not find a suitable location, Moore was to move his command to the Marmaton River site, even though the location was within the jurisdiction of the First Military District. In a note to his Washington, D.C., superiors, Taylor acknowledged that the Marmaton site "is understood to combine great advantages, and it perhaps as eligible for the protection of



Capt. Benjamin Daviss Moore, who helped determine Fort Scott's location and served as first post commander.

³⁷ Brig. General Zachary Taylor to the Adjutant General of the Army, March 11, 1842, M1302, Roll 1, Frame 0660, Z31142, DD, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

³⁸ Motte was familiar with frontier illnesses from the patient's viewpoint. While serving in the South during the Second Seminole War, he came down with typhoid fever and was left by his command to recover in a log house just north of the Florida border for two months. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1818-1865* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army), 69; W. W.S. Bliss, Assistant Adjutant General to Lt. Col. Richard Mason, March 13, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site Microfilm M1302, Roll 1, Frame 0739, B31342, DD; Benjamin Daviss Moore came to the dragoons through an unusual route. Appointed a midshipman in the U.S. Navy in 1829, he resigned to join the mounted rangers as a first lieutenant in 1832. He joined the First Dragoons in 1833 and was appointed captain in 1837. After his reconnaissance of possible fort sites, he founded Fort Scott while commanding Companies A and C of the First Dragoons in May 1842, and was post commander until relieved by Major Graham of the Fourth Infantry. He was killed in California in the battle of San Pasqual in December 1846. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 721.

the frontier against marauding parties of Indians, as a position farther south.”³⁹

Following his orders, Moore’s patrol examined the locations, all near a river, stream, or creek. At the Little Osage River, all the conditions suitable for a military post — water, timber, good defensible position, close to the military road — were available, but the site was too far from the Missouri state line to protect the border. Motte also deemed it unhealthy, the result of several large pools of stagnant water that made malaria and other insect-borne diseases a threat. A location along the Dry Wood River was unsuitable; it lacked timber.⁴⁰ Following Taylor’s instructions, Moore’s expedition, accompanied this time by Assistant Surgeon J. Simpson in place of Motte, inspected the Spring River area. A Cherokee Indian, Joseph Rogers, owned the location originally favored by the Army, but refused an offer of \$1,000, telling officers that he would not take three times the amount even if he had not improved the land. Rogers had built a “good log dwelling house, and barn,” Moore reported to headquarters, and worked about one hundred and twenty acres. The dragoons scouted two other sites on the Spring River, three and five miles above Rogers’ property, but officers rejected both because they were far from water and the high ground immediately behind limited the defensive utility of both sites.

The entire Spring River area seemed unsuitable for a military post. The environmental conditions appeared unhealthy, the officers wrote, “judging from the appearance of the inhabitants.” Timber was also scarce around the sites. Area residents opposed a fort, Moore indicated, because “it would destroy their best building timber and occupy land that the inhabitants were actually in need of, there being but a very small tract suitable for cultivation.” Discouraged by the other sites, Moore took his small patrol to the site on the Marmaton River. During the previous trip to scout the Marmaton location, he stayed at the farm of George Douglas at the crossing of the Marmaton River on the Harmony Mission-Fort Gibson road, approximately sixteen miles east of the bluffs he eyed for the fort. On this trip, Douglas helped Moore locate the best site for Fort Scott. The Marmaton River location had many positive attributes for a fort, Moore said in his report, noting that its position in regard to both the frontier and neighboring Indian bands made it “the most eligible and important point between Gibson & Leavenworth.” Moore’s description of the region was persuasive. The decision to place the fort on the Marmaton River followed soon after his report was received.⁴¹

Established in 1842 on the south side of the Marmaton River, less than five miles west of today’s Kansas-Missouri border, Fort Scott overlooked the junction of the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Gibson military road and the Marmaton River. As part of the interior line of military posts, Fort Scott was one hundred and sixty miles from Fort Gibson, and one hundred and forty miles from

³⁹ W.W.S. Bliss, Assistant Adjutant General, to Capt. B.D. Moore, May 10, 1842, M1302, Roll 1, Frame 0745, B51042, DD, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; General Zachary Taylor to the Adjutant General of the Army, May 15, 1842, M1302, Roll 1, Frame 0666, Z51542, DD, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁴⁰ B.D. Moore and J. Rhett Motte to Lt. Col. R.B. Mason, April 14, 1842, M1302, Roll 4, Frame 0569, MO41442, JL2, 30s 1 NARS, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁴¹ Capt. B.D. Moore and Assistant Surgeon J. Simpson to Capt. W.W.S. Bliss, Assistant Adjutant General, May 19, 1842, M1302, Roll 4, Frame 0621, M051942, LJ2 30s 1, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; Moore to General R. Jones, Adjutant General, May 21, 1842, M219, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; R.J. Holcombe, *History of Vernon County, Missouri* (St. Louis: Brown & Co., 1887), 155; Capt. B.D. Moore to General R. Jones, Adjutant General, May 21, 1842, M219, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.



Commanding Officer of the Army General Winfield Scott

Fort Leavenworth, distances of considerable significance when it came to questions of horseborne transportation and communication. The builders named the fort after Commanding Officer of the Army Gen. Winfield Scott, a hero of the War of 1812. The post's northern location also altered the chain of command on the frontier. The Army assigned Moore to Taylor's Second Military District, but the new post fell under the authority of the First Military District. On June 22, 1842, the Adjutant General's office directed Moore to make future reports to the headquarters of his new superiors, at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri.⁴²

When the Army built a post on the frontier, high transportation costs forced it to use local materials as much as possible. Typically lean War Department budgets demanded that soldiers undertake most construction. The primary exception occurred when soldiers lacked the specialties that civilians possessed. Fort Scott followed this pattern. Workers crafted its buildings from locally produced materials,

including lumber cut at the Army's sawmill on Mill Creek, about one and one half miles northwest of the post. The "large body of fine building lumber convenient to the Post" that Moore observed during his initial visit had been a primary attraction. When civilians could not be found to run a mill to sell contract lumber, the Army built and operated its own mill. This generated a range of problems. Soldiers, typically poor, often urban or immigrant, and usually lacking skills, knew little about sawmills. Mechanical breakdowns, compounded by the long distances required for replacement parts, droughts, floods, and shoddy work hampered the mill's output. However, the Army hired a civilian sawyer/millwright to supervise the operation of the sawmill and it produced the milled timber needed for construction, although reports continually cited the mill as a major source of delay.⁴³

As was typical of military posts, the Army built Fort Scott on level ground near the point of a bluff overlooking a river. The high plateau opened to the plains to the south, while cliffs fifty feet high protected the other three sides of the post. This stretch of high ground was oriented northeast to southwest and its shape determined the orientation of the post buildings. After

⁴² R. Jones, Adjutant General, to Capt. B.D. Moore, June 22, 1842. Roll No. 787, Fort Scott National Historic Site Microfilm.

⁴³ John D. Reynolds. *Archeological Investigations at Old Fort Scott, 1968 to 1972* (Omaha, Nebr.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Midwest Region, 1983); Capt. B.D. Moore to General R. Jones, Adjutant General, May 21, 1842, M219, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

housing his command in temporary log cabins in the late spring of 1842, Moore began construction of barracks and stables sufficient for two companies of dragoons, a total of about 120 men and horses, taking advantage of building materials in the heavy stands of timber that dotted the river bottoms and surrounding limestone ridges. The buildings were frame construction rather than the more simple and more temporary huts that typified so many western forts. On the north side of the fort, the Army built four houses for officers, duplexes almost identical in structure. Workers constructed a hospital, infantry barracks and guardhouse across the parade ground from the row of officers' houses. Two buildings for the dragoons, a barracks and stables for their horses, were on the west side of the parade ground. The post headquarters and ordnance storeroom were in the northwest corner, and the quartermaster complex, which included storerooms and stables, were in the northeast corner of the post. The Army typically constructed Fort Scott's buildings without in-ground basements, and used native limestone



Thomas Swords, shown in his Civil War uniform.

slabs set into shallow trenches for their foundations. Trees from the surrounding area provided the lumber for the buildings except shingles for the roofs and lathing for the interior walls. The Army purchased these, along with bricks for the chimneys, from suppliers in western Missouri.⁴⁴

With the problems of disease in the region, health remained a preoccupation and was one of the principal reasons for selecting the Marmaton River site. An 1852 medical history confirmed the healthy characteristics of the location: patrols failed to discover any swamps, ponds or lakes that might become sources of disease. The post hospital was a construction priority, and the two-story structure was completed except for flooring by October 1843. Joseph Walker served as the first fort surgeon, arriving 1842 and remaining until 1847. Although during Walker's first year at Fort Scott, Congress reduced the number of Army surgeons by two and assistant surgeons by ten, which left some military posts without full medical staffs, Fort Scott's

⁴⁴ Edwin Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Historic Structures Report, Part II. Historical Data Section* (Washington, D.C.: Division of History, National Park Service, 1968).

hospital enjoyed full staffing throughout the post's existence.⁴⁵

Building Fort Scott required a dedicated officer who understood construction and had the vision to plan a fort upon which the military could rely. That task fell to Capt. Thomas Swords, who was serving at Fort Leavenworth with the First Dragoons when he received orders to Fort Scott on June 24, 1842. Swords was unenthusiastic about the appointment and to placate this valuable officer, his superior, Quartermaster General Thomas J. Jesup, promised that "as soon as an Officer of the Department becomes disposable, I will send one to relieve you in this duty." Swords packed his bags and headed for the new post, unaware that Jesup would never fulfill his promise.

Swords was the prototypical antebellum officer. Born in New York City in 1806, he graduated from West Point in 1829 along with classmate Robert E. Lee, and the Army posted him to the Fourth Infantry in time to see serious military action. He served in the Cherokee campaigns and in Army garrisons across the West and in Florida until March 4, 1833, when the government promoted him to first lieutenant of the First Dragoons. Swords became an assistant quartermaster late in the next year and spent the next eight years at Fort Leavenworth, earning promotion to captain in 1837, although not without some blemishes on his service record. While escorting a detachment of recruits from Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, an outbreak of malaria forced him to spend his own money to hire a doctor to accompany the group to Fort Leavenworth. The government crushed his expectations of a swift reimbursement, and he submitted a harsh letter to the Army surgeon general along with another invoice. Swords finally received the reimbursement, but he seemed to harbor an anti-Army attitude after that. A few months after his arrival, the Army arrested him for challenging another officer to a duel, although the resulting court-martial board allowed him to remain in the Army. The temperamental officer was up in front of another court martial within a year, again for challenging an officer to a duel. This time the court convicted him and ordered his dismissal from the service, but his sentence was remitted due to his good character. He served at Fort Leavenworth until 1842, when Jesup transferred him to Fort Scott.⁴⁶

There he faced an enormous challenge. Arriving on the Marmaton River in July, Swords found only the semblance of a post. Dragoons lived in tents and log cabins, as no permanent structures had been erected. He took charge of the work and was responsible for the design and construction of most of Fort Scott's structures. The task was arduous and lonely. Almost from the first month of his new assignment, Swords felt trapped at Fort Scott. His obligations were overwhelming, and the help he needed generally unavailable. The post seemed bleak to this officer, and in a letter to a friend he feared the Army would never permit him to leave, writing "In my order sending me here they say it would be temporary, as I would be relieved as soon as an officer of the Dept. could be spared from other duty, but as so many are sent to company duty I despair of getting away until the work is completed. Swords' concerns proved valid. He served

⁴⁵ Joseph K. Barnes, "Medical Topography and Diseases of Fort Scott," in *Report on the Sickness and Mortality Among the Troops in the Middle Division* (1852), Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives; Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1818-1865*, 74-75.

⁴⁶ George Walton, *Sentinel of the Plains: Fort Leavenworth and the American West* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 46-49.

as Fort Scott's assistant quartermaster in charge of construction for four years⁴⁷

In his first months at the fort, Swords also recognized that serious labor problems existed, a predicament that other officers confirmed. Immediately following his arrival, Swords informed the Army's quartermaster general that he could not finish building the quarters and stables before winter because he learned that the entire command possessed only three carpenters and three brick layers, far too few for the work that awaited them. On July 13, 1842, Col. Stephen Watts Kearny, commander of the First Dragoons, reported that two of his companies were at the Fort Scott site, although he was disappointed to find that they had to construct their own quarters. Moore's companies at the post contained no skilled workers. Kearny insisted his superiors send replacement recruits to his dragoons and that the men selected be "Masons + Carpenters, + send them via this post without delay!" He also recommended that the Army send recruits allotted to the other companies in his regiment to Fort Scott.⁴⁸ In a letter to a friend written late in 1842, Swords complained again about his fellow officers at Fort Scott, saying "not one of them here can draw a straight line, even with the assistance of a ruler." Besides the inadequacies in planning, the available labor force could not even complete the sawmill before the end of September. In response, Swords sought permission from his superior officers to hire as many civilian workers as he needed. A month later he requested the transfer of Thomas Higgins, a former quartermaster sergeant who worked with Swords at Fort Leavenworth. Aside from his experience as a forage and wagon master, the ostensible reasons for recruiting him, Swords acknowledged Higgins as a master builder with "useful knowledge of building generally."⁴⁹ Higgins gave Swords an able assistant who understood the demands of the task.

Swords needed all the expert work force he could muster. According to the July and August rolls of Company A of the First Dragoons at Fort Scott, only seventeen of fifty-nine enlisted men were immediately available for military duties. Six were sick in the hospital, five in confinement for offenses, five away on detached duty; other pursuits, including post construction, engaged the rest. Swords had twelve soldiers assigned to him and the quartermaster department. Another fourteen worked at the sawmill. Two of the officers were available for military duties, but the post stationed the company's first lieutenant at the sawmill. Duty at the mill was not the chore for officers that it was for enlisted men, as assignment to the mill offered several opportunities for recreation. Some officers also used duty there to hide from other obligations. Swords wrote a friend in November 1842 that William Eustis, the first lieutenant assigned to the mill, "is sick, he is remaining there through choice — has every thing his own way, and his horses dogs &c around him, is perfectly satisfied — is raising a pack of hounds for his private amusement." Three years later junior officers were still planning on being assigned to the remote site for recreational purposes. Lt. David Russell told his brother that he intended to

⁴⁷ Jesup to Swords, June 24, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; Swords to Abraham R. Johnston, Nov. 26, 1842, Harry C. Myers, ed. *From the "Crack Post of the Frontier": Letters of Thomas and Charlotte Swords* (Fort Scott: Sekan Publications, [n.d.]), 6.

⁴⁸ Col. Stephen Kearny to Brig. General R. Jones, Adjutant General, U.S. Army, July 13, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁴⁹ Capt. Thomas Swords to Major General Thomas Jesup, July 22, 1842, and August 24, 1842, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

apply for mill duty and asked that he mail out a double-barreled shotgun, rifle and hunting jacket. These mill schemes did not help Swords complete construction of the post.⁵⁰

The War Department soon added more worries for Swords. Infantry was the least expensive branch of the Army and it remained the mainstay of the western frontier. The lack of infantry at Fort Scott limited the response of the dragoons to situations at any distance from the post. Dragoons had to perform all the routine tasks that usually fell to the infantry and as a result, could not mount their full strength in military situations. To counteract that limitation, Kearny proposed that the Army station a company of infantry at the post. Tight military budgets made the deployment of infantry more economical than using horses, but several years of experience with infantry fighting mounted Indians demonstrated to Army leaders the value of troops on horseback. The Secretary of War noted in his 1842 report that "The very nature of the service required renders the employment of mounted men indispensable. The rapidity of their movements is the element which gives to us the advantage in any collision with the Indians."⁵¹

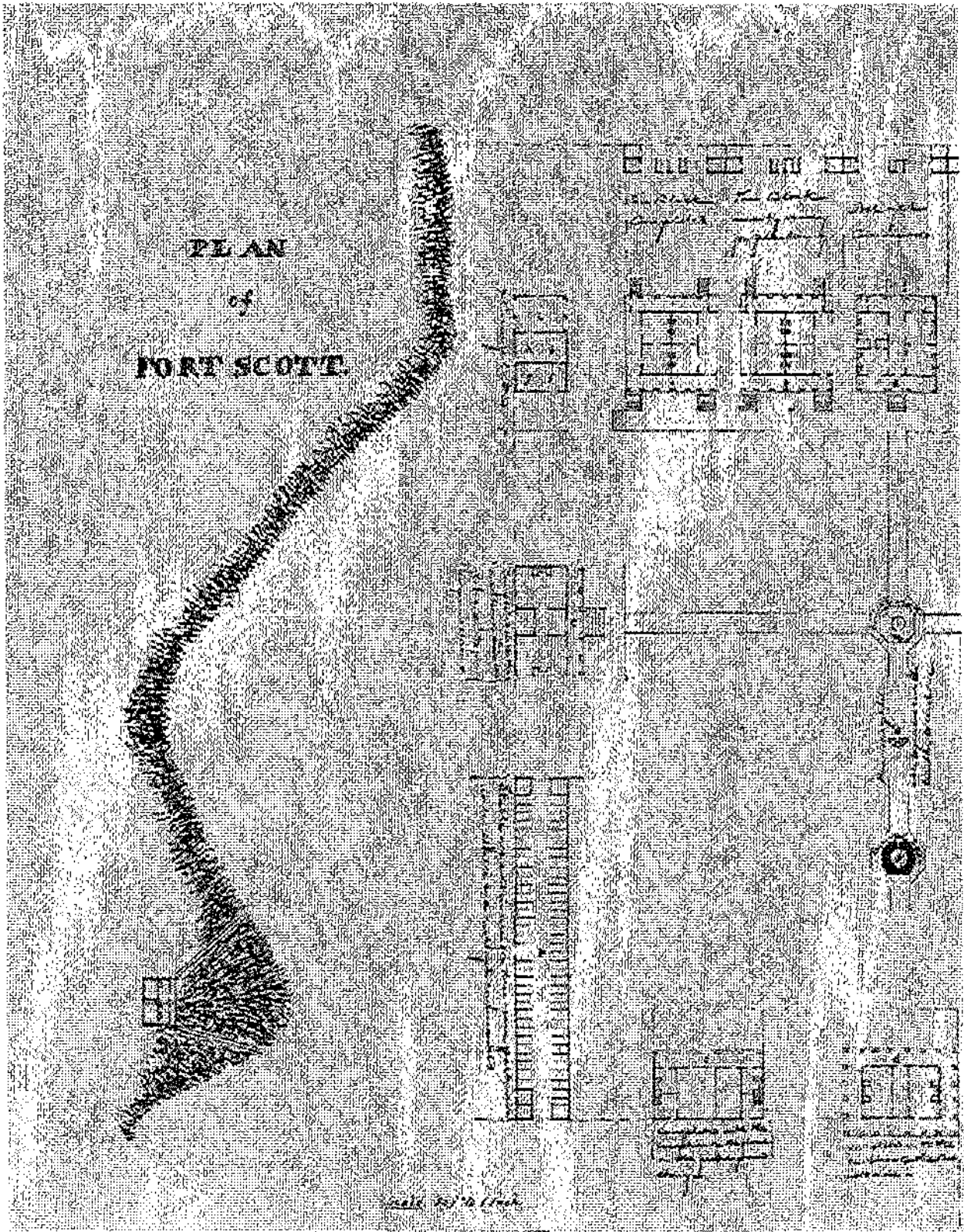
In an attempt to balance the economics of the infantry with the effectiveness of mounted troops, the Army ordered the deployment of one company of infantry to Fort Scott to complement the dragoon force. This decision made Swords responsible for the construction of another set of structures. On October 26, 1842, Swords received orders to build quarters for the infantry immediately.⁵² By mid-December 1842, Swords had completed designing the general layout of Fort Scott. He arranged the buildings around a parade ground 474 feet long, with framing and weather-boarding planned for all the structures under construction. A drought that began in the summer slowed progress and dry conditions showed no sign of ending. Swords hoped that rains would boost the water flow in Mill Creek enough to "raise the stream as the mill is pronounced by judges to be a very superior piece of workmanship and is warranted to put out 5000 to 6000 feet of plank per day." Despite his optimistic projections, the mill never consistently provided the output he needed.

Construction work at Fort Scott continued through 1843 and 1844, always hampered by lack of trained workmen and questions about trimming the Army's budget for projects such as Fort Scott. Washington's view of the fort's progress was normally optimistic. In the annual report of 1843, Thomas Jesup, the Quartermaster General, noted that Fort Scott's "quarters, barracks, hospital and other buildings, were, at the last report, in such a state of forwardness that no doubt is entertained of the completion of all these buildings by the close of the year." The next year he reported that construction was still in progress, being delayed because other duties called off troops. The post work force had nearly completed two blocks of officers' quarters and three soldiers' barracks, and had stockpiled materials for another set of officers' quarters. He

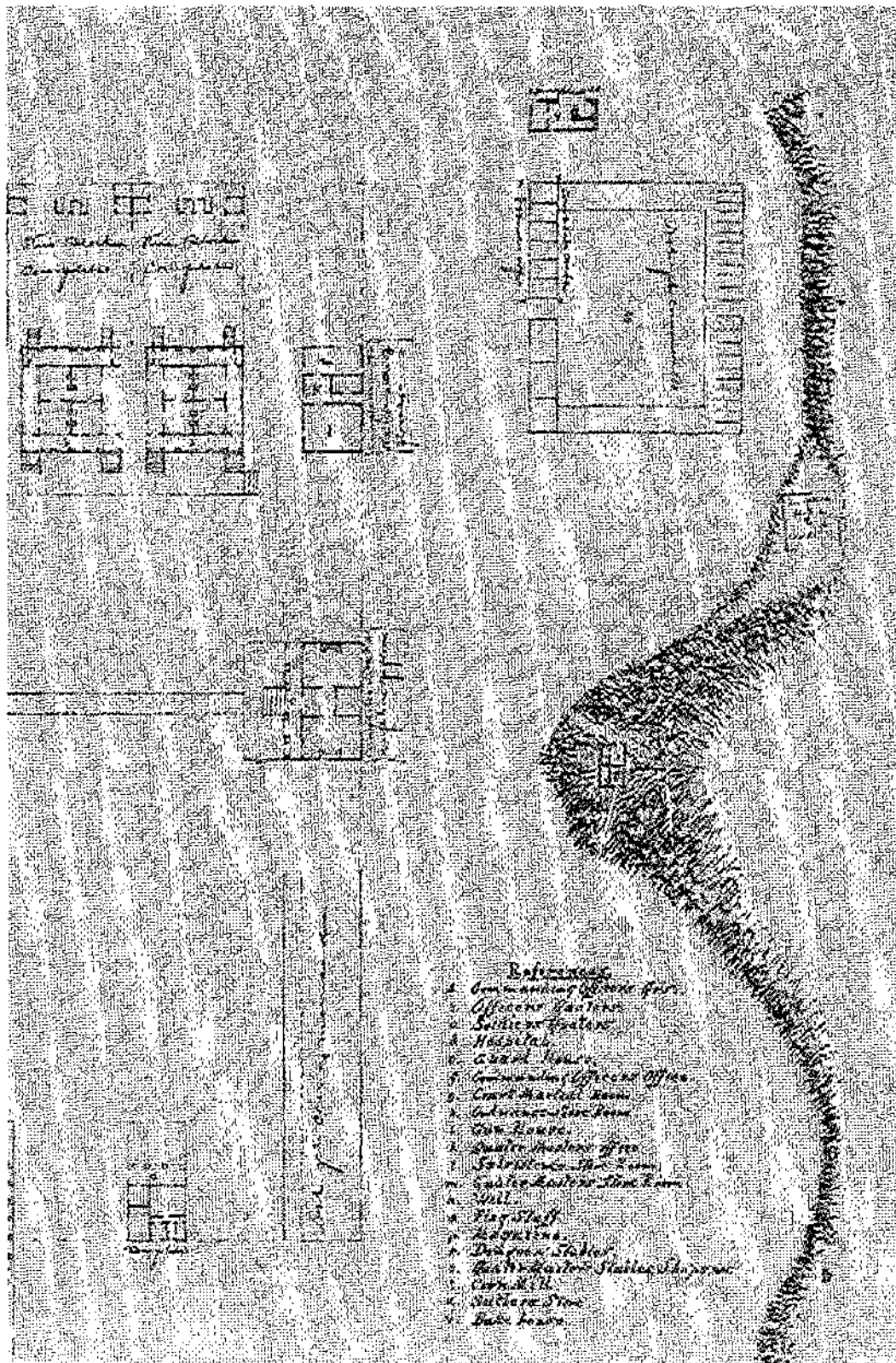
⁵⁰ Muster Roll, Company A, First Dragoons, July and August 1842. Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; Swords to Abraham R. Johnston, November 26, 1842, quoted in Myers, *From the "Crack Post"*, 6-7; David Schafer, "Everybody Here Is Hunting Mad," *Kansas Wildlife and Parks* 51, n. 6 (November 1994): 23; Lt. David Russell to C.L. Russell, December 14, 1845, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁵¹ Kearny to Brig. General R. Jones, Adjutant General, Sept. 18, 1842. Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; *Report of the Secretary of War*, November 26, 1842, 27th Cong, 3d sess., House Document 2: 177-78.

⁵² Jesup to Swords, October 26, 1842, M745, Roll 17, Page 524, Tj102642, 2, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.



An 1848 map of Fort Scott



The center the plan
 compares (original)

- References**
- a. Commanding Officer's Office
 - b. Officers' Quarters
 - c. Soldiers' Quarters
 - d. Hospital
 - e. Guard House
 - f. Communication Officer's Office
 - g. Court-Martial Room
 - h. Unkempt Store Room
 - i. Gun House
 - j. Quarter Master's Office
 - k. Soldier's Store Room
 - l. Quarter Master's Store Room
 - m. Well
 - n. Flour Mill
 - o. Adjoining
 - p. Dispensary/Store
 - q. Quarter Master's Store Room
 - r. Cook's Mill
 - s. Quarters Store
 - t. Bake House

promised that "If laborers can be obtained, the whole may be completed in a few months."⁵³

Swords rarely shared the official optimism, often sounding gloomy about the prospects of the fort. Without the addition of civilian workers, he could not keep to the War Department's schedule. It was impractical to believe that soldiers could provide all the labor necessary to complete the barracks and quarters. Without skilled help, frame buildings were simply impossible to construct. Among the soldiers stationed at Fort Scott in 1844, Swords found just seven carpenters and four masons, only three or four of whom he respected as construction workers. Work continued, with supplies from St. Louis supplementing local purchases, but never as quickly as he hoped. By October 1843, Swords had accepted delivery for a range of construction materials, including six thousand one hundred pounds of cut nails, twelve stoves, five hundred and five pounds of stove pipe, twelve cupboard locks, two barrels of hydraulic cement and twenty-one paint brushes. The soldiers of Companies A and C of the First Dragoons and Company D of the Fourth Infantry spent their days in construction projects, including the building of the hospital, quarters, and storehouse. Skilled tradesmen built chimneys, completed building interiors, and repaired wagons. In exchange for what the Army labeled "extra duty," the men were allotted whiskey.⁵⁴ The libation made the soldiers more eager to perform the tasks that Swords required.

The absence of adequate resources paralleled the lack of trained workers. Low flow on Mill Creek for the greater part of the year made the sawmill unproductive. Swords complained in August 1843 that the mill was again inoperative for lack of water, and that without more consistent operations, the post "will take 2 years longer to finish for want of lumber." When the water was available, the post often operated the mill twenty-four hours a day. Heavy use of the sawmill wore out or broke most of the moving parts. St. Louis was the nearest source of spare parts. In March 1844, Swords informed superiors that the shaft of the mill was broken four weeks previously, "and consequently have been doing nothing since — and all the water is running away over the dam — rather provoking at this time." The fort sent Edmunds Holloway, an officer with the Fourth Infantry, to St. Louis for a new shaft, and "is hourly looked for back."⁵⁵ The delays seemed endless and progress was slow.

Construction of permanent quarters followed rank. One of the first projects undertaken was the construction of the officer's quarters, which began as summer became fall in 1842. The plans for these quarters were similar to the ones used by the Army and showed similarities to Fort Leavenworth's buildings, where Swords also served. All four of the buildings on Officer's Row were two-story duplexes, with their basements built above ground. Each side of the duplex had two large rooms on each floor, with wide hallways containing staircases at the end of each floor. The kitchen was in the basement, and a fireplace in each room heated the buildings. Wide

⁵³ Report of the Quartermaster General, Oct. 25, 1843, 28th Cong., 1st sess., Senate Document 1 (Serial 431), 75; Report of the Quartermaster General, Nov. 11, 1844, 28th Congress, 2d sess., Senate Document 1 (Serial 449), 147.

⁵⁴ Thomas Swords, report, March 4, 1843, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; invoice of Quarter Master stores furnished Capt. Thos. Swords, A.Q.M., Fort Scott, Quarter Masters Office, St. Louis, October 27, 1843, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; extra duty roster, fourth quarter 1841; first, second, third and fourth quarter 1842; and first quarter 1843, Fort Wayne, Cherokee Nation, and Fort Scott, Missouri Territory, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁵⁵ Swords to Johnston, August 7, 1843 and March 26, 1844, Myers, *"From the Crack Post of the Frontier"*: 17.

porches across the front and rear of the quarters provided sanctuary on hot summer evenings. The nearby timber stands provided wood for the buildings, with oak framing timbers twelve inches square, walnut siding, and oak floors. The doors, door frames, lintels, mantlepieces, etc., were of two-inch walnut, and crews turned the fourteen-foot high Doric columns that supported the porch roofs from solid walnut logs. Quarters No. 1, the northernmost building in the row that ran north to east, was completed except for its upper flooring by October 1843. Its neighbor, Quarters No. 2, was the last of the four to be completed; construction did not begin on it until 1845. The materials for completing Quarters No. 3 were unavailable until the end of 1844, and Quarters No. 3 and 4 were ready for occupancy by the spring of 1846. The post's original plans called for a separate structure in the middle of the row for the commanding officer, but the Army never built it because the necessary funds were diverted for use in the Mexican-American War.⁵⁶

The next major concern for the post builders was protecting the Army's equipment and animals. The quartermaster storehouse, to the east of the row of officers' quarters, was one of the first buildings to be completed at Fort Scott and was occupied by June 1843. The dragoon stable's roof and weatherboarding were nearly complete by October 1843, and the troops' horses used the building after November 1843. After the Army changed plans for stationing a second company of dragoons at the post to a second company of infantry, the government canceled the proposed second stable. Workers built the foundation for the powder magazine by October 1843, and completed the entire structure a year later. The men finished a sixty-five-foot well the same month, although the protective canopy was not in place until 1848.⁵⁷

Construction of housing for the post's enlisted contingent continued along with these other projects. Company A of the First Dragoons did not move into their barracks until May 1844. According to Swords' plans, both the dragoon and infantry barracks were similar in outward appearance to the officers' quarters, with an aboveground basement and wide verandah across the front of the main floor, supported by seven pillars. Each of the three barracks planned would be sixty-five feet long, and Swords designed them to accommodate the fifty-man force that made up a pre-Mexican War Army company. Construction on the first set of Infantry Barracks did not begin until fall 1843, and it was reported as nearly ready for occupancy by July 1844. The workers almost finished the second infantry barracks by July 1844, and Company C of the Fourth Infantry moved in on September 3. Work continued slowly on other post structures; the post did not begin the guardhouse project until after October 1, 1844, while workers did not frame the building that became post headquarters until the following October. Construction did not begin on the quartermaster stables until 1848.⁵⁸

The Army monitored construction progress at Fort Scott through reports from Swords and by officers sent from Washington, D.C. According to an inspection report of the post filed by Col. George Croghan, Inspector General of the Army, by July 1844 the dragoon company was

⁵⁶ "Found its Rise as a Fort: Military Authorities Chose the Site of Peaceful Fort Scott," *Kansas City Star*, June 30, 1907; Sally Johnson Ketchum, *Officers Quarters No. 1, Fort Scott Kansas: Furnishing Plan Section C* (Omaha: National Park Service, 1973), 3-5; Thompson, *Fort Scott: Historic Structures Report*, 21, 31.

⁵⁷ Thompson, *Fort Scott: Historic Structures Report*, 51, 54, 59-61, 64.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 32-38, 49, 63-65.

occupying its new building, but the infantry remained in temporary huts. The two companies of infantry were soon to occupy their barracks, with D Company moving into its barracks within a week of Croghan's visit and C Company expected to move by August. Croghan noted that "the quarters will not be completely finished by the time stated, but sufficiently as for comfortable accommodation." Croghan criticized the layout of the post, noting that building an enclosed square around the parade ground precluded any easy extension of the fort. He also preferred having the stables outside the square of buildings around the parade ground, saying Swords should have built it at right angles to the dragoon barracks and at least fifty feet away. The hospital location also drew criticism, with the inspector general suggesting that a quieter spot, away from the infantry barracks, would have been better. "The beauties and advantages of the location have been greatly marred," Croghan observed, since the buildings not only obstructed "the most magnificent prairie of the country, but interrupt in the most offensive way, almost the only refreshing summer breezes."⁵⁹

Construction woes continue through 1844, with Swords complaining about problems with the sawmill and the lack of water and skilled workers, the latter issue compounded by required dragoons patrols that nearly emptied the fort of personnel. Kearny requested that recruits sent to Fort Scott include carpenters and skilled workers (i.e. turners, glaziers, and plasterers), but circumstances rarely granted his wish. Skilled labor remained in short supply. In light of these obstacles, Swords believed that the post would not be completed for at least two more years. He reported that he had spent more than \$7,300 for tools, materials, labor and transportation from October 1, 1843 to September 30, 1844, and estimated that completing the rest of the planned projects would cost \$7,500. The fort also had external concerns; aside from supporting military expeditions — its primary purpose — it had to allot men to keep the nearby military road repaired. On Aug. 27, 1844, after heavy rains washed away the bridge over Sugar Creek, about 28 miles north of Fort Scott on the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Gibson military road, officers ordered out a detachment of soldiers to repair it. Swords noted that he could not repair the two-hundred-and-seventy-five foot-long bridge "without withdrawing all of the mechanics from the buildings."⁶⁰

Despite the setbacks, Swords made progress. In his October 1, 1845 report to Assistant Quartermaster General Col. Henry Stanton, Swords reported that the officer's quarters had finally been completed except for porch flooring. Another duplex was nearly ready for plastering of its inside walls and another one had its frame erected and would soon be ready for covering, although the availability of lumber made the completion date uncertain. Work crews framed the commanding officer's office and ordnance storeroom in preparation for framing and completed the powder magazine was completed. The post still needed to build a stable for the quartermaster, a guardhouse awaited construction, and permanent flooring for hospital and soldier's quarters had not yet been accomplished. Yet again, progress was slowed because the dragoons were out on patrol, the inconsistent mill still produced an inadequate supply of lumber, and Swords wrote, "the very great prevalence of sickness at the Post during the past Month"

⁵⁹ Col. George Croghan's inspection report, July 8, 1844, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁶⁰ Swords to Jesup, August 27, 1844; Col. Stephen Kearny to Brig. General R. Jones, Adjutant General, September 24, 1844, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

made it difficult to accomplish much work. The post may not have looked even as finished as Swords pictured. Lt. David Russell, a new officer assigned to Fort Scott, noted in December 1845 that none of the barracks or officers' quarters were finished, and that "most of the officers have to live in 'log cabins.'"⁶¹

By 1846 the United States was at war with Mexico, and the Army transferred its officers to meet its new commitments. Swords, promoted to major, became quartermaster of the Army of the West. He commanded the baggage train during the Battle of San Pasqual on December 6, 1846, and when the Mexican War ended, the Army assigned him to the quartermaster-general's office in Washington, D.C. He served in the Civil War, earning the rank of brevet major general. When he retired in 1869, he had seen combat in two wars, served as quartermaster in three districts, and worked in the highest office in his division. Swords' most enduring work, a military post constructed in the mid-nineteenth century, still stands along the Marmaton River.

Swords' departure changed little at Fort Scott. The names were different, but the problems remained. The garrison decreased to fifty infantrymen as the dragoons and other soldiers marched off to combat in California and Mexico. In December 1846, George W. Wallace, the post's new Acting Assistant Quartermaster, reported to Col. Henry Stanton that the few soldiers at Fort Scott could not make significant progress on the post. Wallace asked for four or five additional mechanics and twenty to thirty additional laborers. He had hired some mechanics, but was obliged to raise their wages to match local pay.⁶² Wallace found what Swords had long ago learned: in a small post on the periphery of the nation, officers had to be enterprising if they were to accomplish anything of significance. If they waited for their superiors to give them the resources they needed, they were likely to wait a long time.

Fort Scott played another significant role on the frontier: it was the economic engine that drove the region, the one source of consistent income for local people. The military needed much — everything from meat and horses to building material — and local people often provided what they could — for a price. For the military, local purchases meant that the post did not have to rely on an inconsistent supply line from the outside. Local residents could depend on payments from the military for the cash they needed for taxes, land payments, and other economic endeavors for which exchange did not suffice. The local people lived in western Missouri, in Bates and the surrounding counties, and they were tradespeople typically found in a frontier economy, including carpenters, stone masons, and housewrights, as well as farmers and traders. George Douglass, a farmer near Deerfield, Mo., rented pasture for the government horses and mules, and sold forage (hay and corn) to the Army to feed the livestock. The Army purchased lumber from the Dodge sawmill at the village of Little Osage in what is now northern Vernon County. Federal troops away from Fort Scott also put cash into the economy. The Army had to pay transportation fees for ferrying troops and livestock across streams and rivers. It also had to pay for the food and lodging that were necessary to sustain small numbers of soldiers who were away from the fort on detached service such as couriers or escorts. A symbiotic relationship bound the military and the people of the region, one that both needed and both were sometimes reluctant to acknowledge.

⁶¹ Swords to Stanton, October 1, 1845, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; D.A. Russell to C.I. Russell, December 14, 1845, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁶² Wallace to Stanton, December 9, 1846, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

Salaries paid to local civilian workers were hardly the only contribution that the Army made to the area. The construction of Fort Scott required more materials than its soldiers could produce and that demand drove the regional economy. In July 1842, Swords advertised in the *Missourian* newspaper in Independence, about ninety miles northeast of the post, for necessary materials. These included one hundred thousand well-burnt bricks, delivered at the rate of no less than twenty-five thousand each month. He also sought five hundred thousand laths for plastering walls, delivered in lots of one hundred thousand monthly, and three-hundred thousand shingles, with half available for monthly delivery. In September and October of 1842, Swords paid N. Beardslee \$74.25 for delivering fifty thousand shingles each of the months, at the rate of \$2.97 per thousand.⁶³ On the frontier, this was real money, hard cash, an always scarce commodity.

The needs of the post were vast. In addition to building materials, the Army bought food, animals, and feed. On July 31, 1842, Swords purchased five hundred fifty-seven and one quarter bushels of corn from William Pryor for \$313.45; in September he spent \$85.37 for one hundred fifty seven and three-quarters bushels of corn from Edward L. Chouteau, and he bought three yoke of oxen at \$40 each along with two ox chains for \$130.76 from John Shirley.⁶⁴ There was no better source of currency on the frontier than the military, nor was it any surprise that the residents of Arkansas had lobbied so hard for the return of their fort. In addition to the purely military buildings, the new outpost also had a sutler's store. The merchant, operating under contract to the Army, offered goods to the fort's officers and men. In addition, he provided settlers in western Missouri with another market for their goods, and also maintained a source of manufactured items available for purchase.

Economic factors, which made all of the Army's posts extremely desirable for frontier communities, provided settlers in the region with a consistent source of capital, but Fort Scott was built to provide a military presence. The concept of an inviolate Indian country marked by a Permanent Indian Frontier had fallen apart, and the Army increasingly saw its mission as controlling Indian reactions to settlers' provocations. Between 1833 and 1844, the Army built fifteen new posts, although most proved temporary in nature. The fear of war between the two cultures remained constant. Increasing white presence across the Plains continued to threaten the region's Indian population and forced the Army to send its dragoons to persuade Indians not to fight the onslaught. Fort Scott's troops played a role in these maneuvers, but it was war with Mexico in 1846 that shifted national attention from Indian attacks on the Plains to international tensions on the nation's southern border. When combat came, the increased professionalism of the Army's officer ranks proved decisive.⁶⁵

⁶³ Fort Scott National Historic Site, Quartermaster Records, Frame 849, 286.

⁶⁴ Quartermaster Abstracts, Records of the General Accounting Office, 3rd Quarter 1842 - 3rd Quarter 1843; Roll: 01; Frame No: 85; Roll: 01 Frame No: 87; Roll: 01 Frame 90

⁶⁵ Beers, *The Western Military Frontier*, 172-176; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 102-3.

Chapter Three:

Active Service, 1842-1853

The officers and men who established Fort Scott in 1842 had more in common with their Revolutionary War forefathers than with the men who fought in the Civil War less than a decade after the post closed in 1853. The beginning of the industrial revolution in the United States and a parallel upheaval in organizational management techniques dramatically changed the way Americans in uniform worked and warred, bringing in new weapons, different tactics, and improved provisioning. A tremendous transformation in the country's military capabilities occurred during Fort Scott's initial period of activity as the United States Army developed from a small frontier constabulary and coastal defense force into an organization capable of successful international intervention. Operating from the Marmaton River site, Fort Scott's dragoons and infantrymen took part in this transformation as they supported attempts to control Indians on the Great Plains and fight a foreign enemy during the 1846-47 invasion of Mexico.

Fort Scott's garrison helped make American foreign expeditions successful, but their day-to-day activities focused on internal questions central to the nation's expansion. The United States Army kept the peace, enforcing federal policy among the many Indian peoples of the Plains. The equipment and support systems that the military utilized were far more technologically advanced than anything Indian peoples could offer their warriors, giving the Army military advantages in setting the tone and tenor of relationships. Military reform was not limited to white settlers; Indian peoples gained power over the preceding two centuries when they acquired horses and firearms. These new accouterments permitted a host of Indian groups to move onto the Great Plains, where they adapted their societies to this new environment as they went. The Indians came from east and west, Cheyenne from the Rocky Mountains and Lakota from Minnesota, and often they arrived just a few years ahead of the eastern tribes sent west by the American republic's expansion.

Indians on the Plains reshaped their ways of waging war to meet the region's limitations. Their horses' need for natural forage limited combat expeditions to the growing season, and the short range of the bow and arrow made warfare close and personal. Later, firearms made Indian fighters more effective; escalation in the number of fatalities in intra-Indian conflict was a less-desired consequence of the new technologies. When Americans arrived on the Plains, their technological advantages dominated the Indians. Native peoples could only overcome the material superiority of the U.S. Army on the rare occasions when natural conditions favored them. As the Army learned to seek combat on its terms, the possibility of Indian success in battle dramatically declined and soldiers developed into an effective force that could police, intimidate, and if necessary, wage protracted war.¹

¹ Elliott West, *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains*, 5-11; Dan L. Flores, "Bison Ecology and Bison Diplomacy: The Southern Plains from 1800 to 1850," *Journal of American History* 78, n. 2 (September 1991), 465-485; James E. Sherow, "Workings of the Geodialectic: High Plains Indians and Their Horses in the Region of the Arkansas River Valley, 1800-1870," *Environmental History Review* 16 n. 2 (Summer 1992), 61-84; Anthony McGinnis, *Counting Coup and Cutting Horses: Intertribal Warfare on the Northern Plains, 1738-1889* (Evergreen, Colo.: Cordillera Press, 1990), 71-84.

The Army officer corps grew more professional during the early part of the century as it adapted to the possibilities offered by the range of new technologies. The ultimate nineteenth-century product of this technological growth was General Ulysses S. Grant, who led Union forces to victory in the Civil War by understanding the potential of mechanical inventions and structural developments and adapting them to warfare. Many of Grant's predecessors saw the usefulness of new inventions and made them part of the Army's arsenal. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Army requirements underwrote mass production techniques for firearms, developed methods of preserving foods, sponsored the advancement of America's metallurgical industry, and pushed improvements in steamboats, among other inventions. These adaptations played a significant role in the success of military actions at Fort Scott in the 1840s and early 1850s.²

Effective weapons and a sophisticated production and transportation system allowed the United States to maintain a small but effective frontier military force in the face of what the frontier population continually regarded as a significant Indian threat. Congress maintained only 10,000 Americans in uniform to defend the entire frontier coastline from Canada to Louisiana, as well as the coastlines of the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. In 1841, west of Missouri and Arkansas, the Army outfitted only a very few uniformed soldiers: 379 dragoons stationed at Fort Leavenworth, fifty dragoons at Fort Wayne, eighty infantry soldiers at Fort Smith, 178 dragoons and 364 foot soldiers at Fort Gibson, and ninety-five infantrymen at Fort Towson.³ The soldiers were part of a web of connections that stretched throughout the nation. They had one principal responsibility, to carry out military orders. Soldiers sometimes had to build their own shelters or plant gardens or hunt to supplement their routine Army menus, but this remained an occasional feature of frontier living. Most garrisons could call upon farmers, sutlers, and others for food, shelter, clothing, and other needs.⁴

Indian men contended with multiple responsibilities, acting as hunters in a society dependent upon their success as well as warriors. The Plains cultures in conflict were quick to adapt available inventions to their own needs. Most Indian groups, caught in subsistence farming regimes on marginally productive lands or dependent upon an historic pattern of hunting and gathering that relied on increasingly inconsistent buffalo hunts, lacked the population size, social mechanisms, and resources to compete with incoming Americans. Indians shaped their societies around the centuries-old bow and arrow until they could trade for firearms and ammunition. In their rush to acquire new weapons from incoming Europeans and Americans, Indians across the northern half of the nation entered the market economy and depleted natural resources such as beaver and other pelt-producing animals. Rifles let Indians hunt more effectively, taking a great

² M.L. Brown, "Notes on U.S. Arsenals, Depots, and Martial Firearms of the Second Seminole War," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 61, n. 4 (1983), 445-458.

³ "Defense of the Western Frontier," letter from the Secretary of War, April 1, 1840 26th Cong, 1st sess., House Document 161 (Serial 366); R. Jones, Adjutant General, to Alexander Macomb, Commanding General in Chief, January 12, 1841, 26th Congress, 2d sess., Senate Document 104 (Serial 377), 2; George Ness Jr., *The Regular Army on the Eve of the Civil War* (Baltimore, Md.: Toomey, 1990).

⁴ Francis Paul Prucha, "Distribution of Regular Army Troops Before the Civil War," *Military Affairs* 16 (Winter 1952), 169-73; Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York, Macmillan, 1973).

toll on the animal and bird populations. In the American Southwest, raids on Spanish settlements and forts produced much the same effect. Indians acquired the accouterments they desired by force when they were not available through trade. As the nineteenth century opened, Indians still adjusted to life on the Plains. By 1840, this adaptation was complete. Some Indians took advantage of improvements in weapons by purchasing new firearms or winning them through combat. After arrows proved ineffective against the invaders' firearms, Indian cultures shifted to rely on the acquired technology of firearms.⁵

The United States had other significant advantages: sufficient surplus capital to develop new technologies continually as well as the production facilities to produce the results in large numbers. By the 1840s, American society almost universally welcomed and accepted technological change. This was the famed age of "Yankee Ingenuity," when Americans fancied that their contributions to human endeavor were the design and manufacture of new machines and processes. The nation ignored or rejected some inventions, but on the whole Americans embraced the possibilities of technology and its promise. The invention of the steel-bottom plow and McCormick Reaper (a threshing machine) simplified the agricultural development of the prairie. Steamboats made river transportation possible, moving both people and supplies, and by 1835, more than seven hundred steamboats operated on American waterways. By the middle of the century, railroads and telegraph systems opened an entirely new world of communications. Modifying English locomotive designs to fit the nation's topography, a generation of mechanics and inventors brought the American railroad system into prominence during the middle third of the nineteenth century. Samuel Morse also adapted existing technology, securing a government contract to connect Washington and Baltimore by telegraph line in 1843; a year later his historic "What hath God wrought" ushered in a communications revolution. In this setting, technological innovation was part and parcel of being American.

The Army used new technologies whenever they supported its mission. Improved firearms such as percussion muskets and pistols joined with innovations in artillery to increase the military's firepower. Underpinning the military might of the United States was the development of a market economy with the surplus capital to invest in frontier development and support a standing army.⁶

American industries made an especially key contribution to the Army's effectiveness with the development of mass-production facilities that produced military hardware. Growing out of a traditional cottage industry that produced one-of-a-kind firearms, weapons companies embraced the industrial revolution. Large factories used milling machines to turn out large numbers of identically shaped components fitted together into a standardized weapon, easily repaired by replacing any or all parts. Between 1820 and 1850 at the federal government's arsenals at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and Springfield, Massachusetts, and at private gun factories across the

⁵ McGinnis, *Counting Coup*, 3-12; West, *The Way to the West*, 13-50.

⁶ Dirk Struik, *Yankee Science in the Making* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 303-334.

Connecticut River Valley, such factories flourished.⁷

The creation of modern weapons with interchangeable parts changed the way American soldiers waged war. Until about 1830, soldiers carried muzzle-loading muskets, notoriously inaccurate but easily reloaded weapons. The major disadvantage of the musket was its method of igniting the main gunpowder charge; the gun used the spark of a flintlock mechanism placed near priming powder. High winds or rain could make the weapon impossible to fire, and the loading routine had to incorporate separate steps to load a small priming pan. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, arms makers discovered mercury fulminate, a compound that exploded when struck. By 1820 they produced the compound in small metal caps. When used in a modified musket, the percussion mechanism could ignite the main gunpowder charge in rain or winds. Percussion caps set off a revolution in military weapons technology. Government arsenals produced their last flintlock musket in 1842, the year of Fort Scott's establishment.⁸

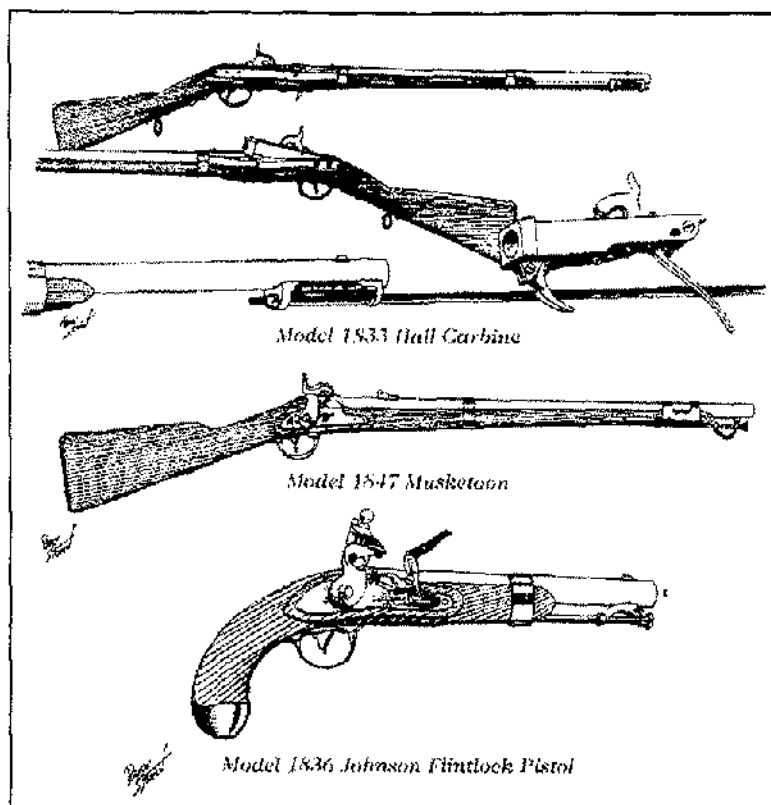
The decrease in reloading time helped cancel one of the Indians' main advantages in combat — mobility. Before percussion caps, well-trained soldiers could deliver a volley every thirty seconds, and mounted Indians could count on charging into the soldier's formation, where the lances and knives upon which Indians relied were extremely effective. With the new weapons, it took only ten seconds to reload and the troops could hold off the Indians. For the dragoons who served at Fort Scott, the percussion caps also allowed them another advantage: they could reload while riding. Unfortunately, as the Army strove to attain the economy mandated by Congress, small military budgets reduced the amount of ammunition available for target practice. Troopers sometimes went into combat with little experience in aiming their weapons, negating most of the advantages they enjoyed.⁹

The revolution in technology allowed the military to organize, deploy, and arm its soldiers in new ways. The creation of dragoon units in 1833 offered an important example. These new elite mounted troops received the best equipment the Army had to offer, including one of the most modern weapons available, the Model 1833 Hall breech-loading carbine, a smaller version of the heavier weapons carried by infantrymen. Developed specifically for the Dragoons, the 1833 Hall was the first percussion breech-loading firearm used by the United States Army. Its success meant that similar weapons followed. In 1836, the government arsenal at Harpers Ferry produced a heavier carbine that used rifle components, and four years later Simeon North introduced the Model 1840 carbines with an improved loading mechanism. The government designed the weapons for the dragoons' unique service needs, but they were not easy to use. To load the carbine, the dragoon pressed a lever down, which raised the front of the receiver,

⁷ David Freeman Hawke, *Nuts and Bolts of the Past: A History of American Technology, 1776-1860* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Struik, *Yankee Science*, 185-190; Robert L. O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men: A History of War, Weapons, and Aggression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989): 192; Merritt Roe Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory and the New Technology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977); William Hallahan, *Misfire: The History of How America's Small Arms Have Failed Our Military* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), 47-108.

⁸ Walter Millis, *Arms and Men: A Study in American Military History* (NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1956): 92; O'Connell, *Of Arms and Men*, 190-91; Charles O'Connell, Jr. *The United States Army and the Origins of Modern Management, 1818-1860* (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1982); William Skelton, "The Commanding General and the Problem of Command in the United States Army, 1821-1841," *Military Affairs* 34 (December 1970), 117-22.

⁹ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 158, 161-162; Ness, *The Regular Army on the Eve of the Civil War*.



Some Dragoon firearms used by Fort Scott troops (From *The Horse Soldier, 1776-1943, Vol. 1*, by Randy Steffen. Copyright © 1977 by the University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. Reprinted by Permission. All rights reserved.)

allowing the powder and bullet to be inserted into the bore of the receiver. Dragoons poured the powder from the paper cartridge into the receiver and then tamped the bullet into place with the ramrod or a small finger. The receiver was then closed and the weapon primed by placing a percussion cap onto its holder and the carbine was ready for firing. The .54 caliber bullets weighed one-half ounce. Some carbines had bayonets that retracted into a recessed slot below the barrel, while others held ramrods. The dragoons also carried the 1836 Johnson single-shot muzzle loading percussion pistol and the 1840 heavy dragoon sabre, commonly named "Old Wristbreaker." With this complement of arms, Dragoons were very effective fighters — after they mastered the intricacies of loading their potent arsenal

while mounted on horseback.¹⁰

Officers serving across the American continent enjoyed more than superiority in weapons and logistical support over Indian opponents. As did institutions across the country, the Army was beginning to experience what historian Walter Millis termed "the managerial revolution," the growth of a control structure that allowed for efficient, effective, and fast utilization of a large organization. In previous wars, improvised command structures and confusion over exactly who was in charge of what hampered the military's effectiveness. Using the lessons learned from battlefield defeats in the War of 1812, Congress passed legislation in 1816 and 1818 to create a General Staff to coordinate Army strategy. Operational command of the country's regions shifted to designated officers in charge of districts and departments, with the Secretary of War providing overall coordination. In 1821 the brilliant John C. Calhoun, one of the century's most effective War Department leaders, created the post of commanding general of the army, finally establishing the principal of one overall leader. A centralized command structure also led to a standardized method of instruction for recruits and officers. The 1841 publication of *Cavalry*

¹⁰ Randy Steffen, *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943: Vol. I, The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 131-134.

Tactics by the War Department, which led to common maneuvers among mounted troops, helped dragoon training. During the 1840s, the instruction, protocols, and command procedures underwent similar modification. Small conflicts across the Plains abounded, and in these local affairs leaders learned to exploit the possibilities of transporting and supplying troops by steamboat. The real fruits of these efforts became visible during and after the American Civil War, when large armies took to the field for campaigns lasting months, armed, clothed and fed by enormous supply trains, and coordinated by faraway officers and political leaders.¹¹

The prospects of Indian-settler conflict sparked the initial call for a military post in what would become southeastern Kansas, and the Army's Quartermaster and Ordnance Departments furnished the material to build it and the arms to protect it. Nearly everything else at Fort Scott depended upon the enlisted ranks — the men who built the fort and patrolled the trails to fulfill its mission. Enlisted men were the backbone of any post, and Fort Scott was no exception. When fort personnel accomplished tasks, it was with the sweat and strength of soldiers. The problems that arose usually involved either the lack of enlisted labor, soldiers' health problems, or the simple difficulties of compelling labor from recalcitrant individuals on the nation's periphery.¹²

The daily routine for the soldiers stationed at Fort Scott varied little. Bugle calls defined the day with a series of distinct tunes, the routine occurring in a never-ending and consistent sequence. During a typical day at Fort Scott, the call for reveille came at daybreak, followed fifteen minutes later by stable call, the time for dragoons to clean the stables and feed and prepare their horses for the morning's activities. Sick call followed at 7:10. The call to breakfast came at 7:30, signaling the day's first post-wide activity. Throughout the remainder of the morning, troopers heard bugle calls announcing fatigue call summoning the men assigned extra duty, guard call for those standing watch, and orderly call. Dinner call came at noon, with the day's second fatigue call coming an hour later. The afternoon stable call came at 1:30. Retreat, marking the end of the work day, sounded at sunset, and the tattoo call at 9:00 p.m. marked the time for troopers to be in their quarters. Regulations required only the watch detail, those on guard duty, to remain awake after the sun went down. The soldiers usually stood for two hours at an assigned post, followed by four hours of fitful sleep fully clothed in case an alarm sounded.¹³

Often the morning sick call provided the greatest variation in the daily routine. As did most other Army outposts, Fort Scott has a hospital that was the responsibility of a surgeon or an assistant surgeon. Regiments typically assigned the worst of their enlisted men to the hospital as either attendants or cooks. The hospital building received priority during post construction, and by 1848 it was completed, except for porches and two small outbuildings.¹⁴ A line of the ill, the

¹¹ Millis, *Arms and Men*, 131-211; Allan Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (NY: Free Press, 1994), 117-122; Skelton, "The Commanding General and the Problem of Command."

¹² Coffman, *The Old Army*, 210-211.

¹³ Post Records of Fort Leavenworth, January 26, 1850, as quoted in James H. Carleton, *The Prairie Logbooks. Dragoon Campaigns to the Pawnee Villages in 1844 and to the Rocky Mountains in 1845* (Chicago: Caxon Club, 1943): xi.

¹⁴ Coffman, *The Old Army*: 182-191; Erwin Thompson, *Fort Scott Historic Structures Report, Part II: Historical Data Section* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1968), 43-44.

recalcitrant and the malingerers made their way to the hospital each morning. Its doors held out the hope of a brief respite from the ongoing drudgery of post life.

Winters on the Plains could be cold, wet, and harsh, and soldiers were forced to endure the vagaries of the frontier climate. Early Army regulations called for fireplaces to heat barracks and quarters instead of charcoal-burning stoves. This was supposed to be an economical move, for military labor could build the fireplaces from locally available materials and they consumed locally cut timber. Most of the post buildings relied on fireplaces, and the barracks included a fireplace at each end, the lone sources of heat during the winter. Small cast iron wood-burning stoves heated the Post Headquarters, Quartermasters Storehouse and Guardhouse. A constant fatigue duty of the soldiers was cutting firewood, but within a few years of the beginning of post construction, parties traveled further to find fuel. The Army had already cut most of the timber along the Marmaton River and the process of obtaining sufficient amounts of firewood became an ordeal for work details.

Soldiers survived the cold winters with the help of another heat source — their bunkmates. Congressional parsimony prevented the Army from purchasing single beds made of iron. Instead, antebellum soldiers usually slept two to a locally made bunk.¹⁵ Such a practice was typical in the nineteenth century and had none of the connotations it might at the end of the twentieth century. People in the nineteenth century — especially in a frontier military post — did not enjoy the privacy or the personal space to which their descendants became accustomed.¹⁶

When payday came, soldiers rushed to receive their due and spent it equally quickly. Standing next to the pay officer on the irregular occasions when frontier troops received their salaries was the sutler, a private merchant who operated under Army license and offered amenities — food, whiskey, tobacco, writing paper, books, and clothes — that punctuated the unending monotony of Army routine. Sutler's stores served military posts across the West. The Army set the sutlers' prices, but without close regulation the stores routinely overcharged soldiers. All too often the sutlers offered their wares on credit, a situation that meant that some



Hiero T. Wilson, post sutler and one of the founders of the town of Fort Scott

¹⁵ David Clary, *These Relics of Barbarism: A History of Furniture in Barracks and Guardhouses of the United States Army, 1800-1880* (Harpers Ferry, Va.: Harpers Ferry Center, 1981), 69-71; Quartermaster Abstracts, Records of the General Accounting Office, Roll 02, 4th Quarter 1843 - 2nd Quarter 1845, Washington, D. C.: National Archives.

¹⁶ Richard D. Gamble, *Garrison Life at Frontier Military Posts, 1830-60* (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1956).

Fort Scott Nov 6-1844

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A typical page from Hiero Wilson's sutler account books. This one is dated Nov. 6, 1844.

soldiers were so far in debt that they left the pay line with nothing but a reduction in their debt.¹⁷

The first sutlers at Fort Scott were both merchants and important citizens of the post. John A. Bugg was the area's first sutler and doubled as the postmaster. In 1843, Hiero T. Wilson, who with his brother Thomas operated a sutler store at Fort Gibson for nine years, arrived at Fort Scott and became Bugg's partner before buying him out. Many of the officers who transferred north from the Indian territory post knew Wilson and a number invited him to follow them to the new fort. Sporting the honorific "colonel," Wilson operated a store near Fort Scott's parade square, adjacent to and just west of the present junction of Old Fort Boulevard and Stanton Street. From there, he sold supplies both to soldiers and settlers in the region. His customers included soldiers, their dependents, travelers, Indians and tradespeople, merchants and farmers from Missouri.

Economic opportunities could be varied for a sutler at Fort Scott, and during the post's early days, the military provided only a portion of his trade. As did many sutlers, Wilson also functioned as an Indian trader. Osage people had been part of the market economy in Missouri and the Indian Territory for more than a century, and as one of the most adaptable and economically sophisticated people, the Osage recognized a new opportunity when they saw one. Their experience as middlemen between the French, Spanish, and other Indian people assured that they knew how to value goods and how to trade. Merchants such as Wilson were quick to tap into the new market, even if it meant some education. At Fort Scott, "I learnt to talk the Osage language," Wilson wrote, "in selling them goods and purchasing their Buffalo Robes and Buffalo Tallow."¹⁸

The small luxuries sutlers provided helped soldiers survive the dusty, tedious duty

¹⁷ Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1987): 120-122; David M. Delo, *Peddlers and Post Traders: The Army Sutler on the Frontier* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1992); Coffman, *The Old Army*, 155-56.

¹⁸ Hiero T. Wilson, Address at Old Settlers Quarter Centennial Celebration, 1879, Old Settlers, "H" (Coll. 626-B), Folder "Hist. — Old Settlers Quarter Centennial Celebration — 1879," Kansas State Historical Society Archives; for the Osage, see Willard Rollings, *The Osage: An Ethnographical Study of Hegemony on the Prairie-Plains* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992); for the complex world of southwestern trade, see Elizabeth A. H. John, *Storms Brewed in Other Men's' Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975).

common to posts such as Fort Scott. Life was never easy at a frontier fort. The work was hard and long, the diversions few and usually venal, low, or dangerous, and there were few opportunities for soldiers to improve their lot. Soldiers enlisted for a range of reasons. For some it provided an opportunity for three meals a day; others fled some personal or economic catastrophe at home. Many were recent immigrants, likely as unaware of the nature of military service on the frontier as they were of the idioms of the English language in the mid-nineteenth century. Few among the enlisted men found military life, especially at a post such as Fort Scott, to their liking. Most simply endured their time in uniform, surely counting the days and even the minutes until they mustered out.¹⁹

As a result, morale was an ongoing problem. Army commanders attempted to keep the men too busy to be bored, assigning work projects and scheduling periods of drill and inspections, but there was simply no military solution to the problem. Maj. William Graham, Fort Scott's second commander, sought to keep the garrison occupied with military duties. His efforts impressed Army Inspector General George Croghan, who noted after his July 1844 inspection that "two thirds of the Companies were engaged in extra or daily duty," which left little time for boredom. Despite the best efforts of the officers, soldiers continued to complain about their situation, and the instances of low morale led directly to desertion. For those men trapped by credit problems, unhappy with military life or anxious to return to civilian life early, running away from the Army provided a way out. The high desertion rate demonstrated how viable an option this was, and many people simply used their enlistment as a means of securing transportation to the frontier, departing the service as soon after as they could. On average the antebellum Army lost around 20 percent of its roster to desertion every year. At Fort Scott, the numbers were slightly lower, in large degree because in the surrounding Indian Territory there were few places in which to run, and not many economic opportunities that could compare to the gold fields of California or Denver. Between 1842 and 1846, post commanders recorded thirty-four desertions. In May 1842, the first month of post returns, six deserted, the highest single monthly total. This surely reflected the difficulty of life at post without barracks and the other basics to which even the lowest-ranked soldiers were accustomed.²⁰

Penalties for desertion from the Army were severe. Execution was within the realm of proscribed punishment, although those captured and convicted of the crime rarely received such extreme sanction. A more likely sentence included shaving the offender's head, marking his body on the back or hip with a tattoo "D" for deserter, and whipping the man before driving him from camp. A military panel sentenced one Fort Scott soldier convicted of desertion to be lashed with rawhide and fined six months pay, a typical sanction. Army regulations also called for the payment of a bounty paid for the return of dead or alive deserters. With sanctions ranging from

¹⁹ Gamble, *Garrison Life at Frontier Military Posts*; John Murphy, *Pistol's Legacy: Sutlers, Post Traders, and the American Army, 1820-95*. Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois -Urbana, 1993).

²⁰ George Croghan, *Army Life on the Western Frontier; Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845*, Francis Paul Prucha, ed. (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1958); Coffman, *The Old Army*, 193-96; James M. McCaffrey, *Army of Manifest Destiny: The American Soldier in the Mexican War, 1846-1848* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 109-112; Fort Scott post returns, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

severe to punitive, deserters ran great risk when they fled.²¹

Military justice affected more than just the enlisted men. The frontier army's officers were also subject to sanction, but more often they were such a scarce commodity that instead they sat in judgment on the many military courts that administered justice. Officers took part in trials on both sides of the bench, many of which resulted from military regulations which outlawed dueling and forced gentlemen to seek satisfaction for imagined or real slights from the courts. One near-continuous drain on the command structure at Fort Scott was the demand for officers and enlisted men to attend courts-martial as judges or witnesses. Officers from the fort traveled to nearby posts such as forts Leavenworth, Wayne, and Gibson and distant ones that included Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis and West Point, New York. The Army maintained two levels of courts-martial for its commissioned officers. A post commander administered hearings for lesser offenses. More serious charges required that the president of the United States, a general commanding an Army or a colonel leading a separate department convene a general court-martial, a board that required anywhere from five to thirteen officers to sit as judges. When such a board found a defendant guilty, it also fixed the punishment.²²

Between calls for detached duty such as courts martial, officers attended to the more mundane features of garrison life. Supplying their isolated posts proved to be one of the most important and difficult of tasks. Provisioning required local efforts as well as military supplies. The post's gardens provided vegetables and fruit, likely the only regular source of such commodities in soldiers' diets. Purchases from Missouri farmers and the post sutler sometimes supplemented Fort Scott's stores of fresh vegetables and fruits, but market demands and unreliable transportation meant that the military could not rely on farmers' surplus. Army regulations ordered the post garrisons to plant and maintain gardens during two separate phases, from 1818 to 1833 and again from 1851 to 1854. Gardens offered two advantages: they provided much needed nutrition and the economic benefits of raising food locally also added incentive for the financially strapped Army.

Before 1853, post commanders determined the enthusiasm for crops at Fort Scott.²³ On July 8, 1844, as part of an inspection of frontier forts, Colonel Croghan described the post gardens at Fort Scott as following: "Messing: The post gardens being good, the fare is equal to every wish of the soldier." The exact location of the plots remain unknown, although a medical report identifies a one-hundred-acre cornfield adjoining the post on the south. Fort Scott's inability to reliably and consistently raise crops can be ascribed to poor weather conditions, the average soldier's lack of experience in farming, and the lack of manpower for field work, with many soldiers patrolling or assigned other duties. Officers stationed at the post also maintained

²¹ William McAnaney, "Desertion in the United States Army," *Military Service Institution of the United States* 10 (September 1889), 450-478; McCaffrey, *Army of Manifest Destiny*, 110; Francis Paul Prucha, *The Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier, 1783-1846* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969); Leo Oliva, *Fort Scott: Courage and Conflict on the Border* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1994), 57.

²² McCaffrey, *Army of Manifest Destiny*, 107-110.

²³ Coffinan, *The Old Army*: 168-170; Miller J. Stewart, "To Plow, to Sow, to Reap, to Mow: The U.S. Army Agriculture Program," *Nebraska History* 63, n. 2 (1982), 194-215; Allison Bacon, *From Prairie to Town: The Cultural Landscape of Fort Scott, Kansas, From the 1830s to the 1900s* (M.A. thesis, Wichita State University, 1993).



Surgeon Joseph K. Barnes, in a photograph taken after his Fort Scott service

gardens, growing a variety of plants and even some fruit trees. Charlotte Swords, wife of the fort's assistant quartermaster, mentioned peach trees in a letter to a friend, possibly referring to the individual gardens grown behind the officers' quarters. The large hospital garden provided the Post Surgeon and patients with fresh fruit and vegetables, what one observer called "a sufficiency of esculents during the spring and summer."²⁴ Despite Army hopes for self-sufficiency, the post consistently ran short of vegetables and fruits.

Whether the post garden or a small officer's plot, any farming endeavor relied on rain. The Army constructed the post during an era of abundant rainfall on the Plains. It was the tail end of the Little Ice Age, a cooling phenomenon that began in the 1500 and lasted until about 1850. As a result, rainfall totals consistently supported unirrigated agriculture. The post surgeon, in charge of collecting weather data, noted that 1851 was an excellent year for

precipitation, with the post recording 19.66 inches of rain, a vast improvement over the year before, when the medical department measured 15.64 inches total. The heavier rainfalls in 1849 (31.02 inches) and 1848 (21.37 inches) produced a series of luxuriant vegetation and abundant harvests as well as an undeserved confidence in the dependability of rainfall to the Fort Scott area.²⁵

When farming endeavors were successful, the vegetables and fruits from the post gardens became an essential component of the garrison's health. After the 1845 dragoon expedition to the Rockies, the assistant surgeon at Fort Scott noted the deficiencies of the returning troopers' military diet. On patrol, the men lived on commissary rations that they brought along — mainly barreled pork or beef and flour, supplemented by whatever meat could be brought in by hunters. There were few vegetables in the diet, and the soldiers lacked familiarity with the region and available foodstuffs. If there were edible wild plants, soldiers rarely recognized them. Fort Scott offered a much better variety of food. Once the patrol arrived at the post, "they indulged in a variety of vegetables & watermelons, musk melons, green apples &c &c to an unlimited extent,"

²⁴ George Croghan, "Inspection Report, Fort Scott, July 8, 1844," Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives; Joseph K. Barnes, "Medical Topography and Diseases of Fort Scott," in *Report on the Sickness and Mortality Among the Troops in the Middle Division* (1852), Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives; Quarterly Report of the Sick & Wounded at Fort Scott, Mo., for the Quarter Ending September 30th 1852, Frame 54, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²⁵ Quarterly Report of the Sick & Wounded at Fort Scott, Mo., for the Quarter Ending September 30th 1852, Frame 54, Hospital Records, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives.

the assistant surgeon observed. "The health of the command is now improving."²⁶

The advantages of fresh vegetables did not cure all maladies. The hospital was the last Army post some soldiers saw. Fort Scott's location and high-quality structures helped it escape the worst epidemics of the mid-nineteenth century. Cholera, a water-borne disease, became the single greatest threat to health on the Plains. In 1849, a major epidemic swept the country, and even the frontier was affected. Up and down the Oregon Trail, grave markers appeared by the hundreds and even by the thousands. The unsanitary conditions of wagon travel contributed greatly to the epidemic's spread. Fort Scott escaped the brunt of cholera, but death was a constant feature of life at the post. From 1842 to 1852, seventeen officers and men died at Fort Scott, according to Surgeon Joseph Barnes. With mortality came the responsibility of maintaining community and tradition as well as honoring the sacrifice of soldiers. One of the first additions to the fort was a cemetery, about three-quarters of a mile west of the post.²⁷

Epic gun battles and besieged Army garrisons fighting off hordes of attacking Indians filled the mythic West. Fort Scott was the reality; its soldiers carried out their orders in much less dramatic fashion, suffering under the hot sun and cold winter winds for tiny paychecks often already spent at the sutler store. Life was hard and dreary at the post — and at most such posts — and soldiers endured in the name of a greater good that often escaped them. Their life was dull, their work, individually at least, could seem trivial. There were few breaks in the routine, few moments of excitement to replace the drudgery. Yet the soldiers at Fort Scott, as did their peers at other Army posts, provided the backbone of a growing nation. Their work was not insignificant. The troops' presence and their actions helped define the frontier and the nature of life on the Plains for subsequent generations.

By the 1840s, distinctions in federal policy toward long-settled Plains Indians and newcomers forced onto the Plains had begun to collapse. American policy before the decade envisioned Indian people living in a broad band across the continent and away from white settlements, with the Army maintaining peace among the two groups of Indians as it patrolled the dividing line between the cultures. As white settlers headed west, the Permanent Indian Frontier had been exposed as fiction and the military could no longer enforce any boundaries. As a consequence of the new circumstances, the Army's role had to change. Military posts such as Fort Scott ceased to function as a dividing line between Indians and settlers and instead took up the cudgel of direct protection of the expansion of white settlement. On occasion, international incidents, especially with the adjacent Republic of Texas, drew military attention. From guardian of the frontier to active participant in its shaping and using Army officers' growing experience in the region to lead to new strategies to manage the Plains, Fort Scott and the other posts adapted to meet these new challenges.

²⁶ J. Walker, Assistant Surgeon, "Quarterly Report of the Sick and Wounded at Fort Scott, Missouri, for the Quarter Ending September 30, 1845," Hospital Records, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives.

²⁷ Barnes, "Medical Topography and Diseases of Fort Scott," in *Report on the Sickness and Mortality Among Troops in the Middle Division*, lists seventeen deaths from 1842 to 1853, but the post returns show a total of twenty-eight deaths until January 1852, with another five deaths recorded over the post's final sixteen months of operation. The Fort Scott post cemetery was located approximately four blocks west of National on Wall Street in today's city. Barnes went on to become surgeon general of the United States Army during the Civil War. See also Charles Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961).

This new policy had not come without a cost in lives, both Indian and white. Since the start of the century, the American Army faced three major threats to frontier security, two in Florida and another in Illinois, while the nation continued its policy of Indian removal. During the first three decades of the century, battles occurred across the continent as white settlements extended west, and after each military or treaty victory, federal policy makers returned to their plans for isolating Indians. The country's dramatic expansion from 1845 to 1848 ended that dream forever, as the addition of Texas (1845), Oregon territory (1846) and California (1848) forced the United States to obtain safe transcontinental routes to its new possessions.

Despite the fears of many frontier settlements, relocated people such as the Cherokees and Choctaws proved to be more than capable of defending their interests in their new home. Since many of the immigrant Indians came from agricultural backgrounds, they were comfortable on the Plains and posed far less of a threat to settlement than federal officials anticipated. The Army also discovered that relocated Indians, often equipped with the firearms that treaty provisions granted them, were not as vulnerable to the nomadic buffalo-hunting Indians of the Plains as the government originally feared. These realizations changed the perspective of the military. Its mission and responsibilities became far different. Instead of protecting settlers from relocated Indians, the military ended up policing the expansion westward of settlers into the lands of relocated Indians and increasingly, protecting both relocated Indians and settlers from the nomadic people of the Plains.²³

During the years it was in active service, Fort Scott carried out its many missions with minuscule garrisons, the result of an undermanned Army forced to staff the many small forts local interests demanded and vote-sensitive congressmen mandated. During the Mexican War, the lone unit at Fort Scott, Company B of the First Infantry, saw its roster fall from a normal level of sixty-five privates to forty, with only ten privates ready for duty and another fourteen on extra duty involving construction as well as timber cutting and food procurement. That total dropped during the next several months. Finally, in January 1847, the company reported just twenty-five soldiers at the post. The numbers climbed in April, when fifty-five recruits marched into the post. Since Fort Scott relied on the enlisted ranks for extra duty in building fort structures, commanders often did not have enough men to undertake military missions.

Although most of their days were filled with the mind-numbing routines of frontier garrison duty, the officers and soldiers assigned to Fort Scott did have opportunities for military adventure. Fort Scott's troops gained experience by participating in a number of dragoon expeditions across the West, patrolling the Santa Fe and Oregon trails, and their officers developed their leadership skills by commanding these isolated patrols. Before the Mexican War, most of the Army's senior officers were self-educated. Only a small minority had attended one of the Army's specialist schools, such as the artillery school of instruction at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, or the infantry school of practice, organized at Jefferson Barracks. In contrast, by 1846 most of the junior officers moving into the senior ranks had been educated at West Point, and a sense of professionalism began to grow. The Mexican War was the first time an American Army had a large number of officers with a formal military education, and officers serving in the post-

²³ West, *The Way to the West*, 40-45; Craig Miner and William E. Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas: A Study of Cultural Revolution, 1854-1871* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990), 1-24.

Mexican War Army benefitted from the patrols and convoys across the Plains undertaken in the face of Indian threats.²⁹

These expeditions had a number of distinct purposes. American control of the region remained insecure and because officers typically believed that Indians only respected strength, they advocated ongoing displays of the nation's military power. As a result, the Army sent its mounted dragoons on several Plains expeditions in the years before the Mexican War. The displays of large columns of brightly dressed soldiers, military leaders asserted, intimidated nomadic peoples and prevented them from raiding emigrant Indian settlements. Commanding officers of these expeditions made it their practice to specifically point out to the Plains tribes that the newcomers were under the direct protection of the United States. Other groups — American emigrants to new settlements in the Oregon and California territories, and Mexican and American merchants traveling to and from New Mexico along the Santa Fe trails — demanded protection. Following the same strategy that protected emigrant Indian tribes, Army columns warned off nomadic tribes.

These expeditions were part and parcel of the expansion process, a focus of the growing nation's energy and resources. Army expeditions reported on the commercial possibilities of the lands that the columns traversed and military officers routinely reported observations of wildlife and geographic wonders. Some expeditions brought along geographic specialists as the nation sought to satisfy its curiosity about its new lands. The creation of the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers in 1838, a group that never numbered more than thirty-six officers, gave the military a unit devoted to scientific exploration, and its officers set higher standards for systematic recording and observation. The War Department explored possible invasion routes of the Southwest and Mexico, and later private interests envisioned railroad routes across the continent. Finally, in an era when most military posts only housed three or four companies of soldiers, the expeditions across the Plains provided opportunities for officers to practice their command techniques on larger bodies of troops, a precursor to the kinds of commands that emerged in the Mexican War and later in the Civil War.³⁰

Patrols and expeditions across the Plains began long before the establishment of Fort Scott. At the behest of Secretary of War Lewis Cass, mounted rangers, militia-like predecessors to the Dragoon regiments, undertook extended patrols in 1832 and 1833. Their mission was to intimidate the mobile Indian people and to clear the way for the relocated peoples of the Southeast.³¹ Captain Jesse Bean raised a company of rangers, typically ill equipped and poorly trained men, in the Arkansas Territory and left Fort Gibson on October 6, 1832 to patrol the Arkansas and Cimmaron rivers. Several civilians, including the writer Washington Irving, accompanied the patrol. Although the column inspected the lands designated for incoming

²⁹ William B. Skelton, "Officers and Politicians: The Origins of Army Politics in the United States before the Civil War," *Armed Forces and Society* 6, n. 1 (1979), 22-48; Coffman, *The Old Army*: 161-163; Fort Scott post returns, Fort Scott National Historic Site, 1846-1847; T. Harry Williams, *The History of American Wars, from 1745 to 1918* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 137-38.

³⁰ William Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803-1863* (New Haven, Yale University, 1959), 4-5, 347.

³¹ Report of the Secretary of War, House Ex. Doc. 116, 22d Cong., 1st sess., 14-17.

emigrant Indians, it failed to encounter either Pawnee or Comanche, both considered particularly hostile to relocated Indians. A second expedition, commanded by Lt. Col. James Many, departed in May 1833 with two companies of infantry and the three companies of rangers, but after chasing a group of Pawnees who kidnaped a ranger, the patrol returned without encountering Plains people.³² The theory of intimidating Indians with a military presence proved more difficult than officers and political leaders imagined.

Authorization of a dragoon regiment in March 1833 spurred further military efforts on the Plains. During the early years of the unit's existence, most dragoons along the Missouri-Arkansas border were stationed at Fort Leavenworth and Fort Gibson. They soon made their presence felt across the West. In 1834, Colonel Henry Dodge led an expedition from Fort Gibson to Pawnee villages located within the Cherokee Nation, inviting tribal representatives to attend peace negotiations in Washington, D.C. A year later, Dodge led about one hundred dragoons to the Rocky Mountains, marching along the Platte River in what is now Nebraska and meeting with Otoes, Omahas, and Pawnees. The trip covered more than sixteen hundred miles and displayed the reach of American power. Another Army officer with years of frontier experience, Lt. Col. Stephen Watts Kearny, commanded four dragoon companies on a patrol up the Missouri early in 1839, an expedition "which had the effect of quieting the apprehensions of difficulty in that quarter," Gen. Alexander Macomb, the Army's senior officer, reported. Later that year, Kearny and five dragoon companies traveled south on the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Gibson military road when news of trouble in the Cherokee Nation arose. The troops rode past the future site of Fort Scott and on to Fort Wayne. Finding no disturbances, they returned north. The dragoons and the professionalism they demonstrated may have been a factor that induced groups of Comanches, Kiowas, and Pawnees to conclude peace treaties with the incoming Americans.³³

Changing political and military demands forced the Army to continually shift its units around the frontier. During 1842, the Army first based troops at the site it selected for Fort Scott. Original plans called for two companies of dragoons and one infantry company to be located on the Marmaton River, but the expense of mounted troops soon convinced the Army to increase the number of infantry companies instead of the more costly dragoons. Fort Scott and the other frontier forts of the 1840s remained secondary to the main post on the Plains, Fort Leavenworth, which enjoyed a central location and almost year-round access to steamboats carrying supplies and men up the Missouri River. A large portion of the First Dragoons regiment stationed in the West was based there, and Fort Scott typically quartered at least one company of mounted troops. Companies A and C of the First Dragoons became the initial contingent based at Fort Scott, the 120 men arriving from Fort Wayne on May 30, 1842. In October, Company D of the Fourth Infantry marched to the Marmaton River post. Another shift in deployment took place the following May, when Captain Benjamin Daviss Moore and Company C of the dragoons were

³² Irving made the journey the basis for his story "A Tour of the Prairies," published in 1835; Henry Putney Beers, *The Western Military Frontier, 1815-1846* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1975), 100-103.

³³ James Hildreth, *Dragoon Campaign to the Rocky Mountains* (New York: Arno Press, 1973); Prucha, *Sword of the Republic*, 373-375; Hugh Evans, "The Journal of Hugh Evans, Covering the First and Second Campaigns of the United States Dragoon Regiment in 1834 and 1835," ed. by Grant Foreman and Fred Perrine, *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 3 (September 1925), 175-215; Beers, *The Western Military Frontier*, 109-114; "Report of the Major General Commanding the Army," Nov. 27, 1839, 26 Cong., 1st sess., Sen. Doc. 1 (Serial 354), 56; Macomb was the Army's senior general from 1828 until his death in 1841.

transferred to Fort Leavenworth and replaced the next day by Company C of the Fourth Infantry, commanded by Captain George McCall. The three companies remained at Fort Scott until called away in 1846 for service in the Mexican War.³⁴

Like the majority of frontier outposts, Fort Scott rarely enjoyed the level of staffing outlined in Army regulations. In theory, the First Dragoon Regiment was commanded by a colonel, assisted by a staff of one lieutenant colonel and two majors. Captains commanded each of the regiment's ten companies, with a first lieutenant and a second lieutenant below each captain. In practice, a host of duty assignments and responsibilities routinely left Army companies with far fewer officers. In June 1842, with two companies of dragoons assigned to Fort Scott, Capt. Moore commanded the post while leading Company C. Capt. Burdett Terrett was in charge of Company A, with First Lt. William Eustis assisting him. Absent from the post were First Lt. R.H. West, Company C, on duty at Fort Gibson, and second lieutenants Richard Ewell, Company A, and John Love, Company C, both temporarily assigned to Fort Wayne. In August of that year, the under-ranked Moore remained the post commander. He was joined on active duty by Ewell and Love, while Josiah Simpson served as post surgeon. Eustis was stationed full-time at the fort's sawmill and Ewell acted as the post commissary officer. Captain Thomas Swords, who reported to the post in July 1842 as Acting Assistant Quartermaster, was away from the post on furlough and West remained on duty at Fort Gibson. As was the case in the rest of the Army, low manpower was also the rule in the enlisted ranks. In one example demonstrating the norm, with twenty-six dragoons on escort duty in 1843, Fort Scott housed the remaining forty-one officers and men of the dragoon company and 139 men in companies C and D of the Fourth Infantry. Of the 119 privates and noncommissioned officers remaining in the three companies at the fort, only forty-seven were listed as available for duty. In the fall of that year, Ewell and Lt. Allen Norton led thirty-one dragoons on another Santa Fe Trail patrol and were detached from Fort Scott for more than two months. While those men were away, only forty-three men were listed as present for duty.³⁵

One of the key responsibilities assigned to Fort Scott was maintaining the military road that was adjacent to Fort Scott and connected Fort Leavenworth with Fort Gibson and Fort Smith. Originally conceived as the connection between the military outposts that separated the Indian and white worlds, the road's purpose had changed by the Mexican War. It no longer operated for a military purpose, but instead functioned as a conduit for emigration to Texas, California and Oregon, and for transporting farm goods east and manufactured products west. Maintenance and repair of the road required the continued effort of fort personnel; work on construction of post buildings ceased on several occasions while soldiers from the fort repaired flood damage to the road.³⁶ The diminished military importance of the road reflected the growing irrelevance of the post. However, the road was destined to become a major territorial and state

³⁴ Thompson, *Fort Scott Historic Structures Report*, 35; Post returns, Fort Scott National Historic Site, 1842-1846.

³⁵ Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 48; Fort Scott post returns, Fort Scott National Historic Site, 1842, 1843; William E. Connelley, "Report of the Santa Fe Escort, August 24 to September 25, 1843," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* XII (September 1925), 249-55; Otis Young, "Dragoons on the Santa Fe Trail in the Autumn of 1843," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 32, n. 1 (Spring 1954), 42-51.

³⁶ Fort Scott National Historic Site post returns, 1844-1848.

transportation artery between 1854 and 1875.

While stationed on the frontier, the regiments of horse soldiers and infantry carried out a variety of missions. Aside from marches aimed at impressing potentially hostile Indians, foot-mounted and dragoon columns carried out surveying and reconnaissance missions, and also guarded national interests by placing American troops near potential foreign problems. These included controversies with Great Britain over Oregon and with Mexico concerning the annexation of Texas. One of the Army's principal duties became protecting the growing commercial traffic across the West. Patrols from Fort Scott and other posts took responsibility for maintaining order along the Santa Fe Trail to the U.S.-Mexico border, then at the Arkansas River. At the river, the merchant convoys occasionally met their Mexican escorts who provided protection to Santa Fe. Most civilian caravans had to guarantee their own safety until they reached the upper Canadian River, 250 miles away.

Trading on the trail from Missouri to New Mexico began soon after the route was first used by European merchants in the 1790s, but Spanish commercial restrictions constrained the quantity of goods that flowed back and forth. When Mexico declared its independence and removed most customs restrictions in 1821, ever-increasing amounts of trade goods arrived in Santa Fe. Three groups of American merchants reached Santa Fe that first year, carrying cloth, tools, household goods, and other manufactured merchandise. They and the traders who followed were able to undersell the Mexican competitors who had to ship in their goods from Chihuahua, far to the south of Santa Fe. In exchange for their goods, Americans carried back silver and also found a ready market in Missouri for the mules that transported the specie. According to Josiah Gregg's classic *Commerce of the Prairies*, imports from the United States between 1828 and 1843 averaged \$145,000 a year. The lucrative trade flourished and helped promote the growth of related industries at the trail's end and along the route.³⁷

Military action to protect the trail remained intermittent. Following the 1834 patrol to Santa Fe, the Army furnished no protection on the trail for almost a decade. Dragoons returned to escort duties in 1843, just in time to become involved in a complicated international situation between Mexico and the Republic of Texas. Two hundred dragoons commanded by Captain Philip St. George Cooke formed the escort for a Mexican-bound caravan. The condition of the new nation of Texas in the 1840s was bleak — the treasury was empty, while its leaders remained proud, boastful, and desperately seeking remedies. In 1841, an expedition tried to invade New Mexico, but got lost in the Jornada del Muerto, the fierce desert east of the Rio Grande. By 1843, Texans were prowling for land and money to redeem their state's debts. Jacob Snively, the former secretary of war for the republic, organized a raiding party to attack rich Mexican merchants on the Santa Fe Trail. Averting that the merchants routinely crossed Texas without paying customs duties, the republic's legislature granted the mounted raiders authority to operate against Mexican traders on any portion of the Santa Fe trail claimed by Texas. In the spring of 1843, Snively led 175 Texans to the Arkansas River in what is now Kansas.

³⁷ David J. Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821-1846: The American Southwest Under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 125-30. Aside from Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), an exciting narrative of life as a Santa Fe trail merchant can be found in James Josiah Webb's *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844-1847* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Leo Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 40.

Forewarned of the raiders' intentions, the Mexican government alerted the United States, which ordered out three dragoon companies from Fort Leavenworth and a fourth from Fort Scott. Cooke was placed in overall command of the patrol. The dragoons joined a convoy gathering at Council Grove and began escort duties June 3.

The convoy had a quiet beginning, but at the end of June the dragoons discovered the Texans on the south side of the Arkansas River and a confrontation almost ensued. Negotiators for the two armed groups met under a flag of truce, but the two sides could not agree whether the groups were then in Texas or in the United States. Cooke maintained that the Texans were intercepted east of the 100th Meridian, inside U.S. territory, while Snively argued that his men were operating inside Texas. With no resolution in sight, Cooke used the threat of his military strength to disarm the adventurers. Still unsure exactly of his legal position, the dragoon officer did not arrest the Texans, instead offering them safe passage back to Missouri and away from the trail. About fifty accepted, and Terrett's company of Fort Scott dragoons provided the escort that saw the smaller group of Texans safely to Missouri. The rest of the unarmed adventurers followed the caravan to the west in hopes of mounting an attack after the dragoons departed. When the convoy reached the Arkansas River, then the U.S.-Mexico boundary, a large military escort of Mexican troops sent from Santa Fe met the pursued merchants. The Texans abandoned their piracy, returned home and disbanded.³⁸ The Republic of Texas filed a diplomatic protest over the intervention, and a U.S. military court of inquiry at Fort Leavenworth the following year affirmed the American position.³⁹

During the 1840s, military patrols that fulfilled a variety of missions became a common sight on the Plains. The tension with Texas continued, and in anticipation of another raid on Santa Fe merchants by semi-official bands of Texans, Captain Nathaniel Boone, the youngest of explorer Daniel Boone's fourteen children, led a dragoon detachment from Fort Gibson to provide an American military presence in the fall of 1843. The column also conducted a reconnaissance of the area between the Arkansas and Canadian rivers, southwest of Fort Scott. The next year, Major Clifton Wharton led a patrol north from Fort Leavenworth to intimidate Pawnee people living along the Platte River in what is now Nebraska. Terrett and Eustis led the Fort Scott contingent of three sergeants, three corporals, one farrier and blacksmith, and forty-five privates, leaving Fort Scott on July 5, 1844, and returning September 28. Later that year, Second Lieutenant Benjamin Berry left the Marmaton River post in command of a patrol of eighty enlisted men assigned to remove Indians from Missouri settlements.⁴⁰ Politicians assumed

³⁸ Olivia, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 42-52; Myers, *From the Crack Post of the Frontier*: 13; H. Bailey Carroll, "Steward A. Miller and the Snively Expedition of 1843," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 54 (January 1951), 261-86; Stephen B. Oates, ed., "Hugh F. Young's Account of the Snively Expedition as Told to John S. Ford," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 70 (July 1966); William E. Connelly, ed., "A Journal of the Santa Fe Trail," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 12, n. 1 (June 1925), 72-98.

³⁹ Otis E. Young, *The West of Philip St. George Cooke, 1805-1895* (Glendale, Ca., The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1955), 109-36; Myers, *From the Crack Post of the Frontier*, 13-14.

⁴⁰ James H. Carleton, *The Prairie Logbooks, Dragoon Campaigns to the Pawnee Villages in 1844 and to the Rocky Mountains in 1845* (Chicago: Caxton Club, 1943), 155-260; Wayne Walker, "Nathan Boone: The Forgotten Hero of Missouri," *Journal of the West* 18, n. 2 (1979), 85-94; Fort Scott post returns, 1844, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives.

the more times the military appeared on the Plains, the easier it became to achieve territorial and national objectives.

The most significant dragoon expedition on the Plains took place in 1845, the year prior to the Mexican War. Commanded by Col. Stephen Watts Kearny, one of the most experienced Army officers on the Plains, five companies were ordered to patrol along the Oregon Trail to the South Pass of the Rockies, turn south to the Arkansas River, and travel along the Santa Fe trail back to Fort Leavenworth. The Army allotted four companies from Fort Leavenworth and one from Fort Scott. Company A from Fort Scott consisted of fifty-four men and three officers and was commanded by William Eustis, promoted to captain just two months earlier. He replaced Captain Burdett Terrett who died at Fort Scott on March 17, 1845, from an accidental gunshot wound. The company from Fort Scott arrived at Fort Leavenworth on May 8 and prepared for the patrol. On the march with Eustis were Ewell and First Lt. James H. Carleton.⁴¹

Leaving Fort Leavenworth on May 18, 1845, Kearny's 280-soldier expedition left with a variety of objectives. The lines of troopers offered another powerful demonstration of U.S. military strength to the Plains Indians. Their presence helped with other important objectives: protecting emigrants heading to the Oregon territory and providing security for merchants on the Santa Fe Trail. The expedition also undertook a reconnaissance of the area east of the Rockies. Lt. W.B. Franklin of the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, the military's elite map-making unit, was assigned to the patrol to document the region. Aside from its topographical assignment and the protection of emigrants and merchants, the patrol to the South Pass may have been intended to send a signal to the governments of Great Britain and Mexico. Kearny and his men passed close to disputed territories in Oregon and Texas.⁴² As was typical of military missions, the many objectives blended together.

This combination of information and protection, combined with Kearny's leadership skills, made for the most successful Plains expedition to that time. The expedition to the Rocky Mountains was allotted a significant portion of the nation's military strength, one-half of a dragoon regiment, an indication of the mission's importance to the federal government. The entire regular Army in 1845 consisted of eight regiments of infantry, four regiments of artillery, two regiments of dragoons, with a small number of officers in the Topographical, Medical and Quartermaster Departments and the corps of engineers, along with staff officers.⁴³

⁴¹ Carleton was perhaps the only American officer to receive writing advice from Charles Dickens. Before donning a uniform, the young Boston resident wrote to the novelist seeking encouragement for a literary career. Dickens was less than optimistic in his reply, warning him to "consider well before you mistake your future course in life." Before Carleton received the reply, he was already serving in the Massachusetts militia. Dickens may have had the man's measure; Carleton's memoirs, *The Prairie Logbooks*, are highly readable but lack literary polish. Aurora Hunt, *Major General James Henry Carleton, 1814-1873: Western Frontier Dragoon* (Glendale, Ca.: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1958), 29-32; Fort Scott post returns 1845, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives; Dwight L. Clarke, *Stephen Kearny: Soldier of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961); Meyers, *From the Crack Post of the Frontier*, 22-23.

⁴² *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 13, 1845; Henry S. Turner, "Journal of an Expedition performed in the Summer of 1845 by 5 companies of the 1st Dragoons under the command of Colonel S.W. Kearny." (Part of this was used in War Department Annual Report, House Exec. Doc., no. 1, Part II, 29th Cong., 1st Sess., 210-213); Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West*, 111.

⁴³ Ness, *The Regular Army on the Eve of the Civil War*.

The expedition became the model for future Army expeditions on the Plains. Kearny demanded efficiency. He stripped the column of all but the barest necessities to remove the need for wagons. Without the wheeled transportation, the patrol could rely on speed to pierce the heart of the Plains. The five dragoon companies carried only eighteen barrels of pork and bacon for the four-month expedition. Thirty head of cattle trailed the men, and the Plains provided the remainder of required meat. Carleton lyrically observed the benefit to the government: "the balance of our edibles in the meat line, both for officers and men, was saving the Government a vast deal of money on this score — by transporting itself over the prairies in the shape of buffaloes, deer, and antelopes." The dragoons also carried some soap and vinegar, "added as sort of luxuries, but they were ... issued sparingly," Carleton noted, "and then only on great and important occasions."⁴⁴ The men traveled fast and hard, prepared for any eventuality.

Covering 2,066 miles in ninety-nine days, the expedition fulfilled its principal mission, demonstrating American military might, and some lesser objectives, including gathering more information about the West. Franklin produced a map of the Plains along the route. While traveling down the Arkansas, the map maker determined the longitude of the site where Cooke, one of the officers accompanying the expedition, encountered Snively and the Texas adventurers two years earlier. To the dragoon officer's delight, Franklin established with his calculations that the site of the contest was indeed within the United States and that Cooke was correct when he disarmed the Texans. On the return trip, the dragoons encountered a large war party of Apaches and Kiowas and warned them against disturbing travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. The American troops left a powerful impression on the Plains.

While the Fort Scott-based dragoons were in the field with Kearny, a change took place at the Fort Scott parade grounds. As international tensions between the United States and Mexico escalated, Companies C and D of the Fourth Infantry joined the rest of their regiment in Texas as one component of Gen. Zachary Taylor's Army of Observation, part of the nation's military buildup. Replacing the two companies on the Marmaton was Company B of the First Infantry, which arrived on July 14, 1845. As part of the Fort Scott transfer, Capt. Sidney Burbank assumed command of the post, a position he held during most of the Mexican War.⁴⁵ With this buildup, the role of Fort Scott changed once again. It became one of the places from which Americans could observe the swelling tension to their south.

Trouble with its neighbor to the south was inevitable as long as the westward-moving population of the United States believed its expansion across the continent followed the hand of divine providence. Mexico's northern provinces of Alta California, Texas, and New Mexico were too far from its core of control to be adequately protected. Neither the Spanish nor later the Mexicans adequately defended their northern possession from Indian, French, or American threats. America's covert aid to Texans fighting for independence in 1835 heightened tensions between Mexico and the United States, and during the decade that followed relations

⁴⁴ J. Henry Carleton, *The Prairie Logbooks: Dragoon Campaigns to the Pawnee Villages in 1844, and to the Rocky Mountain in 1845*, edited by Louis Pelzer (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 159; Abstract of Journals of Lt. William B. Franklin and H.S. Turner in Senate Executive Documents, first sess., 29th Cong., 1, Document 1, pp. 214-217.

⁴⁵ Burbank was post commander except for a four-month period starting in December 1845, when he was relieved by Swords. Fort Scott post returns, 1845, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

deteriorated. Possible American annexation of Texas caused anxiety in Mexico and sparked a decade of debates in Washington, D.C. Finally, on February 28, 1845, Congress resolved to admit Texas as a state. Seeing the annexation as a blow to its national pride, Mexico severed diplomatic relations. U.S. President James Polk continued his efforts to defuse the crisis through diplomacy and hoped to settle the Texas crisis and acquire Mexican territories along the border by purchase. Polk also instructed the military to prepare for war.

After Texas accepted annexation by the United States on July 4, 1845, American military forces under Gen. Taylor, including Fort Scott's two infantry companies, moved closer to Mexico. Taylor concentrated his troops near the small Texas town of Corpus Christi, along the Nueces River, what the United States then considered the southern boundary of the new territory. By mid-October almost 4,000 regular Army soldiers, backed by volunteers, assembled near the town on the Gulf of Mexico. The troops spent the next six months drilling and readying for combat while the two governments continued negotiations. The diplomatic stalemate tightened in December 1845 when Texas was formally admitted to the United States. The impasse ended the following January, when Taylor advanced about 120 miles south to the Rio Grande, which the federal government now proclaimed as Texas' southern boundary.⁴⁶

Fort Scott's officers and soldiers took part in the series of battles and marches that made up the Mexican War. The infantry companies stationed at Fort Scott served in the invasion of Mexico under generals Taylor and Scott, as did the mounted horsemen of the post, Company A of the First Dragoons. Fort Scott's Company C of the First Dragoons joined dragoons from Fort Leavenworth and marched west with Kearny's Army of the West. Capt. Thomas Swords, the principal builder of Fort Scott who was promoted to major on April 21, 1846, served as the column's quartermaster for its march to the Pacific Ocean.⁴⁷

The American military forces deployed to the Gulf of Mexico gradually grew to about 15,000 before August, when Taylor crossed the Rio Grande into Mexico and marched on Monterrey, a provincial capital built in a pass in the Sierra Madres about two hundred miles west of the Gulf. Company A of the First Dragoons and the Fourth Infantry companies served under Taylor, participating in the victory on September 23, 1846. Lt. Charles Hoskins of the Fourth Infantry, stationed at Fort Scott the previous year, was killed in action there. When General Scott arrived in Mexico early in December, he took most of the regular Army troops, leaving Taylor with fewer than 7,000 men, among them Company A of the First Dragoons. The Fort Scott veterans participated in the battle of Buena Vista in February 1847. The Mexican forces almost defeated the greatly outnumbered Americans, but Taylor eventually claimed victory. The tenacity of the volunteers who made up the bulk of his troops, the deadly effectiveness of his artillery, and

⁴⁶ Norman A. Graebner, "The Mexican War: A Study in Causation," *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (August 1980), 405-426; K. Jack Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974); Weber, *The Mexican Frontier*.

⁴⁷ James A. Huston, *The Sinews of War: Army Logistics, 1775-1953* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960); Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962); W.H. Timmons, "The Merchants and the Military, 1849-1854," *Password* 27 (Summer 1982), 51-61.

the professionalism of his young officers supported that claim.⁴⁸

Combat brought glory for some participants from Fort Scott, field experience for many more, and cost others their lives. Capt. James H. Carleton won brevet promotion to major. Other Fort Scott veterans leading dragoon troops at Buena Vista included Capt. William Eustis, and lieutenants Richard Ewell and Joseph Whittlesey. Conversely, Lt. Benjamin Berry was the first officer from Fort Scott killed, dying in a steamer explosion near Corpus Christi in September 1845, as U.S. troops prepared for deployment. Later in the war, Lt. Richard Cochrane of the Fourth Infantry fell on May 9, 1846, at Resaca de la Palma, one of the first major engagements of the war. Capt. William Graham, the second post commander at Fort Scott, was killed at Molino del Rey, one of the battles that led to the American capture of Mexico City.⁴⁹

In addition to expeditions on the east coast of Mexico, the United States organized a column aimed at capturing New Mexico, one of Polk's priorities, and California. About 1,700 men, led by Kearny, left Fort Leavenworth in separate groups throughout the summer of 1846. The force, consisting of Kearny's First Dragoons from Fort Leavenworth, about 1,300 Missouri volunteers, and a group of Mormons, met at Bent's Fort, at the junction of the Santa Fe Trail and the Arkansas River, in present southeast Colorado. On August 18, Kearny and his men occupied Santa Fe after only a few skirmishes and took possession of the New Mexico province for the United States. Kearny promised to respect the New Mexicans' rights and properties and protect them from Indians, which surely endeared the newcomers to the resident population.⁵⁰

Kearny led his forces toward California, leaving Santa Fe on September 25, 1846. American military commanders fighting Mexican troops along the Pacific coast recommended that Kearny try to surprise the enemy outside San Diego. On December 6, in the battle of San Pasqual, east of the coastal city, Kearny attacked a Mexican force commanded by Major Andrés Pico. Capt. Abraham Johnston, a friend of Capt. Thomas Swords, and a dragoon were killed in the initial charge. The American forces, on tired and unbroken mules and horses, were hampered by uncoordinated actions, and the retreating Mexican lancers used their longer weapons to inflict serious losses on the saber-carrying Americans. Kearny's command lost twenty-one men killed and another seventeen wounded, including the dragoon commander. The entire unit was surrounded by the Mexicans for three days until relieved by U.S. naval forces. Aside from Johnston, American fatalities included Captain Benjamin Daviss Moore, first commander of Fort Scott.⁵¹

Swords supported Kearny's expedition in several ways throughout its service in the West.

⁴⁸ Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*.

⁴⁹ "List of Companies and Regiments from Fort Scott and their Battles in the Mexican War," Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives.

⁵⁰ Bauer, *The Mexican War*, 127-145; Clarke, *Stephen Watts Kearny*, 128-146; Neal Harlow, *California Conquered: War and Peace on the Pacific, 1846-1850* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

⁵¹ Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 186-188; McCaffrey, *Army of Manifest*; Sally C. Johns, "Viva Los Californios! The Battle of San Pasqual," *Journal of San Diego History* (Fall 1973), 1-13; William H. Emory, *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth, in Missouri, to San Diego, in California, in 1846* (Washington, D.C.: Wendell and Van Benthuysen, 1848), 105-111.

As the officer in charge of a small detachment, he protected the baggage train at the rear of the column at San Pasqual. He also sailed to the Hawaiian Islands in search of military supplies. While the column was returning east he had the unusual task of taking charge of the burial detail for the Donner party, the unfortunate wagon train caught in early winter snows in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, before leading the Army column back to Fort Leavenworth in 1847.⁵²

Following the fall of Mexico City late in 1847, the war ended. The U.S. Army still faced bandits and guerrillas in the Mexican interior, but the bulk of American soldiers went home. Volunteers received warm welcomes from their neighbors while regular troops quietly returned to their frontier posts and resumed their garrison routines. Mexico and the United States eventually signed a peace agreement, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which gave the United States lands claimed by Texas above the Rio Grande and the territories of New Mexico and California for a payment of \$15 million. At a cost of 1,721 American lives in battle and an additional 11,155 who died of disease, the citizens of the United States acquired almost 1.2 million square miles of land and the United States Army proved its mettle and acquired new responsibilities and commitments.⁵³

The immediate combat demands of the Mexican War slowed the construction of new buildings and posts far from the fighting. The Army continued to garrison its posts across the American West throughout the war, but few improvements occurred while the war continued. The military simply had other priorities, and with the rapid success of American soldiers in acquiring new territories, the viability of some posts came into question. By December 1846, it appeared likely that the United States would expand to the Pacific Ocean. Questioning the needs for improvements at forts that had once been close to the international border, but now appeared likely to be far from their new location became a congressional pastime.

At the still-incomplete Fort Scott, construction continued throughout the war, although the effort was hampered by a lack of personnel. From June 1846 to September 1848, only Company B of the First Infantry was stationed at the post, and typically its roster carried less than fifty men. With myriad military responsibilities and insufficient work power, the soldiers accomplished what they could. The depleted post remained responsible for military matters, providing escorts for convoys on the Santa Fe trail for the next several years, as well as maintaining the military road.⁵⁴ As a result, construction on post buildings progressed intermittently.

Nor could the post exert influence on the region as it had in the days of the Plains patrols. Military response to situations revealed how ineffectual post officers believed their force. In

⁵² Swords wrote in his official report that "We collected and buried the remains of those that had perished from hunger; some of the skeletons were entire; parts of others were found, the flesh having been consumed by the last survivors." *Extracts from American State Papers on Military Affairs from 1818-1817 and from Annual Reports of the Quartermaster General from 1818 to 1915. Bearing upon Operations of the Quartermaster Department.* Compiled by Robert E. Fugitt, 1916, p. 231, sheet 42. Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives.

⁵³ Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: A Legacy of Conflict* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990).

⁵⁴ William Chalfant, *Dangerous Passage: The Santa Fe Trail and the Mexican War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).

1847, a soldier stationed at the post, Mathais Walker of B Company of the First Infantry, returned from Little Rock, Arkansas, where he served as a witness during a trial. On the road, several Osage attacked Walker, injuring him and robbing him of twenty-five dollars. Capt. Sidney Burbank, his commanding officer, was forced to go to the Indian subagent to demand restitution of the stolen property, an unlikely method of responding to an attack for the military. Burbank recognized the limitations of his detachment. "In the absence of a suitable military force," Burbank observed, "I think this the proper course to pursue."⁵⁵ It was hardly the response of an officer who felt his troops commanded the region.

In the face of such realities, completing the post took priority, but scarce resources impinged upon goals. The quartermaster storeroom complex was one of the first projects completed, but although post quartermasters cited the immediate need for a stable, work on the adjacent project did not begin until 1848. In the post plans submitted for that year, a large enclosed compound was under construction east of the storeroom. A year later, the post requested permission to build an additional stable or barn, arguing that the savings in preserving hay would in time pay for the structure. This proposal was rejected by the Army. In June 1848, Lt. George Wallace, Swords' successor in the quartermaster department, forwarded estimates for the commanding officers' quarters to Washington, D.C. With timber scarce around the fort, Wallace sought permission to build the quarters out of limestone instead of lumber, mistakenly assuming that local stone would lessen the cost. In a follow-up letter, he admitted his miscalculations, but the project was eventually canceled anyway. Officers could aspire to complete the fort, but during the war, their chances of accomplishing their goals remained slim.⁵⁶

When the war with Mexico ended, Fort Scott's garrison resumed its antebellum duties. In 1848, Capt. Alexander Morrow of the Sixth Infantry was named acting assistant quartermaster when the Army assigned one company of dragoons and one company of the Sixth Infantry to Fort Scott. Company H of the Sixth Infantry arrived September 29, 1848, and four days later, Company B of the Fourth Infantry closed out its three-year stay at the post. In November, Company F of the First Dragoons arrived for a one-year deployment.⁵⁷ The Army units soon resumed their prewar commitments, and on March 21, 1849, Second Lieutenant John Buford led a patrol of dragoons on escort duty between Fort Smith and Santa Fe. The task kept the men away from the post until mid-December. Morrow reported on April 6, 1850, that construction of the post once again neared completion. Only the Commanding Officer's quarters and the second dragoon stable remained unbuilt. Eventually neither was constructed. The acting assistant quartermaster reported that he could make any needed repairs using soldiers on extra duty, and asked if he should discharge the superintendent of building and his force of civilian workers, a proposal accepted by his superiors.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Capt. S. Burbank, First Infantry, to Lt. Col. Wharton, First Dragoons, Commander of the Third Military Department, May 1, 1847, Fort Scott post returns, 1846-1848, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁵⁶ Lt. Wallace, June 1848, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁵⁷ General Orders No. 1, from Headquarters, Sixth Military Department, Jefferson Barracks, Sept. 13, 1848, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁵⁸ Lt. Alexander Morrow to Gen. Thomas Jesup, April 6, 1850. Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

By the early 1850s, the military uses of the fort had diminished. The concept of the Permanent Indian Frontier had become obsolete, and the Plains Indians were pushed farther west every year. From Fort Scott, the military had to send its men increasing distances for any military purpose. The post was clearly at the end of its effectiveness. When Lt. Orren Chapman commanded Company F of the First Dragoons on a march to the headwaters of the Arkansas River in 1850, he undertook the last military action performed by dragoons at Fort Scott. In November 1850, they left the fort forever, leaving one company of the Sixth Infantry behind.

The post became an anomaly, a place for which the military had little use. Even senior officers were left confused. In 1852, the Army's senior quartermaster officer, General Thomas Jesup, inquired of the status of quarters and stables at Fort Scott. Swords, then assigned to the quartermaster office in New York City, responded that when he left in 1846, two infantry and one dragoon barracks, along with stables for dragoon horses, were nearly completed. Burbank, commander of the post during the Mexican War, added that the foundation for the quartermaster stables had been laid. Burbank also observed that the company quarters were designed to house fifty men, but he believed that as many as seventy men could be accommodated. The post could furnish housing for the officers of three companies.⁵⁹ The question loomed large: what use would three companies at Fort Scott be?

The new possessions won in the Southwest and Northwest demanded new kinds of troops, and Congress acted swiftly to satisfy the new military requirements. As American settlers headed to the Pacific Northwest during the late 1840s, congressional leaders and local officials engaged in serious debates about the most effective form of protection for emigrants. Many favored a series of small forts about one day's travel apart which would house small contingents of soldiers to patrol the Oregon Trail. Others suggested that continual sweeps of soldiers based in one or more large forts provided more efficient protection. After his 1845 expedition to the Rockies, Kearny supported the concept of mounted patrols stationed in small posts along the trail, and Congress followed his recommendation. A new mounted unit, the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, provided protection on the Oregon Trail as part of the small-post concept approved by Congress on May 19, 1846. The appropriation of \$76,500 was to equip one regiment of mounted riflemen and to provide funds to construct a series of posts along the Oregon Trail. The start of the Mexican War delayed the project, but once peace was established, implementation of the unit began. The Army continued to maintain a dragoon presence on the emigrant trails of the Southwest after the Mexican War, and two companies of the new mounted unit eventually replaced the dragoon company stationed at Fort Scott. Companies A and K of the Regiment of Mounted Rifles were stationed at Fort Scott from November 1852 until the post closed six months later.⁶⁰

The frontier remained in a state of bureaucratic flux during and after the Mexican War, as units shifted, responsibilities changed among government agencies, and new territories needed protection. The Army relinquished primary responsibility for safeguarding traffic along the Santa Fe Trail to the Office of Indian Affairs after Kearny captured New Mexico in 1846. Thomas

⁵⁹ Capt. Sidney Burbank to Jesup, September 14, 1852, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

⁶⁰ Arthur P. Wade, "Forts and Mounted Rifles Along the Oregon Trail," *Kansas Quarterly* 10, n. 3 (1978), 3-15; *The Statutes at Large and Treaties of the United States* (1851), 9:13-14.

Fitzpatrick established an agency for the tribes along the Upper Platte and Arkansas rivers shortly afterwards. Under the new bureaucratic regime, troops responded only after efforts for peaceful settlements of problems by agents assigned to the Office of Indian Affairs failed. Summoned into action after a series of attacks made Indians bolder, the Army again rode onto the Plains. Operations along the trail failed to intimidate the warriors in 1847-1848 after Army troops were withdrawn for combat against Mexico and the Indians regained control of the route the following year. Fitzpatrick advocated a line of forts along the trail and believed that the Army should attack Indian camps, a policy that eventually was put into practice.⁶¹

The buildings of Fort Scott outlasted the military missions, a testimony to the Army's effectiveness against the Indians and the quality of work performed by the soldiers who constructed the barracks, quarters, and stables. Dragoon and infantry companies were relatively easy to move, but Fort Scott no longer offered the Army any military advantage nor significant reason to continue operation. Just as its military effectiveness ended, the post's buildings were finally completed after a decade of intermittent construction, a process hampered by an overall lack of adequate funding, an economic-minded Congress that saw its military troops as an available labor force at the same time it needed their military capabilities, and an Army command forced to spend its resources on scores of small posts built across its areas of responsibility.⁶²

Fort Scott was too far east from potential trouble spots along the new frontier, and too far west for the Army to economically ship goods to it. Transportation to and from the post increased the cost of supplying and limited its military effectiveness. Many Army posts were built on navigable rivers or streams to permit transportation of supplies by water. At Fort Scott, the Marmaton River was not navigable and the post relied on expensive land transportation. Supplies sent to Fort Scott usually traveled via steamboats to Fort Leavenworth, on the Missouri River, and then over the military road to Fort Scott, or more directly to Westport landing on the Missouri River about ninety miles away from the post. In 1851, the wagons used by contractors hauling freight between Army posts transported about five thousand pounds each when using good roads, such as the one connecting forts Leavenworth and Gibson. The federal government paid about \$1.25 per hundred pounds for each one hundred miles traveled.⁶³ Eventually, the high costs of supplying Fort Scott over the land route became one of the reasons for the Army deciding to abandon it.

After 1848, the advancing American settlers pushed past the line of the Permanent Indian Frontier and made the operation of Fort Scott as a frontier post unnecessary. The federal government protected the lines of emigrants heading west, an exodus that dramatically grew after the discovery of gold in California in 1848. A new line of forts established across the Southwest became part of the efforts to control the Indians — Navajo, Comanche, and Apache in particular — and a series of transcontinental surveys, in many instances staffed by Army topographical

⁶¹ Robert A. Trennert, "Indian Policy on the Santa Fe Trail: The Fitzpatrick Controversy of 1847-1848," *Kansas History* 1, n. 4 (1978), 243-253.

⁶² Ncss, *The Regular Army on the Eve of the Civil War*.

⁶³ Frank Clarke to his father, June 6, 1851, quoted in Darlis A. Miller, ed., *Above a Common Soldier: Frank and Mary Clarke in the American West and Civil War*, revised edition (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1997), 39.

officers and protected by military units, charted the pathways that railroads soon followed. The lessons learned during the dragoon expeditions on the Plains in the 1830s and 1840s proved invaluable in helping the military exert control across the Southwest.

The end of Fort Scott came eleven years after its establishment, and it took place in a very different nation. By the 1850s, the United States had nearly completed its continental expansion. A new issue dominated the nation: human manumission. Early in the decade, Fort Scott had no practical use either in westward expansion or in the question of slavery. Capt. Michael E. Van Buren of the Regiment of Mounted Rifles, the post's last commanding officer, presided over its closure with little fanfare. The post return simply stated: "This post was this day (April 22, 1853) broken up, pursuant to Dept. orders no. 9, of March 30, 1853, and the garrison on route for Fort Leavenworth, the Ordnance Sgt. Being left at Fort Scott." An era ended quietly. For a decade, Fort Scott had been central to westward expansion. An unneeded anachronism, it simply ceased to be.

Unlike many frontier forts, the post was not abandoned to the elements; instead it created a lasting legacy behind. The lands upon which the fort had been built remained reserved for the New York Indians so the Army never owned it. Sgt. McCann of the Ordnance Department remained to watch over the buildings, joined in isolation by Wilson, the post sutler whose license did not expire until 1855. Wilson sought permission to remain at Fort Scott, writing to Secretary of War Jefferson Davis in May 1854. He noted that he and his family lived there with six slaves, selling to Indians and whites in the area. Davis never replied, but Quartermaster General Thomas Jesup did grant permission. Other settlers entered the area soon after the troops left, and the Army made plans to sell off the buildings, transactions complicated by the inability to sell the land upon which the barracks, stables, offices, and hospital stood. On April 16, 1855, Maj. Marshall Howe of the Second Dragoons conducted the public auction. The land problem was most likely a key factor in the low prices received. All of the buildings painstakingly constructed since 1842 were sold for a total of less than five thousand dollars. The four completed officers quarters were sold for between \$300 and \$505, with Wilson buying the second house. With an eye toward future town development, Wilson also purchased the blacksmith shop, the wood in the carpenter and blacksmith shops, and the well cover and posts. Joining Wilson in pursuit of local dreams was T.F. Whitlock, who bought the hospital building for \$400 and the quartermaster stable, shed, and shops for \$405. Aside from the sale of the larger buildings, the Army also benefitted from the frontier needs of nearby settlers. The auctioneers were able to dispose of items as small as loose lumber in shops and sideboards and other items of furniture. Also purchased that day were two old sabre blades, which someone bought for fifty cents.⁶⁴

The Army completed Fort Scott just as the reasons for building it came to an end. Settlement of the Oregon border dispute and victory over Mexico moved the American frontier far beyond the Marmaton River. Fort Scott's original purpose, the maintenance of a boundary between Indian and white lands, evolved into protecting the lanes of American movement across Indian lands. This transition became possible as a result of an officer corps that had become

⁶⁴ Wilson to Davis, May 22, 1855, Microfilm Roll 21 Frame 797 to 799, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; "Account of Sales of Buildings and Other Public Property at Fort Scott, Kansas Territory, April 16, 1855, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

professional. Industrial development allowed the military to new technical capabilities and years of service on the Plains added field experience as well.

But the Army departed from Fort Scott too soon. After the fort was closed, the nation was forced to deal with the quandary that Kansas became. After Congress established the Kansas Territory in 1854, the area around the recently closed Fort Scott extending across eastern Kansas became the flashpoint of the nation, the places where the fissures built into the constitution of the United States exploded in chaos and violence, in part because of the lack of a federal presence. That setting, and the internecine squabbling that so often led to bloodshed, foreshadowed the future — in Kansas during the latter part of the 1850s and in the national conflict that followed.

Chapter Four: Southeastern Kansas Territory and the Question of Slavery

National pressures over slavery converged in the second half of the 1850s at the former Army post that had become the town of Fort Scott, located on the antebellum nation's periphery. The South's desire to expand the institution of slavery and the doctrine of states' rights both played pivotal roles in the shaping the struggle for the plains. Indian removal, development of the cotton industry, and the growth of slavery into a major economic concern fueled the South's development. African Americans were central to the way the white South saw itself; every southern decision, whether about business, society, or politics, accounted for the presence of enslaved African Americans in the midst of the free white South and with good reason. While only 2 percent of the North traced its descent from Africans, in the South slaves and free blacks comprised fully one-third of the population. In some areas, most notably lowland South Carolina, African-Americans topped 50 percent of the population. According to the 1820 census, 90 percent of the South's workers engaged in agriculture, and an overwhelming majority were slaves.¹

After the American Revolution, Southern states suffered through a severe economic depression. The prices of slaves dropped and abolition became a more commonly held ideology. Eli Whitney's cotton gin, introduced in 1790, revived slavery, linking cotton production and slave labor in an economically profitable embrace. As the price of cotton rose, a powerful planter class whose wealth depended upon slavery gained power and position. Slavery became an economic necessity, forcing the development of a supportive body of law and a legal system to implement it. The national legal system remanded the problems of slavery to the individual states, a reprise of the fissure left by the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution. For Southerners, any federal proposal to prevent incoming states from selecting slavery represented an erosion of the sovereign rights of all states. The doctrine that began as nullification of the federal authority to set tariffs blossomed as a political ideology that put the rights of states above those of the federal government. Called "states' rights," this philosophy served as the underpinning of the southern defense of slavery.²

America's anti-slavery movement failed to coalesce around one central organization or

¹ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene Genovese, *Fruits of Merchant Capital: Slavery and Bourgeois Property in the Rise and Expansion of Capitalism* (NY: Oxford Press, 1983); William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854* (NY: Oxford Press, 1990); William J. Cooper, *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860* (NY: Knopf, 1983).

² Kenneth M. Stampp, *America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 86-87; Eugene D. Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1988); Frederick Merk, *History of the Westward Movement* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 224-228; Irving H. Bartlett, *John C. Calhoun: A Biography* (NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993); Those involved in drafting the Constitution deferred dealing with the majority of issues involving slavery, touching on slaveholder interests in only eight provisions. Slaves were included in census calculations for the purposes of representation and direct taxation in Article I, with their numerical worth set at three-fifths of a white person. The Fugitive Slave clause of Article IV declared that persons held to service or labor under the laws of an individual state had to be returned to the person claiming that service. Another provision denied Congress the right to prohibit slave trafficking into this country for a twenty-year period.

institution and by the middle of the nineteenth century American feelings and thoughts about the country's black inhabitants remained diverse. A national abolition movement faced fears that a successful campaign might threaten the Union. To forestall the crisis, Congress simply did not act, opting to leave the issue of slavery up to local determination under the principle of popular sovereignty. This idea, codified in the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which became law on May 26, 1854, set the stage for the border war for control of Kansas. The legislation, crafted by "The Little Giant," Sen. Stephen A. Douglas, upset the political balance created by the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and the Compromise of 1850. It replaced the imposed balance of slave states and free states joining the Union with the concept of popular sovereignty. Douglas' method of evading the Missouri Compromise's structured symmetry allowed residents of incoming territories to determine whether they would have slavery.³

In mid-century Kansas, an unrelated but interwoven pair of problems obstructed progress on the question of slavery. During the first half of the 1850s, slavery served as a diversion from the acquisition of the Indian lands in the eastern Kansas Territory. Political questions dominated the era's newspapers and congressional reports, but the overwhelming majority of whites traveling west were seeking land — and as far as they were concerned, questions of Indian ownership and treaties were far less important than that quest. It would take twenty years (1853 to 1873) to remove the majority of the Indians from eastern Kansas.⁴

Not all the new American inhabitants ignored the era's hottest political controversy. The early settlers of Bourbon County, particularly those who moved west from Missouri, brought pro-slavery sentiments along with their mules and horses. Before the establishment of the Kansas Territory, slavery was legal in many areas of the Indian Territory and many Army officers owned slaves. Even at Fort Scott, on the edge of the nation, some officers owned slaves or expressed pro-slavery attitudes. Capt. Thomas Swords, responsible for overseeing construction of Fort Scott, asked a friend in 1843: "What will you say to see me come jogging along with a wife, half a dozen negroes and sundry horses, many colts, cows &c to Fort Gibson." Lt. Richard Ewell told his sister that he intended to purchase a servant in the future, a plan he believed would save him money. Hiero Wilson, the former civilian post sutler at Fort Scott, owned six slaves when the Army abandoned the post in 1853. Four years after the military departed, thirty slaves lived in Bourbon County. Slave-holding had become part of life on the Missouri-Kansas border and Fort Scott adjoined its expansion. Location thrust eastern Kansas and Fort Scott into the very center of the leading national issue of the 1850s. Despite the limited prospects for labor-intensive, plantation style agriculture on the plains, the extension of slavery became an important issue in the Kansas Territory.⁵

Missouri was the cusp of one side of sectional confrontation. After entering the union as a slave state under the Missouri Compromise of 1820, the state became the vanguard of slavery's

³ James A. Rawley, *Race and Politics: "Bleeding Kansas and the Coming of the Civil War"* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1969).

⁴ Craig Miner and William E. Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas: A Study of Cultural Revolution, 1854-1871* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990), 3-6.

⁵ Thomas Swords to Lt. Abraham Johnston, March 5, 1843, printed in *From the Crack Post of the Frontier: Letters of Thomas and Charlotte Swords*, Harry C. Myers, ed. (Fort Scott: Sekan Publications, n.d.), 11; Richard Ewell, letter to Rebecca L. Ewell, April 10, 1842, Richard Ewell file, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archive; Charles Hart, "The Natural Limits of Slavery Expansion: Kansas-Nebraska Act, 1854," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 34 (Spring 1968), 32-50.

KANSAS TERRITORY 1855-1859

LEGEND

CITY / TOWN

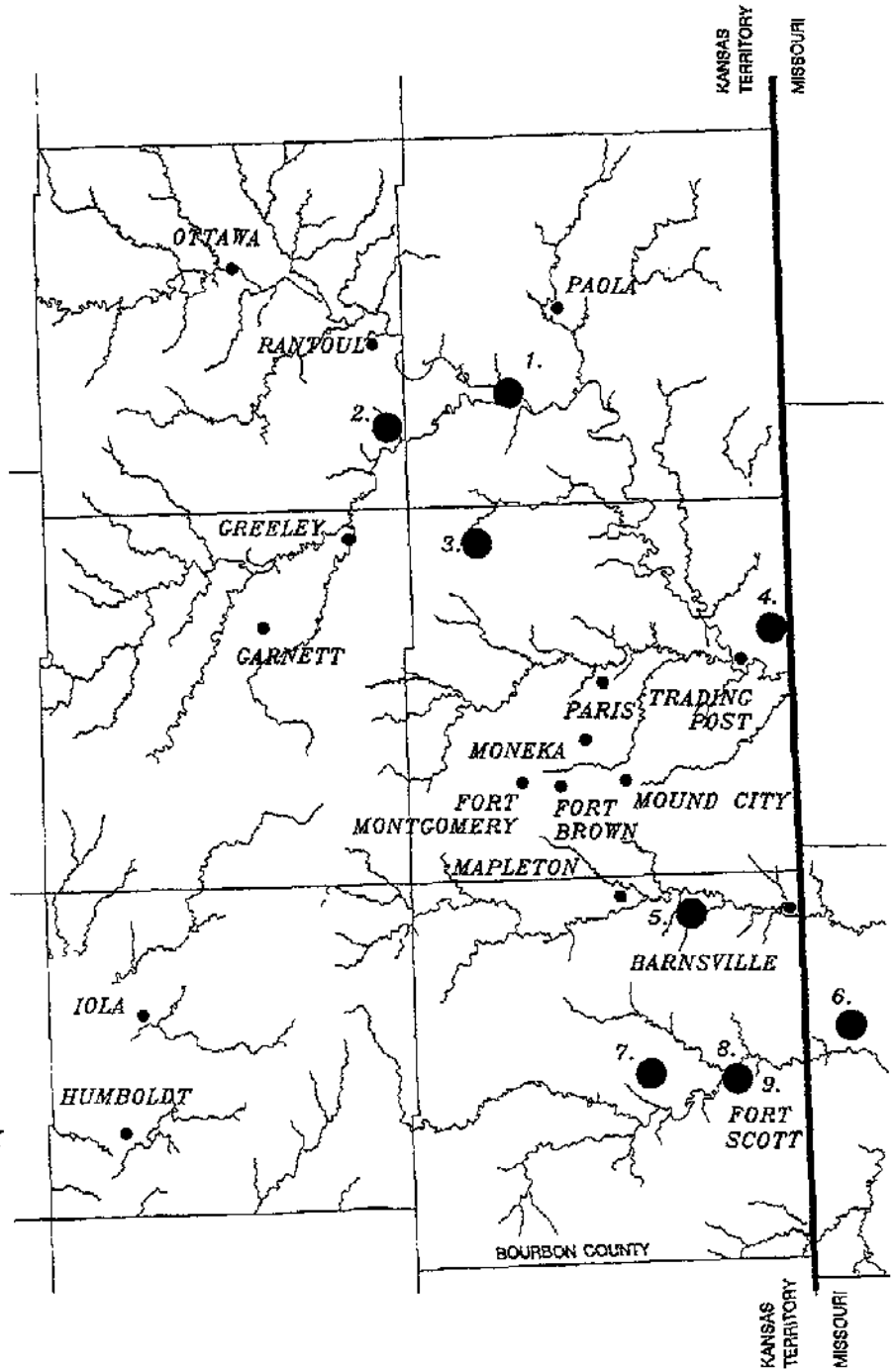
BATTLE SITE

COUNTY BORDER

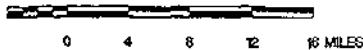
STATE LINE



1. BATTLE OF OSAWATOMIE
(AUG. 30, 1856)
2. POTTAWATOMIE MASSACRE
(MAY 24 AND 25, 1856)
3. BATTLE OF MIDDLE CREEK
(AUG. 26, 1856)
4. MARAIS DES CYGNES MASSACRE
(MAY 19, 1858)
5. BATTLE AT "FORT" BAYNE
(DEC. 16, 1857)
6. RAID INTO MISSOURI
(DEC. 20, 1858)
7. BATTLE OF YELLOW PAINT CREEK
(APR. 21, 1858)
8. RAID ON FORT SCOTT
(JUNE 5, 1858)
9. RAID ON FORT SCOTT
(DEC. 16, 1858)



SCALE



expansion, the prototype for extension to all Western territories. By federal law, congressional legislation could not restrict the peculiar institution there, and a large portion of the state population supported slavery and states' rights. Missourians sought to export their way of life, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which permitted the citizens of the territory to choose slave or free-state status, gave them the opportunity. Abolitionists and free state advocates had other ideas. They intended to populate the Kansas Territory to bring it into the nation as a free state and a large abolitionist contingent made the state a hotbed of anti-slavery sentiment. In addition to the strong slave presence on its eastern border, Kansas' free-state and abolitionist movements had to deal with additional slave support from its southern neighbor, the Indian Territory now Oklahoma, where many Indians, especially the Cherokee, owned slaves.⁶

The political crisis over slavery became the nation's focal point. The conflict on the Kansas-Missouri border known colloquially as "Bleeding Kansas" became no less than a contest for the nation's soul. Some of the most militant participants lived in the southeastern part of the Kansas Territory. Before the abolitionist John Brown found national fame for his failed attempt to spark a slave uprising by raiding the U.S. arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, he made his home in Osawatimie, a small town in Miami County about fifty miles north of Fort Scott. Throughout the territorial period, Missourians committed to ensuring Kansas joined the Union with laws protecting slavery crossed the border and terrorized homesteads. No less zealous in pursuit of their objectives than Brown, the pro-slavers resorted to any tactic they could to intimidate "free soilers." Brown and others responded in kind and the Kansas Territory became the scene of a conflict that foreshadowed the Civil War. The threat of insurrection in Kansas became so serious that in 1855, the government stationed 25 percent of the active U.S. Army force in the territory. One year later President Pierce increased troop strength there to half of all federal soldiers.⁷

When Pierce proclaimed Kansas a territory on May 30, 1854, he created a laboratory that exposed the national fractures over slavery. Political problems dogged the new territorial government from its inception. The first governor, Andrew Reeder, a corpulent Pennsylvanian with dark blue eyes and iron-grey hair, faced jeopardy from the moment he arrived. The proximity of neighboring Missouri increased the chances of a pro-slavery legislature if a quick vote took place before a flood of emigrants from northern states arrived. Reeder thwarted pro-slavery goals when he opted to hold a special election to select a delegate to Congress instead of a general vote for delegates to the territorial legislature. The action incensed slavery advocates and allied politicians claimed Reeder was too slow in making Kansas a slave state. President Pierce received recommendations for the governor's removal as early as December 1854.⁸

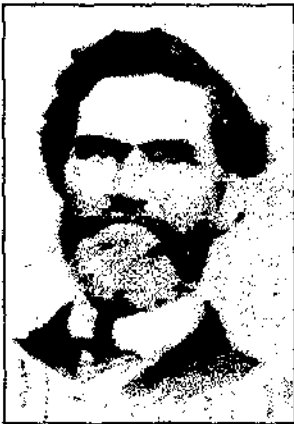
Reeder ordered a territorial census on January 22, 1855. The southern four-fifths of Bour-

⁶ Gunja SenGupta, *For God and Mammon: Evangelicals and Entrepreneurs, Masters and Slaves in Territorial Kansas, 1854-1860* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1996); James R. Shortridge, "People of the New Frontier: Kansas Population Origins, 1865," *Kansas History* 14 (Autumn 1991), 162-185.

⁷ Stephen B. Oates, *To Purge This Land With Blood: A Biography of John Brown* (NY: Harper and Row, 1970); James Rawley, *Race and Politics: "Bleeding Kansas" and the Coming of the Civil War* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1969); Laurie, "Filling the Breach," 154.

⁸ Homer E. Socolofsky, *Kansas Governors* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1990), 33-35; Eric Corder, *Prelude to Civil War: Kansas-Missouri, 1854-61* (Toronto, Ontario: Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1970), 22-23; Jeffrey Rogers Hummel, *Emancipating Slaves, Enslaving Free Men: A History of the American Civil War* (Chicago: Open Court, 1996).

bon County were placed in the Sixth District for voting purposes, with Fort Scott's former hospital building designated as the polling place. William Barbee compiled the district census list in January and February, counting a southeast Kansas population of 249 voters in eleven complete counties and parts of nine others. When finally held, the election of a territorial legislature proved a fiasco. The census showed 2,905 qualified voters living in the territory out of a total population of 8,601. On March 30, 1855, when the territory held legislative elections, 6,307 ballots were cast. Pro-slavery delegates dominated the newly elected body by the margin of thirty-six to three, earning it the free-state title of the "Bogus Legislature." After officials uncovered several instances of voter fraud, Reeder ordered a second election in about one-third of the districts on May 22, 1855. When the legislature convened on July 2, one of its first acts was to throw out all free-state candidates who



John Hamilton

won in the May election and seat the pro-slavery delegates who earlier won seats. After relocating to Shawnee Mission, the legislature voted to adopt Missouri's slave laws for Kansas. Despite victories at the polls, pro-slavery forces still sought Reeder's ouster. Pierce finally yielded to the attacks on July 28 that charged him with irregularities in the purchase of Indian lands and removed him from office. Reeder stayed in the territory for another year, during which a series of threats upon his life from Missourians drove him into the free-state coalition.⁹

In response to the reports of outrageous voting fraud during the elections held in Kansas Territory, Congress established a special committee to examine the situation. Legislators interviewed many of those involved in the elections, including several people from Fort Scott. John Hamilton, who as a dragoon sergeant helped build the post and later as a civilian living in Fort Scott was a Free State legislative candidate, testified he saw as many as one hundred and fifty strangers at the polls in the former hospital building on election day. Most came west from Missouri on horseback and wagon, he said. Two men warned Hamilton that if he contested the election, "it would certainly be detrimental to the interests of myself and family," he recounted. Another Fort Scott resident, Emory B. Cook, told investigators that one of the strangers told him "it seemed to be understood that the north was imposing on the south, and they were going to try to keep up with them." Testifying for the opposition, John Anderson, a pro-slavery candidate who won his election, testified that a "current and credited rumor" placed a body of armed men from the Emigrant Aid Society in Fort Scott to control the voting. Many Missourians, he explained, came to counter that threat. The rancor and partisanship were both obvious and hard to assess. Few U.S. territories endured such contentiousness and deceit when they formed their first legislature.¹⁰

⁹ The territorial census also listed 192 slaves in Kansas, with eleven in the Sixth District. Alfred Thayer Andreas and William G. Cutler, *The History of the State of Kansas*, two vols. (Chicago, A. T. Andreas, 1883. Reprinted in 1976), 94; Ronald Vern Jackson, Gary R. Teeple, and David Schaefermeyer, eds. *Kansas 1855 Territorial Census Index* (Bountiful, Utah: Accelerated Indexing Systems, 1977).

¹⁰ United States Congress, *Report of The Special Committee Appointed to Investigate the Troubles in Kansas: With the Views of the Minority. House of Representatives, 34th Cong., 1st sess., Report n. 200, 235-245*; President James Buchanan, message to Congress, January 24, 1856, *Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, Being the First and Second Sessions of the Thirty-Fourth Congress* (Washington, D.C.: A.O.P. Nicholson, Senate Printer, 1856), 64, 68-69.

When state leaders organized Bourbon County on September 12, 1855, most of the territory's attention focused on conflicts near Lawrence and Topeka. Most of the early settlers in the county hailed from pro-slavery Missouri. The vast majority lived on lands that still legally belonged to Indians, exchanged by treaty for their lands in Wisconsin. Only in June 1858, after a federal land survey, could the government recognize preemption claims on New York Indian lands. Congressional approval for the legal sale of the Indian lands was not even a remote possibility. The Army had already made the public aware of this problem. On April 16, 1855, the same day that Wilson Shannon, an Ohio Democrat, became the new territorial governor, the public sale of buildings at Fort Scott took place. Major Marshall Howe of the Second Dragoons conducted the unique auction, informing bidders that the federal government was selling the structures, not the underlying properties. Because of treaty restrictions with the New York Indians, the Army never established a military reservation around Fort Scott and the Army did not hold title to the land.¹¹ For some buyers, the situation presented a quandary but most were thrilled to have the opportunity to purchase such sturdy structures built at great expense, trusting that a future survey would give them the opportunity to buy the underlying land.

Despite chaos in the Kansas territory, Bourbon County's formation followed entirely typical patterns. The first county commissioners, former post sutler Hiero T. Wilson and land speculator Charles B. Wingfield, both enjoyed wealth and a long history in the region. The first territorial legislature incorporated the town of Fort Scott in 1855. When the Democratic *Southern Kansas* circulated at Fort Scott later in the year, it became the first newspaper published in the new county. In the fall of 1855, Fort Scott's residents undertook a public subscription drive and purchased the former hospital, turning it into the community's first public building. As these institutions of community took shape, a pretense of normality pervaded Bourbon County. A look beneath the surface revealed how unusual the process really was. Most of the city residents, including slave-owner Wilson, supported the South's position, while a growing number of county residents supported free-state principals, leading to fissures in the area's cohesiveness.¹²

Later in 1855 the political machinations turned violent in northern Kansas, as the so-called "Wakarusa War" erupted on Nov. 21, with the shooting of free-state supporter Charles W. Dow, ten miles south of Lawrence. Only one other person died in the "Wakarusa War" other than Dow, but the Eastern press magnified events and the situation in Kansas started to receive great amounts of publicity. Hostilities erupted again the following spring, as free-state newspapers in Lawrence spent the winter continuing their attacks on the pro-slavery movement. A Douglas County grand jury stacked with pro-slavery supporters voted May 5 that the newspapers were nuisances. The jury called for their removal. On May 21, 1856, a deputy U.S. marshal, accompanied by a large posse, rode into Lawrence and peacefully arrested three men. Soon after, the law officer returned

¹¹ Leo Oliva, "Frontier Forts and the Settlement of Western Kansas," in *Kansas and the West: Bicentennial Essays in Honor of Nyle H. Miller*, Forrest Blackburn, Edgar Landsdorf, Robert Richmond, Joseph Snell and Homer Socolofsky, eds. (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1976), 59-74.

¹² Fort Scott acted as the county seat until the border violence of 1858 forced its removal to Marmaton for four years. Andreas, *The History of the State of Kansas*, 1072-1074; Ralph Richards, *The Forts of Fort Scott and the Fateful Borderland* (Kansas City, Mo.: Lowell Press, 1976), 55.

¹³ Gilmore, "Total War on the Missouri Border," 72; Corder, *Prelude to Civil War*, 41, 80-84. Some historians blame economics for the Wakarusa War, and other conflicts during the decade, with late-arriving non-slave-holding whites protesting the early pre-emption of lands by slavery-supporting Missourians; Dale E. Watts, "How Bloody was Bleeding

to Lawrence backed by more men and two pieces of artillery. The group destroyed two newspaper offices and a hotel, and some men broke into several stores and destroyed free-state leader Charles Robinson's house. Two days later, in a direct response to the attack on Lawrence, John Brown led four of his sons and two other men on a rampage through Franklin County in May 1856. They killed four unarmed settlers in what the pro-slavery press labeled the "Pottawatomie Massacre." In retaliation, pro-slavery forces attacked Osawatimie, where Brown lived, killing one of his sons.¹³

Seeking an escape from the violence, many Kansans fled the northern tiers of counties and sought new opportunities in the southeastern half of the territory. In response to free-state settlement in the southeastern part of the Kansas Territory, southerners tried to populate the region with their own supporters. George W. Jones led a group of about thirty men to Bourbon County in spring 1856, organized by the Southern Emigrant Aid Society. Many pro-slavery men belonged to "Dark Lantern Societies" or "Blue Lodges," secret groups organized to push free-state settlers from the territory. The pro-slavery men in July began pressuring free-state supporters to leave the county, hoping for political victory for their cause as well as economic advancement by assuming ownership of the now-vacant properties. Separated by ideological differences, both pro-slavery and free-state adherents often fought in the courtroom as well in the field, masking their political agendas behind writs and lawsuits.¹⁴

Because of the series of pro-slavery territorial governors, the Army played a partisan, pro-slavery role in assisting state and local law agencies, both in northern Kansas and later in the southeastern counties. The free-state legislature selected a governor, Charles Robinson, who pro-slavery Sheriff Samuel Jones promptly arrested. United States troops held Robinson and other free-state political leaders at LeCompton for four months on suspicion of high treason for their involvement in the free-state legislature. When the free-state legislature convened its July 1856 session, the threat of pro-slavery attack ominously loomed. Col. Sumner led eleven companies of dragoons to positions to the north and south of Topeka. When the legislators inquired of Sumner's intent, he told them that if they met, "the authorities of the general government should be compelled to use coercive measures to prevent the assemblage of that Legislature. Sumner rode to the legislature's meeting hall at the head of two hundred dragoons, with a pair of cannons ready for action. He told the delegates that although the action was the most painful of his life, under a presidential proclamation, he was ordering the legislature to disperse. In fear of the pro-slavery forces, the delegates cheered the dragoon officer and as he departed, they dispersed.¹⁵

Continuing violence across Kansas prompted more federal intervention. Pro-slavery forces demanded Shannon's resignation, and President Pierce replaced him with John W. Geary of Pennsylvania in September 1856. The new governor was prepared for the situation — he was a veteran of the Mexican War and had fought vigilantes as San Francisco's first mayor. At about the same time, Gen. Persifor F. Smith replaced Col. Sumner at Fort Leavenworth. The forces under

Kansas?: Political Killings in Kansas Territory, 1854-1861," *Kansas History* 18, n. 2 (Summer 1995): 126-129; Allen Crafton, *Free State Fortress: The First Ten Years of the History of Lawrence, Kansas* (Lawrence, Kans.: World Co., 1954); Carolyn Berneking, ed., "A Look at Early Lawrence: Letters From Robert Gaston Elliot," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 43 (Autumn 1977): 282-296.

¹⁴ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 148-150; G. Murlin Welch, *Border Warfare in Southeastern Kansas, 1856-1859* (Pleasanton, Kans.: Linn County Publishers, 1977), 13.

Smith's command included companies from the First Cavalry, Second Dragoons, and Sixth Infantry. Geary and Smith combined to use the military for an effective show of federal force. The onset of winter months and government officials' use of negotiations backed by armed force eventually helped to calm northern Kansas at least temporarily. Worn out by months of heightened tensions and calmed by the presence of federal troops, settlers across northern Kansas turned their attentions away from political events and concentrated on improving their economic situation. Throughout 1857 and the early part of 1858, a large portion of "Bleeding Kansas" sought to heal its wounds.

By the summer of 1857, the violence shifted to Linn and Bourbon counties. The pro-slavery movement turned more of its attention on southeastern Kansas, far removed from the federal posts at forts Leavenworth and Riley. Its location also made it less attractive to free-state settlers moving in from Kansas City or Nebraska, providing hope that pro-slavery influence of nearby Missouri could prove attractive. Early in August 1857, a group of pro-slavery Texans arrived in Fort Scott. Calling themselves "Texas Rangers," they added about fifty supporters from the town and marched north into Linn County in search of John Brown and his men. On the night of August 29, while the Texans camped on Middle Creek, about fifteen miles south of Osawatomie and sixty miles north of Fort Scott, a group of armed free-soilers surprised them. The pro-slavery men retreated in panic, some racing into Fort Scott with news of an imminent invasion by the Free-State troops. Former sutler Hiero Wilson and his family were among those who fled, seeking shelter south of the town. Other residents dealt with the emergency in their own way. With her husband and sons away with the family horses, Dr. Hill's wife had her servants pull her carriage into the bottom of a steep ravine. Guarded by the servants, she remained hidden until daylight. After the incident, many pro-slavery men sent their families away from Fort Scott.¹⁶

In retaliation for the Middle Creek incident, pro-slavery forces led by Potawatomi Indian Agent George W. Clarke raided Linn and Bourbon counties early in September 1857. Clarke's officers included G. W. Jones of Fort Scott and Linn County sheriff John E. Brown. Supported by Missouri men, the force raided river settlements, destroying crops, driving off stock, and burning household goods. Most of the destruction seemed designed to drive free-state settlers from the area, although many settlers returned to their claims after hiding in the brush during the raids. They later obtained emergency supplies of food and clothing from the National Kansas Committee, an anti-slavery support organization based in Chicago.¹⁷

Despite the consistent violence, the Fort Scott population grew in 1856 and 1857. Free-State settlers dominated the rural areas surrounding the town, while Fort Scott mostly remained in the hands of slavery advocates. Developers established competing groups, the Wingfield Land Company and the Fort Scott Town Company, in 1857, but the two merged in 1858 after the Wingfield group failed to secure title to New York Indian lands. Despite the lack of clear title, development continued and the settlers found uses for the former buildings of Fort Scott. Even the uses of the buildings reflected area politics. Officers Quarters No. 1, originally purchased in the 1855 auction by Alfred Hornbeck for \$350, soon became the Fort Scott Hotel, the local headquarters for Free-State supporters. Across the parade grounds, new owners soon renamed the former infantry barracks the Western Hotel, the town's unofficial pro-slavery headquarters. The dragoon

¹⁵ Gihon, *Governor Geary's Administration*.

¹⁶ Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1066.

barracks on the west side of the complex housed the government land office and post office, along with private businesses including the town's second newspaper, the *Fort Scott Democrat*. Pro-slavery supporters ran the land office that opened in June 1857. One official in the office, the



James Montgomery

receiver, was former Michigan Governor Epaphroditus Ransom. Territorial officials appointed George W. Clarke register, but he held office under the name William H. Doak, as he faced a murder indictment stemming from his pro-slavery activities.¹⁸

Isolated incidents between pro-slavery and Free-State supporters had occurred around Fort Scott since the territory's founding and the violence increased dramatically in 1857. Emigrants poured into the region, because as one settler described it, "they encourages people to come from the east and west and all thats againsts' slavery they want to make this a free state an[d] home for labouring men and to be a home for them that has none and they are to keep out slave holders." Several months after the Texas Rangers and Fort Scott's pro-slavery supporters fled from Middle Creek, Clarke led a band of Missourians across the border on a retaliatory raid against the Free-State settlers. James Montgomery, one of the first Free-State emigrants to settle in southeast Kansas, opposed the force. The former preacher marshaled opposition to slavery in Linn and Bourbon Counties when he formed the "Self-Protec-

tive Company," militia groups comprising free-state men. Soon known as "Captain" Montgomery, he united with John Brown when the abolitionist returned from a tour of the East Coast in 1858. The two led many cross-border raids, attacking opponents and the innocent alike as they used political labels to shield their quest for plunder.¹⁹ The chaos of northeastern Kansas had truly spread to the south.

Incoming settlers in southeast Kansas who believed in the free-soil philosophy found themselves trapped in a political structure heavy with slavery supporters. In July 1857, Joseph J. Williams of Pennsylvania, became a judge in the Third Judicial District of Kansas, with its court based in Fort Scott. Residents soon discovered Williams' pro-slavery sympathies. Those free-soilers driven from their claims sought to return to their farms. Supporting pro-slavery emigrants who had moved onto the lands, Bourbon County officials issued writs of trespass against the free-soilers. Since they believed they could not receive justice in Fort Scott's pro-slavery court system,

¹⁷ Welch, *Border Warfare*, 15-26.

¹⁸ Blackmar, *Kansas*, 672-673.

¹⁹ Nancy Hamilton, of Mapleton, Ks., to her brother, William McCrum, of Toledo, Ontario, Canada, August 31, 1857. Bourbon County folder, Misc. Hamilton, Kansas State Historical Society; Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas, Site*

the free-soil men set up a “squatters’ court” with free-state judges and jurymen, and appealed to Montgomery and his armed men for assistance. The emigrants also formed “wide-awake” societies to counter the attacks of pro-slavery’s dark lantern lodges.²⁰

The test of the law’s impartiality in Bourbon County came on October 19, 1857, when Associate Justice Williams banged the gavel in the south room of the land office building to convene the opening session of the court’s first term. Williams, clerk S.A. Williams, and John H. Little, the deputy marshal, and the members of the grand jury summoned during that first term were all suspected of pro-slavery sympathies by many in the free-state camp. While viewed as a unified threat to the free-state cause, the South’s supporters had their differences. Ransom, the Fort Scott Land Office Receiver during the late 1850s, was an extreme pro-Southern sympathizer who did not regard the judge as wholly sensitive to his cause. He characterized Williams as “a kind, amiable good hearted man, of good social qualities, but a very weak, Silly vain old man, with very little talent or attainment, scarcely the ability of a common county court lawyer.”²¹

The courtroom did not help lessen regional tensions. Free-State supporters faced trespassing charges in front of Williams, as well as accusations that they cut trees on Indian lands, a common practice among area settlers. Prosecutors also charged them with violations of the Rebellion Act, legislation passed by the pro-slavery legislature in February 1857 that made it unlawful for two or more persons to combine for the purpose of resisting the enforcement of the law.²² The unsympathetic court convicted most of them, and the disposition of such cases brought the legitimacy of authority into question again and set the stage for more armed conflict.

The conflict moved out of the courtroom in December 1857. Deputy Marshall Little left Fort Scott with a posse of between thirty and forty men to capture a squatters’ court operating at the home of O.P. Bayne, located a few miles west of where the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Scott military road crossed the Little Osage River. The Free-State contingent outnumbered Little’s band and the pro-slavery forces could neither make arrests nor close down the squatters’ court. Pro-slavery forces held a town meeting in Fort Scott, passing a resolution that the armed body of men, gathered in their “fort” on the Little Osage River, constituted a military threat. The Fort Scott residents demanded an end to the court, and called upon the governor to send troops. They also appointed a vigilance committee, which included Little and Wilson. After increasing tensions between the factions, armed groups met again near Bayne’s house. In the resulting fight, the defenders killed three pro-slavery men and another died during the retreat. The pro-slavery posse, its numbers swelling to 150, returned the next day, only to discover that the occupants of Bayne’s fort had moved north.²³

In response to the Fort Scott vigilance committee’s call for assistance, Fort Leavenworth

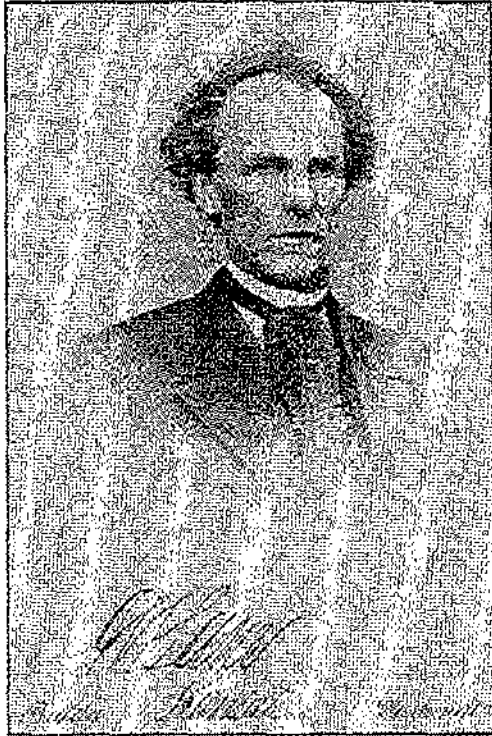
Identification, 87-90; Corder, *Prelude to Civil War*, 131-133.

²⁰ Welch, *Border Warfare*, 36-37.

²¹ Epaproditus Ransom to Lewis Cass, March 25, 1858, Folder “Misc. – Ransom, Epaproditus,” Miscellaneous Collections, Ra-Rea, Manuscript Collections, Kansas State Historical Society. Despite Ransom’s accusations, Williams had a strong judicial background. The Pennsylvania native was appointed associate justice of Iowa Territory in 1833 and served until 1847, when Iowa became a state. He then served as chief justice for a year. In 1849 he began a six-year period on the supreme court. He served as associate justice of the Kansas territory until January 1861. He resided at Fort Scott, where he acquired some property, until his death there in 1870.

²² Thompson, *Fort Scott*, 87; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 38.

²³ Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1067; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 40-46; Watts, “How Bloody was Bleeding



James Lane, pictured on a calling card popular in Washington, D.C.

sent Companies E and F of the First U.S. Cavalry, under the command of Capt. Samuel D. Sturgis. The mounted troops arrived in Fort Scott on December 21 for a two-week stay, in time to avert an attack on the town by reinforced Free-State forces. The pro-slavery elements no longer had the law on their side. The Free-State legislature authorized a militia on December 17, and anti-slavery forces promptly allied themselves with it. Leading the new army was Major General James H. Lane, who soon acquired the sobriquet, the "Grim Chieftain" of Kansas. Lane saw opportunities in abolition. Born in Indiana in 1814, he practiced law before fighting in the Mexican War. He later served in Congress where his support of the Kansas-Nebraska Act cost him his seat. Lane then moved to Kansas Territory in hope of organizing the Democratic Party and securing another position of importance. Using his charisma and commanding presence, Lane won control of the party's military forces and replaced Robinson as the most influential Free-State figure in Kansas. He shaped the direction of the Free-State's military action during the remainder of Bleeding Kansas.²⁴

Fort Scott grew into the most significant town in the southeastern part of the Kansas Territory and pro-slavery supporters continued to dominate its leadership positions. The Kansas and Gulf Railroad Company organized on January 27, 1858, with Judge Joseph Williams as president, Ransom of the Land Office as vice president, and George A. Crawford, president of the Fort Scott Town Company and general land agent, as treasurer. The *Fort Scott Democrat*, with James E. Jones serving as editor, began to publish at the same time. The first editorial proclaimed that while the newspaper did not advocate slavery in Kansas, "we shall boldly defend it, when occasion may require, where it exists or may be adopted by a sovereign state, as the constitutional right of such state." Slaves, owned by U.S. Army officers, had been present at the former military post between 1842 and 1853. In 1857, the Bourbon County Courthouse recorded the sale of a black woman named Lucinda to Wiley Patterson of Bourbon County. Also new in 1858 were the first free African Americans to settle in the town. Two brothers, Pete and Jess Slavins, worked for themselves. Pete was a barber and Jess hired out as a servant.²⁵

The *Democrat* had more than slavery on its editorial agenda; boosterism and community development also filled the news columns as the town's economic potential developed. The editor asked in January if immediate action would prevent "our country friends, and the public generally [sic], from using the trees in 'Carroll Plaza' for hitching posts? There is not west of the 'Fathers of the Waters' so beautiful a Park to be found." The Plaza was the former parade ground of the

Kansas?" 128.

²⁴ Welch, *Border Warfare*, 44-48.

military post, and it had become the focal point for the community. Among the newspaper's advertisers was J.H. McKay, who described the Western Hotel at the southwest corner of Fort Scott's town square, as "newly fitted up and elegantly furnished" for "the reception, accommodation and comfort of guests." The hotel also accommodated guests' horses, the advertisement promised, in the old dragoon stables. Competing with the Western Hotel was the Fort Scott Hotel, the former officers' quarters in the northwest corner of the square. In another transaction, C. P. Bullock ran a series of ads seeking to sell "the splendid Dwelling House," the old commissary building. Aside from a land office, the former dragoon barracks housed tailor Daniel Funk, Mr. Maxwell's drug store and Dr. Americus J. Carter, who advertised the office "where he is ready at all times for professional engagements." The former sutler, Hiero T. Wilson, advertised "a large and general assortment of reasonable, stable and fancy dry goods" on hand at his store, still located west of the fort.²⁶

Unlike his unfavorable characterization of Judge Williams, Ransom held a high opinion of George Clarke, his co-worker at the Fort Scott land office. Clarke, despite involvement in the deaths of two men outside Lawrence in 1856, was "a high-minded honorable chivalrous man, incapable, I think of a low mean act." Clarke's actions proved him in Ransom's eyes to be "an uncompromising democrat of the right stripe – not a pro-slavery man merely, but a true democrat upon broad, national, constitutional grounds." Ransom pinned his hopes on those "democrats," predicting that while "such miscreant villains and traitors as Jim Lane and his coadjutors," might push for a rebellion, the military would put it down. As for the Republican Party, Ransom confidently expected its conservative members to "submit quietly to a state government, organized under our constitution, with the sanction and authority of the general government."²⁷

Southeast Kansas' swelling population foreshadowed transformation of its political structure. By 1858, free-soil forces finally unseated the pro-slavery minority that long controlled Linn County, although three anti-slavery men died in a shootout with U.S. Deputy Marshal Andrew Russell on January 20. Bourbon County soon underwent a similar revolution. On February 10, 1858, Montgomery and O.P. Bayne led Free-State forces, known locally as the "Osages" because they lived in the Little Osage River Valley in northern Bourbon County, to Fort Scott after a free-state man reported men from the town robbed him. The two companies, also known as the "Kansas Militia," marched on Fort Scott, but by the time the group of forty arrived, the "bloody villains had heard of our coming and all fled into the state that night," wrote participant L.G. Anderson.²⁸ The invasion forced pro-slavery families to flee. As Montgomery and his men enjoyed the city's hospitality, confusion over allegiances reigned. Jones, editor of the *Democrat*, complained that pro-slavery forces believed the Fort Scott Hotel, where he resided, was the headquarters of the town's abolitionist movement. Jones refuted that claim, noting that he and the other occupants of the hotel "are all of that class of democrats, who think Kansas is designed by nature and the people, for a free state — not an Abolition state — but a National Democratic State."²⁹ The free-staters finally

²⁵ Thompson, *Fort Scott*, 84; Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1006.

²⁶ *Fort Scott Democrat*, January 27, 1858, January 27, 1858; February 25, 1858.

²⁷ Epaproditus Ransom to Lewis Cass, March 25, 1858, Folder "Misc. – Ransom, Epaproditus," Miscellaneous Collections, Ra-Rea, Manuscript Collections, Kansas State Historical Society.

²⁸ L.A. Anderson to his brother, February 17, 1858, Folder "1858," papers of Richard Hinton, Box 1, Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers, 1850-1860, Kansas State Historical Society

²⁹ Eloise Frisbie Robbins, "The Original Military Post Road Between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Scott," *Kansas History* 1, n. 2 (Summer 1978), 99; Watts, "How Bloody was Bleeding Kansas?" 129; Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1068; *Fort*

secured a hold on the community.

While Anderson vividly described the tension of “Bleeding Kansas,” noting how for more than three months alarms of possible attacks constantly interrupted his work, the economic attractiveness of the state proved more irresistible. Writing to his brother, Anderson reported “I was offered \$500 for my claim this winter but this is no time to sell. Claims will be in great demand in the spring. We have had no winter here until in this month and this would be called pleasant in Iowa. ... Tell John Clinton that if he wants a claim in Kansas he had better come early this spring. There is good chances here yet and the prettiest county he ever looked at. If I sell my claim I shall take another.”³⁰

Federal troops returned to southeast Kansas to counter a renewed threat of violence. Two companies of the First U.S. Cavalry, commanded by Capt. George T. Anderson and Lt. Ned Ingraham, arrived at Fort Scott on February 26, 1858. The *Democrat* welcomed the troops, likely seeing them as support for the pro-slavery camp. “It is hoped and expected,” an editorial read, “that they will be permitted to remain until the Kansas troubles are ended.” The federal troops’ arrival was timely. A man named Pharis on the Osage River reported being threatened by an armed gang, Linn County residents reported more stolen horses, and settlers fleeing south “brought news of the assembling of bodies of armed men from the northward who were marching with cannon upon Fort Scott.” Acknowledging the Army’s neutral role, the *Democrat* also noted that “the army is here, not to prosecute or annoy the innocent, but to serve as a posse in assiting [sic] the officers of the law in preserving the peace and in punishing crime committed by men of all parties.” Remnants of Fort Scott’s political structure still allied with the pro-slavery camp made neutrality unlikely. Upon the troops’ arrival, Anderson reported to Judge Williams and Marshal Little, Bourbon County’s acknowledged representatives of the law, leading free-state supporters to claim that the federal troops were supporting the pro-slavery forces.³¹

The troops’ actions soon confirmed the fears of free-staters. In March, Anderson and Little led the soldiers against Montgomery’s band, which was raiding isolated pro-slavery supporters who lived near the Marmaton River. Late in the next month, the combined contingent patrolled the Marmaton Valley in pursuit of the free-state force. During a chase, gunfire erupted, seriously wounding a dragoon, Alvin Satterwaite, and killing Anderson’s horse. Satterwaite died two days later. The *Democrat* lamented his loss and fixed blame: “It is right that those who shot him should know that he came from the North,” adding that “he was a favorite in the company, a young man of studious habits, liberal education, the son of a respectable Philadelphian.”³²

Violence continued across the region, although the controversy over slavery did not spark all of the attacks. One of the most significant incidents, the Marais des Cygnes Massacre of May 19, 1858, shocked Linn County and the rest of Kansas and the nation. Montgomery’s earlier raids through the region forced Charles Hamilton, a pro-slavery supporter living in Linn County near the Missouri border, away from his home. Hamilton returned at the head of about twenty or thirty-five men, and captured twenty men. After an impromptu trial, he released all but eleven, although none of those men had taken part in any border disturbances, and nine of them were National Demo-

Scott Democrat, May 6, 1858.

³⁰ *Fort Scott Democrat*, May 8, 1858.

³¹ Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1068; *Fort Scott Democrat*, March 4, 1858.



Harper's Weekly illustration of the Marais des Cygnes Massacre of May 19, 1858.

crats, a party that fought for slavery. Hamilton and his men shot their prisoners, killing five and wounding five, while one man was unharmed. A nearby resident wrote his sister:

“Capt. Charlie Hamilton with twenty imps of purgatory went on into Kansas some ten days ago and took twelve peaceable inocent [sic] free state men out of their fields and marched them out in a little valley and told them to march off in a line twenty steps and then turn around and look at the instruments of their death. They then told them to turn the other way and as they turned these Georgians fired on them with their rifles and every man fell, five were killed instantly. Six were mortally wounded and one young man standing beside his brother was not touched but played up dead and his brother laying across his body with two bullets through him and he kicking in the agony of death, just then Hamilton came up, put a revolver to the wounded man's head and fired. Saying it was not the first damned Yankee he had send to hell.³³

Politics might have set up the circumstances of the massacre, but economic motives seem to have been an underlying reason for the deaths. Prior to the shooting, Thomas J. Wood of Fort Scott informed the governor that unrest in the area “seem to consist chiefly of a scramble for property.” Hamilton, he averred, most likely simply had been seeking revenge for being driven off his property.

³² Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1068; Watts, “How Bloody was Bleeding Kansas?” 129.

³³ *Fort Scott Democrat*, May 27, 1858, June 2, 1858; Watts, “How Bloody was Bleeding Kansas?” 121-122; Harvey R. Hougen, “The Marais des Cygnes Massacre and the Execution of William Griffith,” *Kansas History* 8 (Summer 1985), 74-94; Al Burchard to Dear Sister Aggy, Marvel, May 30th, 1858, Special History Collection, Fort Scott National

LE MARAIS DU CYGNE.*

A secret as of roses
 Where rose never grew!
 Great drops on the bunch-grass,
 But not of the dew!
 A faint in the sweet air
 For wild bees to shun!
 A stain that shall never
 Bleach out in the sun!

Back, stood of the prairies!
 Sweet song-bird, fly back!
 Wheel hither, bald vulture!
 Gray wolf, call thy pack!
 The foul human vultures
 Have feasted and fled;
 The wolves of the Border
 Have crept from the dead.

From the heart of their cabins,
 The fields of their corn,
 Unarmed and unweaponed,
 The victims were torn,—
 By the whirlwind of murder
 Swept up and swept on
 To the low, rocky fen-lands,
 The Marsh of the Swan.

With a vain plea for mercy
 No stout knee was crooked;
 In the mouths of the rifles
 Right manly they looked.
 How paled the May sunshine,
 Green Marais du Cygne,
 When the death-smoke blow over
 Thy lonely ravine!

In the homes of their rearing,
 Yet warm with their lives,
 Ye wait the dead only,
 Poor children and wives!
 Put out the red forge-fire,
 The smith shall not come;
 Unyoke the brown oxen,
 The ploughman lies dumb.

Wind slow from the Swan's Marsh,
 O dreary death-train,
 With pressed lips as bloodless
 As lips of the slain!
 Kiss down the young eyelids,
 Smooth down the gray hairs;
 Let tears quench the curses
 That burn through your prayers.

Strong man of the prairies,
 Mourn bitter and wild!
 Wail, desolate woman!
 Weep, fatherless child!
 But the grain of God springs up
 From ashes beneath,
 And the crown of His harvest
 Is life out of death.

Not in vain on the dial
 The shade moves along
 To point the great contrasts
 Of right and of wrong:
 Free homes and free altars
 And fields of ripe food;
 The seeds of the Swan's Marsh,
 Whose bloom is of blood.

On the lintels of Kansas
 That blood shall not dry;
 Henceforth the Bad Angel
 Shall harmless go by:
 Henceforth to the sunset,
 Unchecked on her way,
 Shall Liberty follow
 The march of the day.

* The massacre of unarmed and unoffending men in Southern Kansas took place near the Marais du Cygne of the French voyageurs.

John Greenleaf Whittier's poem, published in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

The *Democrat* used the event to further its pro-slavery objectives. Besides the murdered men, it reported incorrectly that a large group, calling themselves free-staters, drove about one hundred families from their homes. What became known as the Trading Post massacre received a great amount of publicity in Kansas and across the nation, including a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier published in the *Atlantic Monthly* later that year.³⁴

What had likely started as political and economic conflicts soon degenerated into raids of plunder. Relative restraint was the rule for the early jayhawking raids across the border led by Montgomery, as the former preacher prohibited his forces from all-out looting. The slide into all-out anarchy soon intensified as new jayhawking leaders such as Charles Jennison emerged. The transformation into sheer banditry presented a genuine threat to all social order in southeastern Kansas and well-intentioned people sought to find ways to cross the political gulf that divided the region. In Fort Scott, people reacted to the new levels of border violence in a variety of ways. The town newspaper hid behind optimism as it continued its blind boosterism of the town's commercial possibilities. "The story of our troubles is about ended," Jones insisted. "Organized villainy is routed." Reporting that the Army had stationed two companies of cavalry and one company each of dragoons and infantry were stationed in Fort Scott, with part of an artillery battery on the way from

Fort Leavenworth, the news editor wrote "We hope now that the families that have been driven off will return without delay, and resume their occupations. Our good citizens of all parties will sustain them."³⁵

Town leaders recognized that the community's survival depended on cooperation across political lines. A new deputy, H.P.A. Smith, replaced the partisan Little, a sign that there was hope for peace. Leaders planned to bring the community together late in the month through a town meeting. "The time has arrived when the good men of all sections must take a bold stand against unscrupulous men," Jones wrote in an editorial. Helping to organize the meeting were anti-slavery figures such as John Hamilton and pro-slavery supporters including Wilson and Ransom.³⁶ Adding urgency was the reassignment of most of the troops at Fort Scott to possible action against Mormons in Utah. Only one artillery section remained at Fort Scott.

The town meeting held on May 27, 1858, revealed that economics could supersede politics even in the most volatile of settings. Leaders sought the best method for residents to protect their own community, with the organizers hoping to secure "to our houses and families, peace and safety." Pro-slavery or free-state attitudes had ceased to be the principal motivation for the violence that crippled the border region. The town leaders saw the disorder that threatened them as motivated by more than politics, charging that "in the main, those who have raised the cry of war loudest, have proved the greatest thieves."

The town soon faced one of its most severe threats. On May 30, Deputy U.S. Marshal Samuel Walker arrived in Fort Scott with writs for the arrest of pro-slavery leader George W. Clarke, the one-time Indian agent, and several of his followers. A posse of about seventy-five free-state men that included James Montgomery accompanied Walker. After a tense standoff on the porch of Clarke's house, the former Officers Quarters no. 4, he surrendered, and Walker agreed to leave him and another prisoner in Fort Scott, guarded by Army soldiers. Before the posse set off for its return to Leocompton, Walker surprised Montgomery with a writ for his arrest, and began escorting him back for trial. On the return trip, a courier brought word to Walker that Judge Williams had ordered the Army to release Clarke. In response, the marshal freed Montgomery, setting up a reprisal raid upon Fort Scott.³⁷

Less than a week later, Montgomery's men entered Fort Scott with the intention of burning the hotel they saw as the focal point of the pro-slavery forces. At 2:00 a.m. on June 7, the raiders piled hay against the Western Hotel in an attempt to burn it down, but the building failed to catch fire. Montgomery's men also fired about fifty shots into different buildings and homes, and reportedly fired upon those fighting the blaze. Despite the potential for fatalities in the early morning incident, little actual damage was done. By the end of June, Company E of the Third Artillery joined the two infantry units.³⁸

In an attempt to quell the escalating violence, Gov. James Denver ordered Capt.

³⁴ Thomas Goodrich, *War to the Knife: Bleeding Kansas 1854-1861* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998), 215-16.

³⁵ *Fort Scott Democrat*, May 6, 1858; Stephen Z. Starr, *Jennison's Jayhawkers: A Civil War Cavalry Regiment and its Commander* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 30-31.

³⁶ *Fort Scott Democrat*, May 20, 1858.

³⁷ Thompson records Clarke as being arrested on the porch of the Free State Hotel. Thompson, *Fort Scott: Historic Structure Report*, 13-14; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 126.

³⁸ *Fort Scott Democrat*, June 10, 1858; William Smith to Samuel McKittrick, February 28, 1858. History of

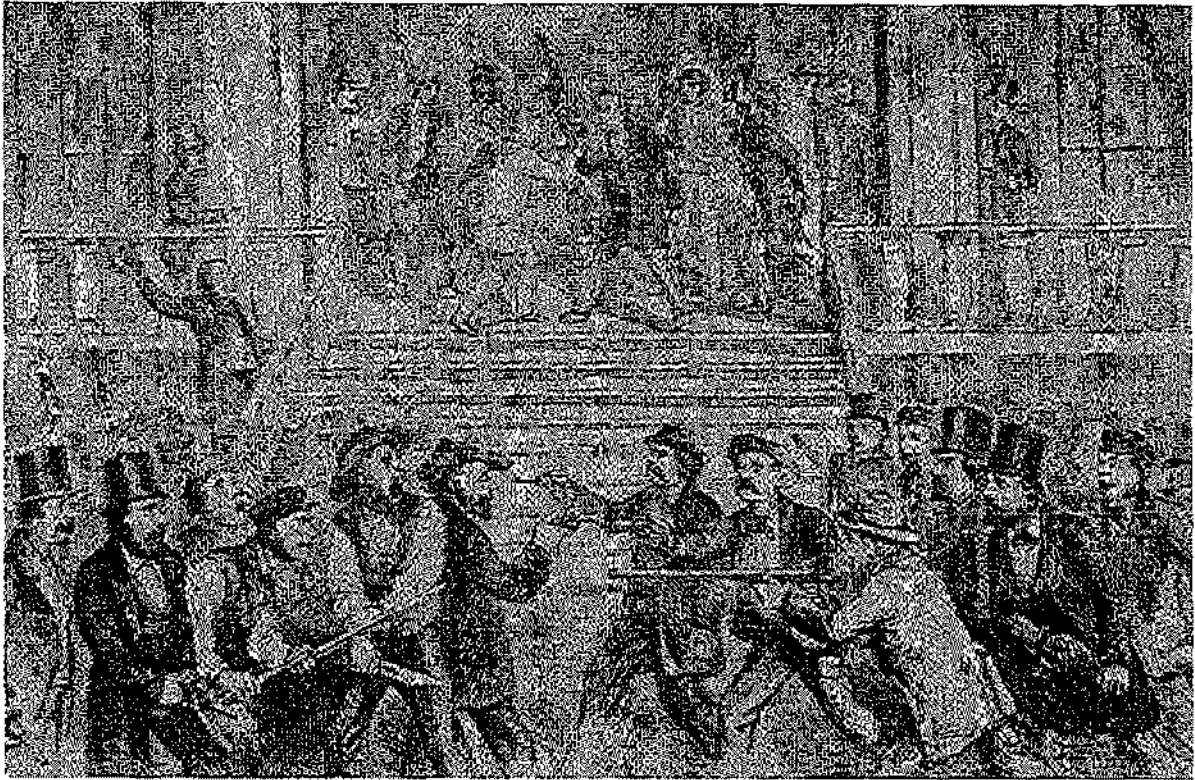
Nathaniel Lyon of the Second Infantry and two companies of infantry out of Fort Leavenworth and assigned them to Fort Scott to relieve the company of artillery garrisoned there. Lyon's orders placed him and his troops under the civilian control of Judge Williams or the deputy marshal. In his report after arriving in southeast Kansas Territory in early June, Lyon told his military superiors at Fort Leavenworth that after crossing the Big Blue River, about twenty miles north of the Marmaton River, he found mostly deserted houses. Many remaining residents banded together for protection against both pro-slavery and free-state forces, Lyon noted, adding that according to local sources, "most of the people, in this region, are armed, organized, and on the alert" to repel any intruder.³⁹ Lyon also recognized the threat arbitrary violence posed to settlement in the area. The armed incursions across southeastern part of the Kansas Territory interrupted area farming for at least fifty miles north of Fort Scott. As a consequence, the price of agricultural products rose, and people in the area feared any stranger who happened by. No social order existed, and the captain thought the only resolution would be the permanent presence of federal troops in the area.

Committing federal forces to calm the domestic violence introduced new problems. Lyon informed Denver, the territorial governor, that the forces fighting in Bourbon County and Fort Scott took advantage of the federal presence. Armed parties left town, committed acts of violence in the countryside and fled to the refuge of Fort Scott; pursuers would not pursue them because of the military. In addition, he wrote, the nature of the conflict forced his troops to remain in close contact with area residents and opened them up to "appeal to the political sympathies of the Soldier in behalf of the respective parties, whereby a corruption is engendered in the ranks difficult to reach and correct." Such actions, he warned, could shatter the notion of the Army as impartial arbiter, as the keeper of order in the chaos of Bleeding Kansas. After holding a conference with Montgomery on his way south, the governor arrived at Fort Scott on June 15 to try to mediate a negotiated settlement. Lyon found Governor Denver a "frank, high-toned gentleman," and the governor mustered all the authority its office gave him. He met with different groups in hopes of achieving resolution. "Ranting demagogues and office seekers" threatened to disrupt the process, Lyon noted, although residents craved peace. Denver proposed that if all the armed bands dispersed and the citizens kept the peace, he would withdraw the federal troops and suspend all writs until a proper tribunal could review them. Robinson, who accompanied the governor, accepted the blame for the chaos. "As the Free State men were in a large majority in the Territory," Robinson allowed, "they were responsible for all the disturbances, and should long ago have taken steps to have prohibited them." After one meeting, Lyon said, area people seemed to support Denver's proposals for quelling the violence. Eventually, as Fort Scott resident George Hopkins remembered, the opposing parties "agreed with the officials to let all bygones be bygones and all live up to the laws from thence forward." Denver left Fort Scott the next day.⁴⁰

Bourbon County – Fort Scott, Collection 688, Kansas State Historical Society; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 125-126; *Fort Scott Democrat*, June 10, 1858; U.S. Army Records of Kansas Military Posts, 1842-1869, Microfilm Box 260 — Fort Scott Records, Post Returns June 1842-March 1871, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, RG 94, Kansas State Historical Society.

³⁹ *Fort Scott Democrat*, May 27, 1858; Capt. N. Lyon to Maj. T.W. Sherman, Commanding Fort Leavenworth, June 10, 1858, Fort Scott National Historical Site Archives; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 120.

⁴⁰ Capt. N. Lyon to Gov. J.W. Denver, June 13, 1858, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives; Capt. N. Lyon to Maj. T.W. Sherman, Commanding Fort Leavenworth, June 15, 1858, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives; *Fort*



A Harpers Weekly drawing of 1858 documents "a peace convention at Fort Scott, Kansas." The sketch shows an imminent confrontation, apparently on the porch of the former enlisted barracks north of the post hospital. The former barracks was known as the Western or pro-slavery hotel.

With firmer prospects for peace, Bourbon County settlers tried to return to the normal rhythms of agricultural life. A change in federal policy made this transition easier. In June 1858, the Land Office Department recognized settlements on the New York Indian reservation. In a policy that typified American land law, the government permitted squatters to acquire title to land that they improved. In the following month, area farmers began the arduous process of resuscitating their livelihood. A man named Wimsett, who lived west of Fort Scott, planted an experimental field of winter wheat. The *Democrat* predicted that "when Bourbon county should be dotted over with such lovely sights as this, it would be conclusive evidence that the farmer has returned to his plow, and that our people would make war no more."⁴¹

The newspaper was prematurely optimistic. Title to the lands seemed imminent, but clearing legal hurdles proved more difficult. In August, the Senate passed a bill to allow title to the New York Indian lands, but the House of Representatives, occupied with the Lecompton Constitution, failed to act. Lobbyists such as George A. Crawford, president of the Fort Scott Town Company, anticipated success during the next session. Federal officials guaranteed that the New York Indians could no longer claim these lands and indicated that settlers who made improvements could likely secure title to 320 acres. Legal action finally extinguished the Indian claims the following February,

Scott Democrat, June 17, 1858; George H. Hopkins, Autobiography handwritten manuscript, Folder "Misc., Hopkins,

and by July 1859, federal surveyors completed their survey of the former Indian lands.⁴² Law completed the process of removing Indians from Bourbon County.

With Bourbon County more peaceful in the weeks following the Fort Scott meeting, Lyon sought to remove his men from the area. Army commanders at Fort Leavenworth rejected his request, preferring to wait until the territorial governor requested a withdrawal. When military necessity drew the troops north to Nebraska's Fort Randall and Fort Ridgely in Minnesota in July to meet new Indian threats, Gov. Denver loudly protested. He needed federal troops in the southeastern part of Kansas Territory until the fall elections to help maintain the peace and prevent a new buildup of border ruffians. Heeding the wishes of the state government, the military acquiesced. The Army canceled the march north before the men reached the Kaw River. Denver finally believed the situation was secure in August, and Companies B and E of the Second Infantry left Bourbon County for Fort Leavenworth on August 10. Soon after, prospectors discovered gold in Cherry Creek, a tributary of the South Platte at the base of the Rocky Mountains. To protect the new emigrant wave, the Army established a new series of posts in the western part of the Kansas Territory, including Fort Larned and Fort Wise on the Arkansas River.⁴³ These posts' garrison requirements diminished the military's ability to respond to turmoil in eastern Kansas.

The peace treaty that Denver forged in Fort Scott barely outlasted his administration. In September 1858, Kansas Territory lost its fifth governor in five years when Denver resigned and returned to the Indian Bureau. In his place, Buchanan appointed radical pro-slavery supporter Samuel Medary of Ohio. A new round of violence soon erupted, when on October 30, a group of unidentified men, possibly led by pro-slavery supporter and former marshal John Little, fired a volley of shots into Montgomery's Linn County home.⁴⁴ The attack was personal as well as political and combined with the political situation, it became a catalyst that reignited violence in Bourbon County. Peace was illusory and fleeting in the torn territory.

After failing to secure Kansas as a slave state with intimidation and election fraud, pro-slavery leaders made one final effort for a legislative victory. Both the territorial legislature and congressional delegate had become free-state, but the pro-slavery Lecompton Convention reassembled on October 28. Emerging from the debates was a constitution that protected slave-owners' rights in Kansas, and called for a provisional government filled with pro-slavery politicians. The Lecompton delegates proposed to submit only the constitution's slavery clause to the voters, although the "no slavery" choice simply prohibited the further introduction of slaves into the territory and protected the property rights of current slave-owners. In response, with Medary not yet in the territory, the newly elected legislature pushed acting governor Frederick Stanton into authorizing a special session, from which emerged a third choice for Kansans — total rejection of the constitution. Before Kansans had the chance to vote for this third option, the territorial government scheduled elections on the constitution for December 12. Election results showed 6,266 voting for the constitution with slavery and 569 voting against it.

George H.B., "Misc. Collection Hom-Hoy, Kansas State Historical Society.

⁴¹ *Fort Scott Democrat*, June 17, June 24, and July 8, 1858.

⁴² *Fort Scott Democrat*, February 17 and July 14, 1859.

⁴³ *Fort Scott Democrat*, July 15, July 22, and August 19, 1858; Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 97-170; Elliot West, *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 45-47; Socolofsky, *Kansas*

Fort Scott. Jan 24 - 1859

Montgomery

Written to me.

Yesterday I heard you said in a speech a few days since, that you were not proud your hand killed John Little, that he was not killed by force.

Can you before God say so?

O, the conquest you have caused! He was one of the noblest men ever created, brave and true to his country and word. You can't force him even injured or innocent person.

A few days more and he was one of them. You would then go south to trouble you no more. But through your influence he was killed, sent to another world without even trial.

to pray a very good bye to his friend.

But thanks to God if you didn't kill his body you can't touch his soul, and it is in the spirit-lands now, the men of the "ages are crossing" can awake him or some, but he now quietly sleeps in our little grave yard.

But remember this, I am a girl. but I can fire a pistol and if you the same could I will send you to the place where their "chopping and slashing of teeth"; you a minister of the, you mean a minister of the devil and a very superior one too.

I have not more to say this time. I you and your wife please accept the sincere regards for your future separation.

Gene Campbell

Gene Campbell's letter to James Montgomery about the death of John Little

The irrelevance of politics to the border troubles tragically became apparent in December. The free-state party sought to free one of Montgomery's men, Benjamin Rice. John Hamilton, captain of the local militia and a longtime member of the free-state forces, arrested Rice a month earlier on a charge of robbery and held him in the Free State Hotel. On December 16, 1858, James Montgomery and between seventy and one hundred of his men stormed into Fort Scott and forced the townspeople onto Carroll Plaza. Former marshal John Little, a pro-slavery supporter, lived in the former Post Headquarters building just northwest of the Free State Hotel that also housed his store. He fired on Montgomery's men, closed the door, and then climbed up to look through the transom window. At that moment, a rifle bullet hit him in the head, killing him instantly. Montgomery's men then freed Rice and ransacked Little's store, taking an estimated \$4,000 in goods. The free-state band "retreated in good order without the loss of a man but had gained one," as one Fort Scott resident remembered.⁴⁵

The fallout from Little's death again heightened tension in Bourbon County. Little was

Governors, 69

⁴⁵ Richards, *Headquarters House*, 23; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 174.

HORRIBLE MURDER.

MOB LAW TRIUMPHANT

FORT SCOTT INVADED!

A PRISONER RESCUED FROM THE SHERIFF!

The reader of the Democrat will remember to have read in our columns that "Ben Rice" of the Osage, one of Capt. Montgomery's men, was arrested a few weeks ago by Capt. John Hamilton, a Free State man, on the charge of having assisted in the robbing of Mr. Davy Jones, which crime is in the hands of the Sheriff, it became that officer's duty to detain him—indictments having been found against him by a Grand Jury composed of active Free State men with but a single exception for murder in one case and in two other for assault with intent to kill, and writs for his arrest being then in the hands of the Sheriff.

On Thursday morning the 16th inst., just at the break of day and before the citizens were up, our town was entered by Capt. Montgomery, Stephenson and Cain with about 100 men under their command, doubly armed with Sharps rifles and revolvers, and sustained by a well mounted cannon. Our citizens had been thrown off their guard the previous night by a false alarm and were slow to be aroused to their danger. They did not suppose that the town could be approached without their receiving notice from the country. Before we knew it this armed gang had gained possession of what is known as the "Free State Hotel" in which Rice was imprisoned. The Sheriff, unfortunately, was on his claim, a mile or more out of town and did not receive notice in time to prevent the rescue of Rice. Having thus secured everything they effected an entrance into the room where Rice was imprisoned, and easily succeeded in releasing and carrying him off.

Fort Scott Democrat of Dec. 23, 1858, recounting Montgomery's raid.

engaged to Gene Campbell, who understandably was distraught over the killing. In a move that only grief and the familiarity of the people in southeastern Kansas with each other can explain, she wrote Montgomery a personal letter, simultaneously plaintive and threatening. Did Montgomery realize "the anguish you have caused" the young woman wrote? She asserted her fiancé's character: "If you did kill his body you can't touch his soul." Campbell added threats to her missive. She could fire a pistol and "send some of you to the place where theirs [sic] weeping and knashing of teeth."⁴⁶ The combination of grief and anger most clearly articulated the pain of life in Bleeding Kansas.

Following Montgomery's raid, Bourbon County again descended into chaos. Fort Scott residents sent a group to Lecompton to discuss defensive measures with Gov. Medary, seeking martial law and federal troops. As they discussed the situation, armed free-state bands constructed forts on the Little Osage River and near Paris in Linn County. Raids also continued throughout Bourbon and Linn Counties.⁴⁷ No authority widely held as legitimate could be found. Any pretense of order disappeared in partisanship. There were two governments and two societies and they fought each other with ferocity. Bleeding Kansas had become a war in all but name. Voters returned to the polls on January 4, 1859, to vote for state offices established by the Lecompton constitution and only then had a chance to participate in a referendum as authorized by the special December legislative session. State residents voted overwhelmingly against the constitution, with 10,266 favoring rejection, 138 voting for the constitution without slavery, and 23 supporting the slavery provision. Neither the December nor January results accurately reflected Kansans' position on slavery, since the free-state supporters boycotted the first election and pro-slavery forces ignored the second.⁴⁸

Bowing to southern interests, President Buchanan disallowed the results of the January balloting and submitted the Lecompton constitution to Congress as the basis for

⁴⁶ Fort Scott Democrat, December 23, 1858; Lawrence Herald of Freedom, January 8, 1859; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 187-190; Hopkins, autobiography, Kansas State Historical Society.

⁴⁷ Gene Campbell to James Montgomery, January 4, 1859, Fort Scott National Historical Site Archives.

⁴⁸ Welch, *Border Warfare*, 187-191; Fort Scott Democrat, February 3,

statehood. Seeking to block a Southern victory on the Kansas question, Republicans and Democrats supporting Sen. Stephen Douglas opposed the move. William English of Indiana proposed a compromise that would give Kansans another opportunity to vote on a state constitution. Acceptance would bring immediate statehood while rejection meant the territory had to wait until its population reached the number needed for statehood, at that time about ninety thousand. Kansans rejected this compromise on August 2, the measure failing 11,300 to 1,788.⁴⁹

As the Buchanan administration struggled for a political solution to the Kansas problem, Medary initiated his tenure with a request for more federal troops, prompted by the visit of George Crawford and the Fort Scott contingent. Crawford warned the governor that an armed group of Missourians was camped on the Marais des Cygnes River, about forty miles north of Fort Scott. Medary dispatched Capt. W. S. Walker and two companies of cavalry to Fort Scott and authorized former dragoon sergeant John Hamilton to raise a company of militia. Before hostilities erupted again, delegates held another peace convention in Bourbon County, this time at Dayton, northwest of Fort Scott. Montgomery addressed the conference, but Medary refused to consider its resolutions, most of which favored Montgomery. Before the troops reached Fort Scott, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis sent an order ending the use of federal troops in quelling domestic violence in the two counties. Medary continued to raise militia units, but finally saw a hint of peace. Faced with an endless war, Montgomery appeared in Lawrence on January 18, 1859 and surrendered. Since the only charge he faced stemmed from an attack on a store in Willow Grove, Montgomery posted \$4,000 bail and his jailers freed him, to the cheers of the town. The free-state leader met members of the legislature, addressed the Congregational Church in Lawrence, and spoke with the governor at the Eldridge Hotel. The Dayton meeting and Montgomery's surrender opened a new period of peace throughout Kansas, and on January 18, 1859, Medary politely declined Buchanan's new offer of additional federal troops.⁵⁰

With armed conflict on the decline, the legislature took the lead in resolving the crisis. A fourth territorial legislature, held in Lawrence because delegates refused to go to the pro-slavery city of Lecompton, repealed all laws passed by the Bogus Legislature, and initiated a new constitutional convention. The new document asked Kansans to vote on whether or not they wanted another convention. Passage of the bill meant an election for delegates in June, with the convention meeting in Wyandotte in July. A general referendum in October would consider the constitution. As it achieved its goals, the idiosyncratic Free-State Party gradually dissolved, and the new Republican Party, led in Kansas by James Lane, replaced it.⁵¹ On October 4, 1859, the people of Kansas approved the Wyandotte Constitution by a two-to-one margin. Slavery's days in the West drew to a close.

As debate over Kansas' entry into the union shifted to Washington, D.C., the settlement of the Kansas Territory continued. Federal officers undertook a General Land Office survey for the Fort Scott area between 1855 and 1857, opening the region's legal settlement. In June 1857, developers organized a new town company, and a month later the federal land office opened. Shortly after, a blacksmith shop and two saloons opened, and during the following January, crews

1859.

⁴⁸ William Frank Zornow, *Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 76-77.

built a new saw mill. The town of Fort Scott again was incorporated on February 27, 1860, after the new legislature ruled invalid the 1855 incorporation by the “Bogus Legislature,” and the town company finally received land titles that September. The area quickly became populous. In a census taken in 1860, the squatters on the New York Indian reservation land numbered 2,202, vastly outnumbering the fifty Indians settled there.⁵² With the end of open hostilities, the town could continue its initial purpose: creating economic opportunity for settlers and others who wished to develop the area.

The statehood drive for Kansas continued. On February 12, 1860, members of Congress introduced an admissions bill in the House of Representatives, followed two days later by a similar measure in the Senate. Some in the Democratic Party questioned whether or not the territory had sufficient population to qualify as a state, while others opposed measure because of the proposed boundaries. Congress eventually tabled the bill for the remainder of the session. A fifth territorial legislature convened during the year revised the federal census figures upward to more than 100,000 people — sufficient for statehood. The Republican victory in the national elections of November 1860, coupled with the withdrawal of a number of Southern senators finally brought about approval there on January 21, 1861. A week later the House passed the admission bill and on January 29, 1861, outgoing President Buchanan signed the bill that made Kansas the thirty-fourth state.⁵³

Peace was still an unstable commodity in Fort Scott as 1860 closed. James Montgomery was among those seeking a settlement on their own terms. In a November letter, the Jayhawk leader noted that “All that is needed here, to make the times interesting, is the presence of United States Troops. I told the Gov. privately that their presence here would be considered insulting to our dignity as free-born American citizens.” A newspaper reporter in the town during the public land sale of Dec. 3 personally witnessed what he termed “a hotbed of Southern hatred and proslavery vindictiveness.” Observing a small force of dragoons and infantry transferred down from Fort Leavenworth to maintain the peace for the sale, William Hutchinson visited the former parade grounds, where he was surrounded by bayonets. Upon retreating to the hotel, Hutchinson encountered “a wild and angered mob that threatened and swore at me.” After a full day of this treatment, he finally realized “that Fort Scott was not likely to be a healthy place for me.”⁵⁴

Southern domination of national affairs served as the foundation for the continuation of the Union — as long as the region retained power at the federal level, the South had genuine reasons to remain a part of the republic. Yet throughout the 1850s, southerners lost much ground in national affairs. The imminent threat of loss of power helped make secession look more inviting. It seemed a better option than becoming subservient to the North. Political change began the process. Southerners lost key northern allies as the fallout from the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act caught Democrats across the North. In the wake of the bill’s passage, popular indignation in the northern

⁴⁹ Stamp, *America in 1857*, 324-31; Zornow, *Kansas*, 77-8.

⁵⁰ Richards, *Headquarters House*, 24-25; Welch, *Border Warfare*, 200-16.

⁵¹ Zornow, *Kansas*, 80-1.

⁵² Erwin N. Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Site Identification and Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Division of History, 1967), 82; Miner and Unrau, *The End of Indian Kansas*, 115.

⁵³ Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, 179

⁵⁴ James Montgomery to George L. Stearns, November 27, 1860, Folder “Correspondence/Misc. Papers, 1860,

states targeted the Democrats who supported it. Without northern support, the southern position in the party weakened and the emergence of the Republican Party led to greater fissures in the nation. By the time Abraham Lincoln ran in the 1860 presidential election, southern political power was on the wane.⁵⁵

Because of Republican victories at the polls and in Kansas, southern senators moved toward seceding from the union. Before slavery supporters took that final step, they and the new state of Kansas watched the first governor, Charles Robinson, the former agent of the New England Emigrant Aid Society, take the oath of office in the free-state bastion of Lawrence. It was a fitting end to a decade-long battle that pitted brother against brother, neighbor against friend, and severed any sense of community in the Kansas Territory.

Bleeding Kansas was a tragedy that exposed the enormous rift in the nation. From it stemmed the Civil War, which reprised many situations first seen in Kansas and in Bourbon County. Fort Scott stood sentry to the disintegration of the first American republic, finally impaled on its inability to address the question of slavery in the constitution of the United States. When politicians failed to solve this greatest of American dilemmas, many of the Army's officers faced an unthinkable choice. Trained to be loyal to the nation first, many responded to the calls of their home states and turned their back on their uniforms, oaths, and careers, foreshadowing their countrymen's actions. What Americans could not resolve in legislatures and courts, they sought to prove in battle. That decision, made in the aftermath of the admission of Kansas as a state, reinvented the nation.

Box 1, George L. and Mary E. Stearns Papers, 1857-1901," Collection 507, Kansas State Historical Society; William D. Hutchinson, "Sketches of Kansas Pioneer Experience," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society* 2 (1901-2), 390-410.

⁵⁵ Don E. Fehrenbacher, *The South and Three Sectional Crises* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 52; Stamp, *America in 1857*, 120-121; Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

Chapter Five:

“If we surrender, it is the end of us”

Southeastern Kansas Goes to War, 1861

The historical vectors pointing at Fort Scott before and during the Civil War had as many political elements as military ones. While President Abraham Lincoln led the fight to preserve the Union and bands of Kansans raided Missouri communities for revenge and plunder, men such as Senator James H. Lane battled Governor Charles Robinson for control of army patronage appointments and quartermaster contracts, the Confederate war effort across Missouri splintered over incompatible objectives, Indian tribes to the south of Kansas ripped apart into pro- and anti-slavery factions, and the spreading violence unwillingly pulled in neutral settlers living on both sides of the Kansas-Missouri border. Politics eventually amplified the pain of war felt by the townspeople of Fort Scott and determined the course laid down by Lane, the man whose actions largely determined the progress of war in Southeast Kansas throughout 1861.

The town of Fort Scott, which acted as Lane's base during the war's first year, played small, yet significant roles in tenuously holding Missouri in the Union, helping defend Kansas from military attack, and guarding a major Northern military transportation route. Enemy forces threatened the town several times, but it never came directly under enemy fire. Its success as a military post helped to stabilize the environs of Fort Scott and southeast Kansas. Instead of serious military threats, Fort Scott commanders had to deal with widespread guerrilla activity, with partisan aggression fueled by more than a decade of violence.¹

The death toll caused by the five violent years of “Bleeding Kansas” continued to mount after statehood, as Missourians and Kansans crossed and recrossed the state line to exact revenge for past deeds and present outrages. Southeast Kansas, far from the federal installations at Forts Leavenworth and Riley that might have helped maintain control along the state border, remained especially vulnerable to Confederate guerrilla and troop incursions from Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory. Without nearby federal troops, irregular bands could easily slip across the border to satisfy personal grudges. The government allotted much of the available manpower to serve in the rapidly expanding Union Army, leaving the state government limited resources for raising local militia units. An overall lack of military organization, weapons and equipment for the local militia units compounded the manpower problems, which caused dramatic rifts among Kansas' political leaders.

Although during the first year of the war the town of Fort Scott lacked an army post, it soon felt the effects of these chaotic military circumstances. Several of the town's buildings served as headquarters or storage space. Troops billeted in tents near the Marmaton River and on the prairie to the west and south. Even before the Army formally reestablished Fort Scott in

¹ Stephen Z. Starr, *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War: Volume III: The War in the West, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), 174-75; Richard S. Brownlee, *Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy: Guerrilla Activity in the West, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958).

March 1862, the town's importance lay in its geographic location in southeast Kansas and its position astride the original military road that went north to Fort Leavenworth and south to forts Gibson and Smith. The physical structures of the original fort and the town grew in importance as the war in the West progressed, in the end playing an increasingly significant role in the outcome of the war.²

During the war years, a post garrison that during the previous two decades consisted exclusively of Regular Army troops changed to Volunteer contingents from several states. The town of Fort Scott, which housed federal troops on an intermittent basis during the last few years of "Bleeding Kansas," continued to garrison Regular Army units until February 1861. Company B of the Second U.S. Infantry, assigned to Fort Scott in January, moved to Missouri to protect the St. Louis arsenal and help maintain federal control in the border state. The unit participated in the June expedition to Boonville and the capture of Jefferson City, and later saw action at Wilson's Creek. The company completed its move out of the western theater in December, joining its regiment in Washington, D.C. It followed most of the other frontier Army companies reassigned to the East once hostilities erupted, as senior military officers scrambled to place reliable, well-trained units in the front lines.³

In 1861, the regional conflict over slavery that had burned between the citizens of Missouri and Kansas during "Bleeding Kansas" contributed to the beginning of the Civil War. Concerned that adding new free states upset the balance of power between South and North, southerners, never doubting the right of states to secede, concluded that survival depended upon independence. The North, determined to preserve the union, disagreed and prepared to prevent the nation's disintegration. The eastern seaboard became the focus of the early stages of conflict and the Union army concentrated its forces there, maintaining only a minimum force in the Midwest and the West. U.S. Army units in Missouri and Kansas had the twin responsibilities of guarding against the military threats presented by Confederate armies and the irregular partisans of "bushwhackers" from Missouri and Kansas-based "jayhawkers." The two duties required very different strategies: the Army needed concentrated forces to meet the threats of invading armies while small widespread units were best for defeating partisans. Union department and district commanders tried a variety of experiments before they controlled the threats. Fort Scott played a role in both responsibilities, quartering troops available for countering an invading army while supporting a ring of small outlying posts in western Missouri and southern and eastern Kansas to handle warring partisans.⁴

Continued problems with Union command structures hampered prosecution of the war, as the Army reorganized the Kansas and Missouri departments several times. The Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi West remained a secondary theater of operations to Eastern actions, as

² Erwin N. Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Site Identification and Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Division of History, 1967).

³ Frederick Henry Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, Compiled and Arranged from Official Records of the Federal and Confederate Armies. Reports of the Adjutant Generals of the Several States* (Des Moines, Iowa: Dyer Publishing Co., 1908, reprint, Dayton, OH: Morningside Bookshop, 1990), 1710.

⁴ Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), 69-85.

Northern military and political leaders held to the philosophy that they could lose the West and still win the war, but the Union could not win if it lost in the East. The lack of attention helped accelerate violence across the Missouri-Kansas border, and established conditions that led to four years of suffering in the Indian Territory, south of Fort Scott. Inadequate federal supervision allowed state military units in southeast Kansas and irregular partisans based in the area to raid Missouri at will during the first year of the war. The lack of Union protections angered pro-Union supporters and drove neutral Missourians into active support of the Confederacy. Political influences in both states contributed to this problem. Military units involved in the Kansas and Missouri theaters were often not regular federal troops, but rather state units raised by leaders more interested in their personal agendas, including profit, than the prosecuting the war.

James Lane's quickly developed friendship with President Abraham Lincoln also contributed to political unrest in Kansas. Their relationship played a key role in Lane's political feuding with Robinson, the Kansas governor, and ultimately hurt the state's military effort. During the first troubled days of the war, the western senator was a significant source of support for Lincoln, offering the services of about 120 Kansans to serve as a "Frontier Guard" for presidential protection. The president's secretaries believed the act "lent an important moral influence in repressing and overawing the lurking treason still present in a considerable fraction among the Washington inhabitants." The presidential detail was short-lived. The Army soon assigned Lane's unit to protect the Washington Navy Yard. On April 27, 1861, Lane requested permission to disband the unit, citing the increased numbers of federal troops then available.⁵

While the contribution seemed small, the Frontier Guard inaugurated a relationship that lasted throughout the war. Lane's enthusiasm for the Union cause and the Republican party, along with his ability to carry ideas into action, became an appealing trait to a president surrounded by military men unable to act with the decisiveness to win. Lincoln's appreciation of Lane was quickly evident. He wrote Simon Cameron, his Secretary of War, in June 1861 that "we need the services of such a man [as Lane] out there," in Kansas suggesting that the Army appoint the senator a brigadier general of volunteers with authority to raise at least two regiments. "Tell him when he starts to put it through not to be writing or telegraphing back here," Lincoln continued, "but put it through." Lane sought permission to raise "regiments of troops in Kansas in addition to the three regiments from the state heretofore accepted." In response to prompting from Lincoln, the secretary of war



James H. Lane

⁵ John G. Nicolay and John Hay. *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (New York, 1904), IV, 106-107, cited in Wendell Holmes Stephenson. *Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society Embracing the Political Career of General James H. Lane* (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1930), 104; Edgar Langsdorf. "Jim Lane and the Frontier Guard." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 9 (February 1940): 13-25.

authorized Lane to recruit and organize the Third and Fourth Kansas Volunteer Infantry regiments. Returning to Kansas, Lane began recruitment efforts, and quickly began laying plans for military glory. The former Jayhawk leader planned to raise one regiment of infantry, including two companies of cavalry and two companies of artillery, to be led by him, and one



James Blunt

combined regiment of infantry, including two cavalry companies and two artillery companies, led by Col. William Weer. James Blunt, a Maine-born Kansas doctor, helped organize the Third Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment.⁶

Unqualified presidential support for Lane continued for several years and eventually registered a significant impact on Fort Scott. The worsening military situation in Kansas proved a godsend for Lane, as the new state units offered a large number of patronage opportunities and Kansans strove for commissions as officers. Although governors controlled recruitment and commissions in every other state's volunteer units, Lane's close relationship with Lincoln allowed the senator to usurp Robinson's prerogative and contributed to the fracas in Kansas politics. The continued federal calls for volunteers eventually sapped Kansas' meager population resources, but Lane converted a disadvantage into advantage, turning to African Americans and Indian refugees in Kansas for his new regiments.⁷

While its contributions to manpower were limited, Kansas provided a key geographical strength to the Union cause. The state was important as a link to southwestern territories and Pacific states. The Santa Fe Trail and other important transportation routes traversed Kansas to the west and the former military road from Fort Leavenworth in northeast Kansas to Fort Gibson in Indian Territory continued to provide efficient north-south transportation for men and materials. Fort Scott's military value lay in its location; any Confederate thrust up through Missouri had to contend with the threat of a flank attack from the west. The southeast Kansas post also held a role of importance as a military supply center for Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Union expeditions into Missouri, Arkansas and the Indian Territory (Oklahoma), as well as a federal presence to counter any Indian uprisings in southwest Kansas. For senior government leaders, Kansas promised to play a key part in the war. With it in the Union ranks, Missouri had a federal presence on three of its borders, a geographic fact that

⁶ Stephenson, *Political Career of General James H. Lane*, 105; Around Aug. 10, 1861, the Army ordered Blunt and the Third Regiment to Fort Scott. The Army organized the Fifth Kansas Cavalry and it wintered at Camp Denver near Barnsville, in Bourbon County. Blunt remained at Fort Scott with the Sixth Kansas Cavalry on Sept. 2, while Lane and the Kansas Brigade marched north to Kansas City to meet a Confederate threat. Lane's Brigade left Kansas City around Oct. 18, and arrived in Springfield on Nov. 1. After the Confederates retreated into Arkansas, Lane's Brigade returned to Fort Scott around Nov. 12. The Third Regiment spent the winter on Mine Creek. On April 1, 1862, Kansas Gov. Charles Robinson ordered the breakup of the Third and Fourth regiments, and consolidating the remainder into the Tenth, with the appointment of new field officers. Charles E. Cory, "The Soldiers of Kansas: The Sixth Kansas Cavalry and its Commander," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society* 11 (1909-1910), 217-238; James G. Blunt, "General Blunt's Account of His Civil War Experiences," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 1, n. 3 (May 1932), 211-265; Starr, *Union Cavalry*, 33-35.

⁷ Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind*, authorized edition (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 46-48, 87-89.

helped maintain Missouri as at least a neutral state.

Kansas remained firmly in the Union camp throughout the war, but its easterly neighbor presented a more complex picture. One of the four border states with uncertain allegiance to either the Union or Confederate sides, Missouri's population and heritage labeled it as a slave state. Confederate sympathizers, most notably Gov. Claiborne Jackson, controlled the state government, but the state's strong Southern flavor remained balanced by a strong pro-Union German population across the state's northern half. Union loss of Missouri would threaten Illinois and other states and influence the political and military situations in Kentucky, which was also a border state. If Missouri jumped to the Southern side, the Union might lose control of three



Sterling Price

of the continent's major river systems. Missouri's departure would also leave Kansas and the Pacific territories, with their much needed gold, isolated from the North. A Confederate Missouri would open Kansas to a new round of predatory attacks from Missourians seeking revenge for violence incurred during Bleeding Kansas. Until the 1862 Union victory at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, Missouri remained a prize sought by both sides, and Confederate forces threatened the state for two more years.⁸

The secession crisis in Missouri polarized the state's population and eventually sparked a new round of border violence with Kansas. Missourians overall hoped to remain neutral, but with many Southern immigrants living across the state, a strong pro-slavery faction existed. Threatened by the seething political climate, the federal government treated Missouri as a southern state, by moving arsenals and posts to avoid losing them to the Confederate cause. On March 11, 1861,

the Army assigned Capt. Nathaniel Lyon, Second U.S. Infantry, to command of the St. Louis Arsenal, where he received orders to arm the loyal citizens and execute the laws of the United States. On May 10, Union troops commanded by Lyon, former commander of Army troops at Fort Scott, captured a band of Missouri militiamen suspected of treason near St. Louis. In the resulting unrest, observed by future Union generals Ulysses S. Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman, federal soldiers killed twenty-eight of the mob that attacked them.⁹

Pro-Southern elements won support across Missouri in response to this "Camp Jackson Massacre," and began to show active support for the Southern cause. The legislature, meeting in a special session, gave the governor virtual dictatorial powers, appropriated \$10,000 to encourage Indians in the territory to retaliate against Kansans, and authorized \$2 million to raise a state army. Legislators also mobilized the State Guard, placing it under the command of Sterling Price, "Old Pap" to his troops. Born in a prosperous Virginia farming family in 1809, Price and his family emigrated to Missouri after he finished law school. By 1840 he was a wealthy tobacco

⁸ Henry Steele Commager, *The Blue and the Gray: The Story of the Civil War as Told by Participants* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1950), 375-76.

⁹ Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*: 132-133; Ulysses S. Grant, *Memoirs and Selected Letters, Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant* (Washington: The Library of America, 1990), 155-57.

planter in Chariton County, just north of the Missouri River, where he owned several dozen slaves. He entered political life in 1842, serving in the state legislature and then the U.S. House of Representatives as a member of the Democratic Party. Price resigned from Congress when the Mexican War began, serving as colonel in a regiment of Missouri volunteers who saw duty in New Mexico. Success against Pueblo Indians and Mexicans brought a brevet promotion to brigadier general. He sided with the pro-slavery faction of the state's Democratic Party, and won the gubernatorial election in 1854. Officially he did nothing during his term in office to aid Missouri's "Border Ruffians" during the violence of Bleeding Kansas, but he also did little to prevent their invasions. After failing to win a seat in the U.S. Senate following his term as governor, Price returned to his tobacco farm. During the 1860 presidential campaign, he supported Stephen Douglas, combining his pro-slavery philosophy with a rejection of secession except if necessary to protect the South.¹⁰

While Missouri went to war, its neighbor to the west also made preparations for conflict. Across Kansas, militia companies formed and began drills. Fort Scott, so near the Missouri



Charles W. Blair

border, was in the first wave. On May 1, a host of Fort Scott citizens met in town councilman Charles W. Blair's office. In an early burst of patriotic fervor, the townspeople agreed to form two companies of volunteers, electing Blair and A. McDonald, a local merchant, as the two captains. When Arkansas joined the Confederate states on May 18, pro-Union Kansas' defenses faced an even greater threat. Fort Scott's town leaders soon reorganized the companies, forming one company of light infantry according to bylaws passed on May 20. Blair, an Ohio native who emigrated to Fort Scott in 1859, commanded the unit. John Hamilton, the Dragoon sergeant who helped build Fort Scott more than twenty-five years earlier, led the training and drilling for the sixty-three men of the "Frontier Guard." The *Fort Scott Democrat* touted the local military unit, noting that "in case of foreign invasion, it moves with as much alacrity as any other, to resist the common foe." While hardly the highest praise, the paper lavished its hopes on the unit:

"Fortune, honor and victory is our parting prayer for the Frontier Guard." Defending their homes and defending the Union were entirely different activities, a fact that became apparent on the Guard's subsequent march north to join the Army in Lawrence, Kansas. Many men left the ranks along the way or backed out once they arrived at the federal mustering site in Lawrence.¹¹

Kansas' initial contributions to the war effort, the First and Second Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiments, were "90 day men," volunteers with expectations of a short war. The Army garrisoned the First Kansas at Fort Leavenworth from May 20 to June 3, 1861, and based the

¹⁰ Albert Castel, *General Sterling Price and the Civil War in the West* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), 1-9.

¹¹ *Fort Scott Democrat*, May 18 and May 25, 1861.

Second Kansas at Lawrence for three months beginning in May 1861. The two regiments participated in the battle of Wilson's Creek, which occurred southwest of Springfield, Missouri, on August 10, 1861. Other early Kansas military units included the Eighth Kansas Volunteer Infantry, organized at Lawrence in August 1861; the First Kansas Light Artillery, organized on July 28, 1861 at Mound City, Linn County; the Sixth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, first formed at Fort Scott in July 1861; and the Seventh Kansas Cavalry Regiment, organized at Fort Leavenworth on October 28, 1861.¹²

Despite the growing patriotic fervor across the North and South, the political situation in the early months of the war remained muddled. Missouri reflected the national chaos. In February, Missouri elected delegates to the state convention, but despite widespread pro-Southern sentiment, of the 140,000 ballots cast for delegates, 110,000 went to anti-secessionists. Reflecting his prewar glory and political philosophy, the convention elected Price its president on a near-unanimous vote. The delegates were almost unanimous in passing a resolution stating no adequate reason for Missouri's withdrawal from the United States yet existed. However, when the convention voted on a resolution declaring Missouri's intent to follow any other border state if it seceded, Price was one of twenty-three delegates voting in favor. Price explained to a friend that he regarded himself as a military man and a Southerner. Although the state convention had voted against leaving the Union after the South fired on Fort Sumter, Missouri Governor Jackson denounced Lincoln's call for volunteers from Missouri and urged legislators to move toward joining the Confederacy.¹³

The South played its last political card in its quest to secure control on Missouri later that Spring. General William S. Harney, commander of the Department of the West, and Price, serving as commander of the Missouri State Guard, agreed on May 21, 1861, that if Price could maintain law and order, Harney would not bring federal troops into the state. This conciliatory move gave control of Missouri to pro-southern factions. Although a Union commander, Harney held southern sympathies and was friendly with a number of wealthy slave owners, accounting for an otherwise peculiar decision. The response from his superiors was swift and harsh. Within ten days, the Army's Adjutant General informed Harney that "The authority of the United States is paramount, and whenever it is apparent that a movement, whether by color of State authority or not, is hostile, you will not hesitate to put it down." Soon after, Union leaders recalled Harney to Washington, D.C., and the Army named Lyon top commander in the state. Missouri's counter came on June 6, when Missouri Gov. Claiborne Jackson put out a call for 50,000 volunteers to enlist in the Confederate army to repel what they saw as ongoing Union attempts to conquer the state. The possibility of a Confederate invasion of Kansas moved closer to reality.¹⁴

Northern military commanders immediately sought to diminish Confederate power in Missouri. Lyon attacked Jackson's forces on June 17, defeating militia units entrenched on the

¹² *Fort Scott Democrat*, June 1, 1861; Thompson, *Fort Scott Kansas: Site Identification*, 116.

¹³ Castel, *Sterling Price*, 9-25.

¹⁴ Harney, "Proclamation to the People of the State of Missouri," May 21, 1861; United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as O.R.), 1:3, 374-376, 381-382; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*: 129.

Missouri River at Boonville, west of Columbia. From there, the Union troops seized control of Jefferson City, Missouri's capital. Jackson withdrew to the southwest, Price's troops joined him, and the militia general took command of the combined force. Deciding his command was too weak to oppose Lyon's well-trained and equipped Regulars, Price ordered a retreat to southwestern Missouri, seeking the support of Confederate troops in Arkansas. The possibility of introducing new forces into the escalating regional conflict compelled a Union response. Kansas sent the First and Second Kansas regiments, raised earlier in Lawrence and Leavenworth, eastward to reinforce Lyon. On July 5, 1861, some federal regiments met part of the Missouri forces, clashing near Carthage, Missouri, approximately seventy miles from Fort Scott in the southwest corner of Missouri. The Missouri State Guard troops led by Governor Jackson defeated part of Lyon's expedition, about one thousand German-American troops from St. Louis commanded by Brigadier General Franz Siegel, forcing a Union retirement toward Carthage. Siegel withdrew in an orderly fashion, limiting the significance of the triumph, but pro-southern elements in Missouri, anxious for good news, championed their first victory.¹⁵

The threat from Missouri was only one concern for residents of Fort Scott. Confederate leaders quickly saw southeastern Kansas' strategic importance to both Missouri and the Indian Territory and looked to seize it. Indian Territory became a de facto Southern possession on April 30, 1861, when federal troops evacuated forts in the territory, leaving the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and portions of the Creek, Seminole and Cherokee tribes exposed to Confederate influence. Eventually the balance of Creek, Seminole and Cherokee tribes remained loyal to the United States and many warriors served as soldiers in the Union Army. In an attempt to win absolute control over all the tribes, the Confederates needed to impress the peoples of Indian Territory with their power. Brigadier General Benjamin McCulloch, the former Texas Ranger who led southern forces in Arkansas, believed that possession of northern Arkansas and Fort Scott could help pressure the Cherokee Indians out of neutrality and into the Confederate camp. "I am satisfied that Lane has no force yet of any importance," he informed Confederate Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker on June 14, 1861, "and the occupation of Fort Scott would not only place Kansas in my power, but would give heart and countenance to our friends in Missouri." Looking past the opportunities offered in Indian Territory, McCulloch added that the border population of Missouri supported the Confederate cause, predicting easy access to supplies. He predicted that "After strengthening myself at Fort Scott I could, by co-operating with Missouri, take such a position on the Kansas River as I might desire." This strategic analysis posed a real threat to Union aspirations in southeast Kansas as well as federal control of western Missouri and eastern Kansas. Those concerns were only slightly mollified at the end of July, when the Missouri State Convention voted to replace Jackson with Hamilton R. Gamble, a native of Virginia who supported the Northern cause.¹⁶

The military situation in Missouri and the early July signing of Confederate peace

¹⁵ Wiley Britton, *The Civil War on the Border: A Narrative of Operations in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas and the Indian Territory During the Years 1861-62*, (New York: Putnam's, 1890-1899), and Wiley Britton, *Memoirs of the Rebellion on the Border, 1863* (Chicago: Cushing, Thomas, 1882); Kansas Adjutant General's Office, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion* (Leavenworth, Kans.: W.S. Burke, 1870), 119-50.

¹⁶ McCulloch to Walker, June 14, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 594-595.



Nathaniel Lyon. This is his last known photograph, taken in 1861 before his death at Wilson's Creek.

agreements with the Creek, Chickasaw and Choctaw nations left southeast Kansas vulnerable. Soon after the battle of Carthage, Missouri, on July 5, 1861, Gov. Robinson stationed a considerable militia force at Fort Scott, a move the town newspaper termed "an act of tardy justice." Kansas volunteer unionists came to the rescue. On July 13, 1861, the *Fort Scott Democrat* reported that between two hundred and five hundred Kansas militiamen, veteran "Jayhawkers" of numerous incursions into Missouri, were stationed south of town under the command of Capt. Charles R. Jennison. The mounted men intended to remain until federal troops relieved them. A week later, the town learned it had been selected as an advanced supply depot for Union troops operating in the Southwest and a large supply train was already on the way from Fort Leavenworth. The town breathed a collective sigh of relief. Not only did this mean that federal troops were not far behind,

the news brought to life the possibility of massive federal spending in the region. The newspaper saw other ways to benefit. Predicting record corn crops that season, an editorial crowed that "If Uncle Sam's army should be in this neighborhood next Fall and Winter, it will make a fine market for our farmers." The events greatly strengthened Fort Scott's military and economic ties to the Union.¹⁷

The situation at Fort Scott showed a prospect that state leaders recognized and welcomed: the federal government appeared willing to fight for the region. Without federal resources, the situation remained dire. J. P. Root, lieutenant governor of Kansas, asked Secretary of War Cameron in July for more weapons, noting the state's two regiments of volunteer troops then serving in Missouri offered little protection for Kansas' borders. The state was "left wholly to the mercy of secession Missouri in the east," Root claimed, "and an Indian frontier on our south and west, and not an arm or an ounce of ammunition to protect ourselves with." Looking to Fort Scott's own defense after the battle of Carthage, W.C. Ransom and others from the town asked General Nathaniel Lyon, Union military commander in Missouri, for permission to raise troops to defend southeastern Kansas. Lyon authorized them to raise three companies of infantry for Fort Scott. The town quickly raised companies of one hundred men each under the name of Bourbon County Home Guards, and put them under command of Major W.R. Judson, one of the original members of the 1857 Fort Scott Town Company and the town's first mayor. The town soon organized a cavalry company. The four companies served as the nucleus for the Sixth

¹⁷ *Fort Scott Democrat*, July 20, 1861.

Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment.¹⁸

Although pleased with local militia recruitment, the Union response to the Confederate threats did not live up to the expectations of the people of Fort Scott. In August 1861, Major General George B. McClellan offered his overall plan for prosecuting the war. He suggested that Kansas and Nebraska serve as a base for an expedition through Indian Territory to west Texas. A federal presence there "like a similar sentiment in Western Virginia," the general wrote Abraham Lincoln, "will, if protected, ultimately organize that section into a free State." McClellan was notoriously indecisive; within two months he dropped his plans for the West, leaving western states such as Missouri with just enough troops for defensive purposes, and concentrated Union forces in the Army of the Potomac. The Trans-Mississippi West remained a secondary theater of operations throughout the war.¹⁹



Benjamin McCulloch

From southwestern Missouri, Confederate forces under generals Sterling Price and Benjamin McCulloch pushed northward across Missouri, threatening the state's continuation in Union ranks. Leaving Fort Leavenworth in mid-August, Lane headed south to Fort Scott, where he assumed command of men in the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Kansas regiments operating as the Kansas Brigade. The jayhawking element continued to dominate military regulations, as discipline remained noticeably absent in the camps that lay scattered around Fort Scott. Convinced the town, surrounded by hills, was indefensible, Lane immediately planned for a fallback position and ordered the construction of Fort Lincoln, twelve miles north of Fort Scott on the north bank of the Little Osage River.²⁰

Fort Scott faced its first direct military threat as the conflict escalated. Continuing his summer campaign to drive Confederate forces out of central Missouri, Lyon and his Army of the West advanced to Springfield. Price's state militia units joined Confederate troops led by McCulloch, and the maneuvering began. As the armies marched across southwestern Missouri, news trickled in of a Confederate victory at Bull Run, fought three weeks earlier in Virginia. The reports of the Union defeat increased resolve among the Missouri and Kansas volunteers, including the First and Second Kansas infantry regiments. It "produced intense feeling, and some of our boys who have been wishing for their three months to expire, declare they will not leave as 'long as a bean remains in the commissary,'" reported a Topeka newspaper. Early on August 10, 1861, at Wilson's Creek, about ten miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri, and about one hundred and

¹⁸ Root to Cameron, July 22, 1861; *O.R.*, 1:3, 405; William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883).

¹⁹ Memorandum from General George McClellan to President Abraham Lincoln, August 4, 1861, and McClellan to Secretary of War Henry Cameron, October 1861, *O.R.*, 1:5, 7-10.

²⁰ Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 50-53.

twenty-five miles from Fort Scott, Lyon split his small army into two columns. He led three thousand men against the enemy and sent about 1,000 men commanded by Col. Franz Siegel around the Confederate flank, hoping to trap McCulloch's army of ten thousand. Lyon assigned the 1,400 men of First and Second Kansas regiments to the Fourth Brigade, under his command. The First Kansas occupied a key position in the front line, repulsing Confederate attacks for two hours, before it charged the enemy encampment and pushed back the Confederates before withdrawing in the face of a threat on their flank. At the same time as the First Kansas was returning to its lines, the Second Kansas, led by Lyon, was advancing to the front when Confederate forces ambushed it, hitting the Kansans with heavy gunfire. The attack killed Lyon. Maj. Samuel D. Sturgis of the First Kansas Infantry succeeded him in overall Union command. The gunfire also wounded the Second Kansas' commander, and the regiment withdrew and reformed under Col. Charles Blair. By early afternoon the Confederates withdrew, but Sturgis realized that combat had exhausted his men and his ammunition was low. He ordered a retreat to Springfield. Casualties at Wilson's Creek amounted to more than 23 percent of all engaged. Out of the 644 men in the First Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment, seventy-seven died at Wilson's Creek and one hundred and eighty-seven were wounded, testimony to the intensity of their part of the battle. In reserve for part of the fight, the Second Kansas lost five men killed and fifty-nine wounded. The Confederates were too disorganized and ill-equipped to pursue Sturgis' retreat. Although the Southerners eventually followed up victory by conducting a campaign as far north as Lexington, Missouri, and claiming control over much of southwestern Missouri, Lyon's sacrifice provided time to organize a pro-Union government in the state, keeping it within the federal camp.²¹

As the Confederate column advanced toward northwestern Missouri, Lane, then operating out of Fort Leavenworth, perceived this movement as a new threat to eastern Kansas. He requested reinforcements, supplies, and artillery for Fort Scott, adding a demand for at least three regiments to reinforce the town. Lane received immediate help in the form of a large government supply train intended for Lyon that reached Fort Scott in mid-August, but little else. Dissatisfied, Lane asked Major Prince, commander of Fort Leavenworth, for permission to raise more troops. Five more companies were organized and accepted into federal service for service in southeast Kansas, and another supply train of forty-three wagons soon left Fort Leavenworth. Lane, anxious to locate his military power base far from Fort Leavenworth and the regular army, saw southeastern Kansas as an opportune site for empire building, justifying his stance later that month by noting that "The point to defend Fort Leavenworth is in the neighborhood of Fort Scott." Lane arrived at Fort Scott on August 19 as military commander. Among his commanders operating out of Fort Scott were former jayhawk leaders Jennison and James Montgomery. Townspeople heralded his arrival, with the *Democrat* cheering that "The energy of Gen. Lane in concentrating the Government forces at this point in so short a period, is worthy of all praise. Red

²¹ Report of Maj. John M. Schofield, *O.R.*, 1:3, 57-64; Report of Maj. John A. Halderman, *O.R.*, 1:3, 82-3; Report of Lt. Col. Charles W. Blair, *O.R.*, 1:3, 84-5; Hans C. Adamson, *Rebellion in Missouri, 1861; Nathaniel Lyon and his Army of the West* (Philadelphia: Chilton, 1961); Christopher Phillips, *Damned Yankee: The Life of Nathaniel Lyon* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1990); *Topeka State Journal*, August 10, 1861; Albert Greene, "On the Battle of Wilson Creek," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society* 5 (1889-1896): 116-27; Report of Maj. S.D. Sturgis, *O.R.*, 1:3, 71.

tape is abolished in his Brigade."²²

The situation in southeast Kansas worsened over the next several weeks, and rumors of Confederate advances heightened the already thick tension. Some of Fort Scott's residents left town and government wagons began moving military stores to safety. Some Union officers took advantage of the situation to confiscate homes of southern sympathizers throughout the town. Joseph Trego, an officer serving in the Tenth Kansas Cavalry at Fort Scott, wrote his wife that he and seven other officers, with "four soldiers as servants and a contraband wench for cook are occupying the house where Mr [Judge Joseph] Williams was living. The parlor and one bed room are richly furnished, fine paintings & engravings on the walls, spring bottom sofa, divan, chairs, &c. A good piano which Zouliasky is now amusing himself with. Preserves & jellies, magazines & books[s] and everything we want are here, so you see we are living high at present."²³ The optimistic spirit was not wide spread. The *Topeka State Record* warned that if Missouri fell to the Confederate armies, "then the bloody scenes of '56, only in a ten fold aggravated degree, will be re-enacted upon our soil." The newspaper noted that about half of the volunteers raised by Kansas were with the federal forces withdrawing northward in Missouri, away from their home state, and "while we have every confidence in the other half, who are now near Ft. Scott, under Gen. Lane, yet they are not superhuman." Lane eventually amassed about two thousand men around the town of Fort Scott, a force almost increased by an offer from a group of Osage Indians who came to Fort Scott offering their services to the Union camp. The offer was apparently declined.²⁴

At the same time as his troops were concentrating around Fort Scott, Lane was making a series of defensive plans. One of his scouting parties, led by Montgomery, sent a message telling Lane that two groups of Confederate troops — one of one thousand men and the other "4,000 picked men" — were advancing on Fort Scott. Lane planned to defend southeastern Kansas by leaving Fort Scott and withdrawing twelve miles north to the Little Osage River, where the rough fortification he called Fort Lincoln was complete. At the same time, he detailed about one hundred men at Fort Scott to dig entrenchments, and made plans for the burning of the town in the event of his forced withdrawal. Lane reported on August 25 that he had about twelve hundred men at Fort Scott, half of them mounted. His defensive arrangements all lay north of the town of Fort Scott, as he established a series of area outposts, including forty men at a post on Fish Creek three miles south of the Little Osage, another one hundred men five miles away at Barnesville, twelve miles northeast of Fort Scott on the military road to Fort Leavenworth, and another small

²² *Fort Scott Democrat*, July 13, 1861, cited in Thompson, *Fort Scott Kansas: Site Identification*, 117-119; Kansas Adjutant General, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion* (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1896), 73; Lane to Frémont, August 16, 1861, and Prince to Lane, August 15, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 446; *Topeka State Record*, August 17, 1861; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 37-64; *Fort Scott Democrat*, August 24, 1861.

²³ The men were living in what later became known as the Wilson/Goodlander Home, which now has the Park Service designation HS-2. Edgar Langsdorf, editor, "The Letters of Joseph H. Trego, 1857-1864, Linn County Pioneer, Part I, 1857, 1858," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 19 (May 1951): 113-32.

²⁴ *Topeka State Record*, August 24, 1861; Joseph H. Trego to his wife, September 5, 1861, "The Letters of Joseph T. Trego, 1857-1864, Linn County Pioneer: Part Two, 1861, 1862," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 19, n. 3 (August 1951): 113-224; *Fort Scott Democrat*, August 24, 1861.

garrison at Mound City, about twenty miles north of Fort Scott.²⁵

The situation seemed dire, and Lane sought to maintain high spirits as he begged for the resources to counter the Confederate threat. Again asking for more troops, Lane promised that his "little force" would do its best to defend the state. His fear showed. "Fort Leavenworth and Kansas should be defended from this point," he wrote with passion, "and the idea of holding artillery to rust at Fort Leavenworth does not strike me with any favor." Reports of a large Confederate force, numbering almost 6,000 and located about thirty-five miles away, reached Lane. Only two thousand troops were stationed at Fort Scott, and the town lacked artillery. Seeking to reassure the civilian population, the *Fort Scott Democrat* boasted "Our city presents the appearance of one grand military camp ... the measured tread of the sentinel and the tramp of cavalry may be heard at all times of the day and night."²⁶

Believing that Lane sought to turn a military problem into a political windfall, many Kansans tried to rebut the dire picture he offered. Gov. Charles Robinson remained Lane's bitterest enemy, and he countered Lane by insisting the senator exaggerated the Confederate threat. The fastest way to peace along the border, he believed, was to move Lane's forces into the state's interior, where they could not antagonize Missourians. Robinson wrote Major General John Frémont, the district commander that "what we have to fear, and do fear, is that Lane's brigade will get up a war by going over the line, committing depredations, and then returning into our State." Such an endeavor might unite secessionist and Union Missouri men against the federal government. Before Frémont could respond to Robinson's charges, they all came true.²⁷

The threat emanated from the aftermath of Wilson's Creek. After his small victory, McCulloch and his troops headed south to Arkansas. Price left Springfield with about ten thousand Missouri militiamen in pursuit of a number of objectives. The principal intention of the raid was to clear the border counties of jayhawking Kansans. In addition, the Confederates sought to attack Lexington, in north-central Missouri. Price also sought to open an invasion route north to the Missouri River, allowing him to disrupt federal communications with its Pacific possessions. As Price's forces moved north, the commander of his advance guard reported the federal concentration around Fort Scott, warning that reinforcements were necessary. Price left Springfield with rest of his army of about 6,000 on August 25, 1861, heading west and encamped near Nevada by the end of the month. Lane concluded that Fort Scott was the target of the advancing army. In a frantic request for reinforcements from Fort Leavenworth, he estimated that between six thousand and ten thousand of Price's men were marching toward him, writing that "I am compelled to make a stand here, or give up Kansas to disgrace and destruction."²⁸

The Kansans' wait for the approaching enemy did not last long. Lane sent out a cavalry detachment of about six hundred men on September 2 to learn the whereabouts of the

²⁵ Lane to Prince, August 25, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 454-55.

²⁶ Lane to Prince, August 24, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 453; Lane to Prince, August 29, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 465; *Fort Scott Democrat*, August 24, 1861.

²⁷ Robinson to Frémont, September 1, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 468-69.

²⁸ Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 184; Lane to Capt. Prince, September 3, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 163; Cory, "The Sixth Kansas Cavalry and Its Commander," 218-19.

Confederates just when Price was moving his forces forward. The advancing Confederates encountered the dug-in Northern troops in the forest surrounding Big Dry Wood Creek, Missouri, about twelve miles east of Fort Scott. Beginning about 4:00 p.m., the Kansans opened fire upon Price's small advance guard. After an hour-long skirmish, the Northerners retreated, suffering four fatalities and the loss of eighty-four mules. This engagement became known as the Battle of the Mules or the Battle of Drywood. The Confederates, regarding the event as a "trifle," continued toward Lexington. The retreating Kansans moved back to the bluffs on the east side of the town and raised the alarm in Fort Scott. Around midnight Lane decided to move twelve miles north to Fort Lincoln, taking just the ammunition and provisions that his soldiers could carry away. He was going to burn Fort Scott to prevent it from being captured by the advancing rebels. Many of his troops used the opportunity to plunder the town before leaving. The retreat saved the town, as Price decided "he did not want to invade Kansas unless her citizens shall provoke me to do so by committing renewed outrages." The abandonment of Fort Scott relieved him from any duty to move into Kansas.²⁹

As part of his defensive efforts, Lane left eight hundred men at Fort Scott. Earlier he had ordered six stockades built along the southern border, at Humboldt and Le Roy, on Turkey Creek, and on the Verdigris, Walnut, and Fall rivers. A system of signals to alert the county in case of an invasion supported the small posts. The threatened invasion from Missouri pulled away the militia unit at Humboldt, about forty miles west of Fort Scott. On September 8, 1861, an Indian trader named John Matthews led a group of bushwhackers and Indians against the defenseless town of Humboldt. The band of about one hundred and fifty men stole property and seized blacks on the pretense they were escaped slaves to be returned to their legal owners. During their escape to the Indian Territory, a detachment of the Sixth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry commanded by Lieut. Col. James G. Blunt pursued the group. The cavalry unit killed Matthews and another member of the band and captured two prisoners.³⁰




Lane stayed in Fort Lincoln, unswayed by a deserter's report that the Confederates were moving north. He remained convinced that Price was moving north solely for the purpose of attacking him from the rear. Within two weeks Lane veered from larger geopolitical objectives and returned to fighting the war for his own economic and personal goals. He sent his troops out of Fort Lincoln into Missouri for the twin purposes of avenging the Humboldt raid and chasing Price's force. As an excuse for the raid he emphasized the latter objective, telling the Army command at Fort Leavenworth "with a handful of men and but little artillery, I propose to pursue far enough to threaten their rear and confuse them." Once his column of about twelve hundred infantry, eight hundred cavalry and two pieces of artillery crossed into Missouri, leaving about two hundred mounted troops at Fort Scott and three hundred foot soldiers at Fort Lincoln, Lane quickly reverted to his jayhawking past as he encouraged the plundering of property and freeing of Missouri slaves. Despite the pleas for reinforcements from Sturgis, in command of the federal forces still facing Price, Lane gave up his military pursuit. Once across the state line he left the

²⁹ *Topeka State Record*, September 7, 1861; *Fort Scott Democrat*, September 21, 1861; Price to Jackson, September 4, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:53, 435-36; Castel, *A Frontier State at War*, 52.

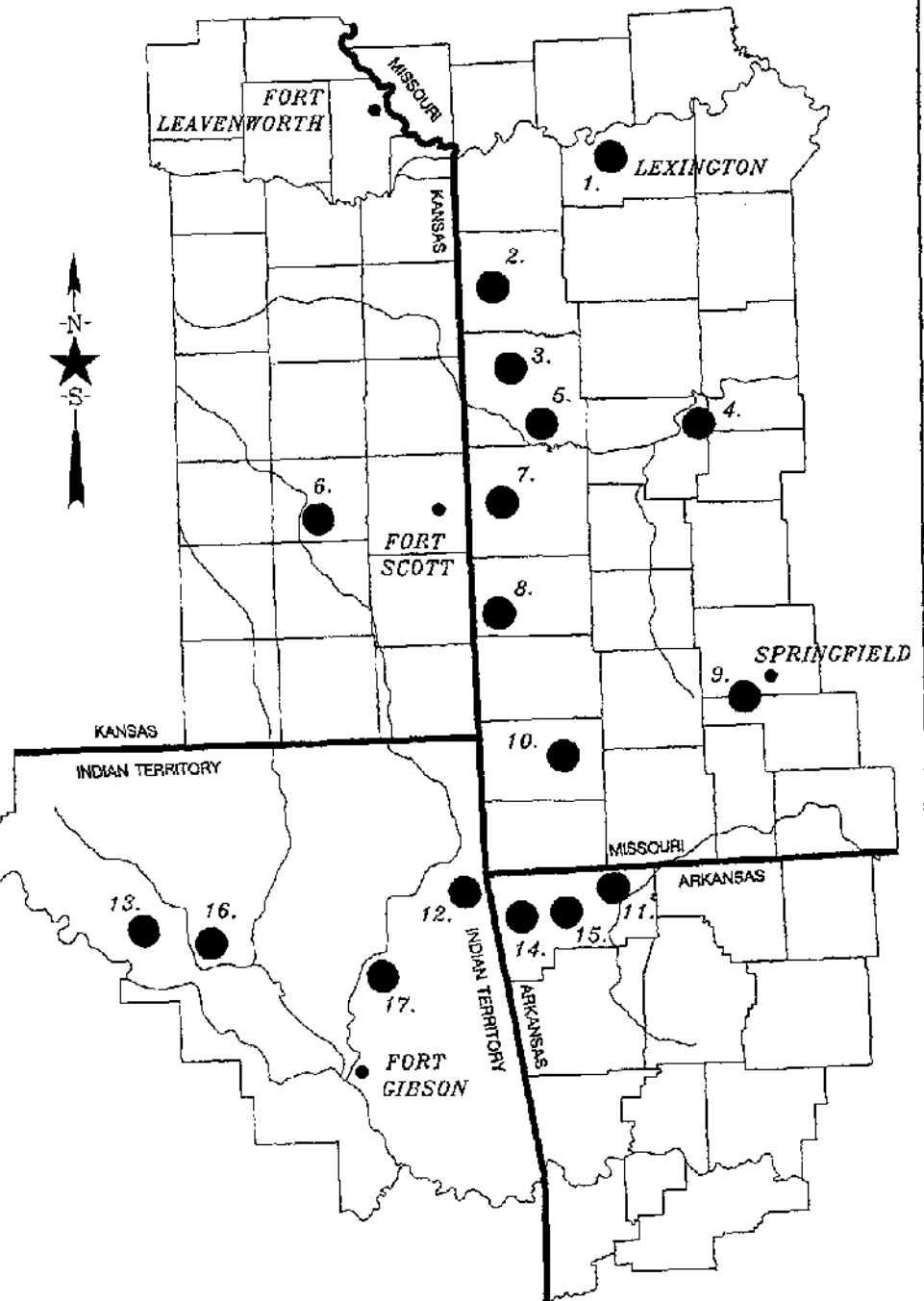
³⁰ Lane to Prince, September 12, 1861, *O.R.*, 1: 3, 490; *Fort Scott Democrat*, September 21, 1861; Blunt, "General Blunt's Account of His Civil War Experiences," 211-65.

EARLY CIVIL WAR 1861-1862

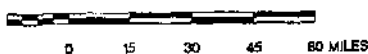
LEGEND

- BATTLE SITE 
- FORT / TOWN 
- COUNTY BORDER 
- STATE LINE 

1. LEXINGTON (SEPT. 19-20, 1861)
2. MORRISTOWN (SEPT. 17, 1861)
3. ISLAND MOUND (OCT. 28-29, 1862)
4. OSCEOLA (SEPT. 23-24, 1861)
5. PAPINSVILLE (DEC. 13, 1861)
6. HUMBOLDT (SEPT. 8, 1861)
7. DRYWOOD CREEK (SEPT. 2, 1861)
8. CARTHAGE (JULY 5, 1861)
9. WILSON'S CREEK (AUG. 10, 1861)
10. NEWTONIA (SEPT. 30, 1862)
11. PEA RIDGE (MARCH 7-8, 1862)
12. OLD FORT WAYNE (OCT. 22, 1862)
13. SHOAL CREEK (DEC. 26, 1861)
14. CANE HILL (NOV. 28, 1862)
15. PRAIRIE GROVE (DEC. 7, 1862)
16. CHUSTO-TALASAH (DEC. 9, 1861)
17. LOCUST GROVE (JULY 3, 1862)



SCALE



Confederates to advance unmolested and instead informed Fort Leavenworth that he intended to clear Southern sympathizers out of the Osage Valley. He marched east to Papinsville, and north to the Missouri towns of Butler, Harrisonville, Osceola, and Clinton.³¹

The Kansas forces ran into Confederate troops at Morristown, on the Missouri side of the border east of Paola, Kansas, on September 17, 1861. About six hundred men of the Fifth Kansas Regiment overran an encampment, killing seven and capturing the enemy's equipment and horses. Lane and his men marched onto Osceola, a town of about 2,500 on the Osage River southwest of Morristown, and away from Price's men, then completing a week-long siege of Lexington, east of Kansas City. The forces commanded by Lane all but destroyed the small Missouri town. In his battle report of September 17, Lane wrote of how enemy forces ambushed his command on the approaches to Osceola and was forced to shell the town, although "in doing so the place was burned to ashes, with an immense amount of stores of all descriptions." In reality, as one participant described it, after "a little brush with the enemy" Lane's men "obtained all the horses, mules, wagons and niggers; loaded the wagons with valuebles [sic] from the numerous well supplied stores, and then set fire to the infernal town it was burned to the ground." According to another account, the large haul of plunder included a piano and a number of silk dresses that Lane himself claimed. The Union force marched away herding four hundred cattle and escorting two hundred blacks to freedom in Kansas. A week later, Lane reinforced his military justification for the attack, although in his report to Frémont he described Osceola not as a military target but rather "the depot of traitors for Southwestern Missouri." Ordered to Kansas City for a joint operation against Price, Lane and Sturgis quarreled over rank. By the time they settled the dispute and Frémont ordered a new advance, Price had completed his raid and was returning to southern Missouri. When the Union columns advanced upon Price's camp at Springfield, Frémont refused to attack, although he outnumbered the Confederate force. On November 2, Lincoln, upset with his commander's lack of initiative, replaced Frémont with Major General David Hunter.³²

Leaving his column to return to Kansas and answer the growing number of allegations about his conduct, Lane defended his actions. To audiences in Lawrence and other Kansas cities, he labeled his actions of seizing and freeing slaves the best and fastest way to end the rebellion. Lane also wrote to fellow military leader Samuel Sturgis, asserting that he followed his orders. He did not, he emphatically claimed, pursue higher rank or seek to free Missouri slaves. The slavery issue would resolve itself, Lane believed, when the U.S. Army changed its policy of returning runaway slaves to their owners. A staunch abolitionist since the days of Bleeding Kansas,³³ Lane insisted that depriving the South of its property was only just. "Confiscation of slaves and other property which can be made useful to the Army," he wrote, "should follow treason as the thunder peal follows the lightning flash." His returning troops brought scores of

³¹ Sturgis to Captain John C. Kelton, September 9, 1861, and Lane to Prince, September 10, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 475, 483, 485; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 55-57.

³² Reports of Brig. General James H. Lane, September 17, 1861 and September 24, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 196; Lane to Frémont, September 24, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 506; Trego to his wife, September 5, 1861, "The Letters of Joseph T. Trego," Part II, 295; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 54; John I. Speer, "The Burning of Osceola, Mo., by Lane and the Quantrill Massacre Contrasted," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society* 6 (1897-1900): 305-12.

African Americans back with them into Kansas, both in its ranks serving as laborers and in separate wagon trains. Officials distributed the former slaves throughout southern Kansas as laborers to replace white Kansans serving in the military. Defending himself against allegations of illegality in holding political and military office, Lane recommended that the federal government form a new military department, composed of Kansas, the Indian country, and part of Arkansas. He would cheerfully accept command of the department, and in return would resign his Senate seat.³³

The approaching winter season sparked hopes of lessened violence along the border, but fears of an invasion lingered in Kansas. General John Pope, commander of the Second Division, Army of Southwest Missouri, feared that Price, in search of ammunition for his army, was retreating slowly to the southwest and might threaten Fort Scott, which held considerable amounts of ammunition and rations. The armies that had caused so much anxiety across Kansas — the Missouri militia units under Price and the Confederate troops led by McCulloch — remained two separate commands. Although the two leaders had cooperated on several campaigns, they had entirely different responsibilities guiding their decisions. Price desperately wanted to drive the Union forces out of his state; the Confederate government assigned McCulloch the responsibility to protect Indian Territory.³⁴

Throughout late October, the disparity continued, with different sections of Kansas the principal targets. Price wrote to McCulloch, telling him of his plans to ignore southeastern Kansas temporarily in favor of another advance to the Missouri River and seizure of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, isolating Kansas from the rest of the Union. The Missouri general saw Lawrence and central Kansas as the war's pivotal points, saying "It is there that abolitionism reigns; it is there her wealth is held; it is there her fighting men are raised; in short, it is the center from which all her depredations upon Southern rights and Southern property radiate." An attack in southern Kansas, Price argued, even if successful, would allow reinforcements to flow into the northern part of the state, leading to ultimate Confederate defeat. More concerned with Indian Territory, McCulloch looked southward, urging the destruction of southern Kansas, arguing that the Indian Territory could not be secure until Southern sympathizers assumed control of the region.³⁵

Lane's jayhawking activities became even more idiosyncratic with the impending arrival of winter. Price withdrew from Lexington in October as the Confederates began looking for a winter camp. Northern regiments started in pursuit, but within ten days, Lincoln ordered Hunter, Frémont's replacement, to halt his pursuit of Price, who by now was in Arkansas, and instead regroup his scattered forces. By concentrating soldiers at Rolla and Sedalia and coordinating their efforts with Lane at Fort Scott, the president predicted it would be easy to concentrate and repel any army returning north into Missouri for the remainder of the year. Lincoln expected that by

³³ Lane to Lincoln, October 9, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 528-529; Lane to Sturgis, October 3, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 516; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 55-57.

³⁴ Pope to Eaton, October 8, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 527-28.

³⁵ Price to McCulloch, October 23, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 722; McCulloch to Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate Secretary of War, October 14, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 718-719.

1862 Missouri's population would eagerly look forward to peace and would not cause trouble, if Union officials could rein in the jayhawkers.³⁶

The year's military activities had not yet ended. Hearing rumors that the rebel Missouri legislature was meeting in Springfield, Major General John Frémont sent a small cavalry detachment into the town on October 25, routing the small Confederate force there. Frémont and the main body of his army entered town two days later. After the Confederate victory at Wilson's Creek, McCulloch increased his army strength in preparation for an attack on Fort Scott and Fort Lincoln, but while he concentrated troops near the Kansas border, Price informed him of Frémont's advance upon Springfield. Torn, McCulloch made the responsible decision and withdrew to defend his supply lines from Arkansas. Lincoln seemed prophetic.³⁷

The lack of overall Confederate organization and hierarchy again hampered their offensive activities. On October 26, McCulloch urged Price to unite their commands to face Frémont, but the Missouri commander had greater aspirations than simply winning one summer battle. On November 7, Price asked General Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of Confederate forces in the western theater, for permission to strike against St. Louis, for Frémont's large expedition to Springfield left St. Louis almost undefended. At the same time, he and McCulloch staged a diversionary move by attacking Springfield. Price repeated his vision of a Confederate attack on St. Louis in a letter to Confederate President Jefferson Davis two days later, saying "Missouri stretches her hands to her kindred blood of the South as an infant child turns its imploring eyes to a mother. Give us a chance to show our fidelity." On November 10 and 11, McCulloch and Price exchanged plans. Price wanted to fight Frémont and the federal army there in central Missouri, while McCulloch sought to draw the Northern forces away from his supply depots and fight further south. He proposed that his troops fall back to Arkansas and Price's command drop back to southern Missouri. In the face of overwhelming federal strength, Price finally concurred and on November 15, he ordered his army south to Newtonia, in far southwestern Missouri.³⁸

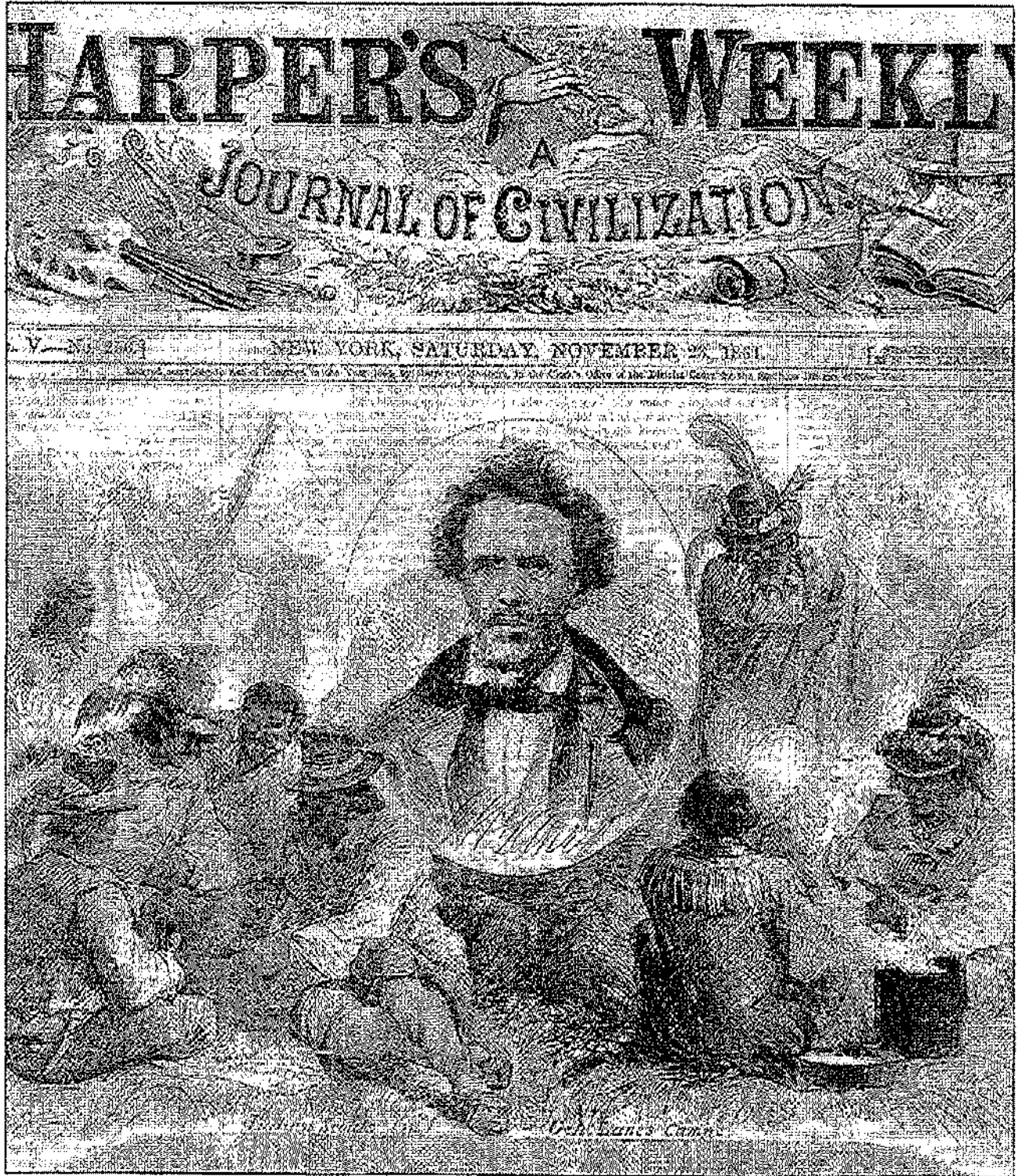
Hoping to overcome organization friction that hampered its war efforts, the Union reorganized its West, Cumberland, and Ohio departments late in 1861. As part of the administrative shuffle, Washington officials finally acceded to Lane's wishes for a separate command for his state and on November 13 created the Department of Kansas, which included the Indian Territory, Colorado, and Nebraska. However, Lane had planned to be the one in control of the new military organization. Instead, bowing to opposition from Missouri residents over appointing such a notorious jayhawker, Lincoln took Hunter out of the Department of Missouri and named him the new Kansas commander.³⁹

³⁶ Lincoln to Hunter, October 24, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 553-554.

³⁷ McCulloch to Benjamin, December 22, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 747-748.

³⁸ Price to McCulloch, October 26, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 727-728; Price to Johnston, November 7, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 731-732; Price to Davis, November 10, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 735-736; Price to McCulloch, November 10, 1861, and McCulloch to Price, November 11, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 737-739.

³⁹ General Orders No. 97, Headquarters of the Army, November 9, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 567; McCulloch to S. Cooper, Adjutant and Inspector General, C.S.A., November 19, 1861, *O.R.*, I:3, 742-743.



Unlike the regular Army, James Lane had no compunction about using minorities as soldiers. This Harper's Weekly cover of November 1861 is entitled "Indian Scouts in Gen. Lane's Camp."

Lane's military future continued to look dim, although he retained the most important political connections. On November 19, Lincoln named Henry M. Halleck commander of the Department of Missouri, which controlled the Department of Kansas. A month later Halleck was complaining to General-in-Chief of the Army George B. McClellan about the jayhawking Kansans, noting that "The conduct of the forces under Lane and Jennison has done more for the enemy in this State than could have been accomplished by 20,000 of his own army." Halleck had heard some rumors of Lane's promotion to brigadier general, but he could not "conceive of a more injudicious appointment. It will take 20,000 men to counteract its effect in this State, and, moreover, is offering a premium for rascality and robbing generally." Lincoln read the message, noting that while it was an excellent letter, "I am sorry General Halleck is so unfavorably impressed with General Lane." The president declined to take any action against Lane.⁴⁰

Outside the political battlefield, soldiers in gray were not the only threat to Kansas. Both Union and Confederate leaders were concerned with the Indian Territory, but the southern government, concerned with its western flank and seeing an opportunity for easy success, made the first serious effort to capture Indian allegiance. Many of the groups living in Indian Territory, principally the Cherokee, Choctaw and Chickasaw, had brought the white tradition of slavery with them when the federal government relocated them from their homelands in the South. The white man's conflict soon produced a parallel version among the tribes that would affect Fort Scott and southeast Kansas. Confederate agents sent to the Indian Territory secured treaties with many of the Five Civilized Tribes, but John Ross and the Cherokees sought to remain neutral. This newest struggle was a continuation of the conflict that erupted during the Cherokee's removal from Georgia and the Southeast more than twenty years earlier. Cherokees led by Ross who opposed the move to Indian Territory tended to favor honoring treaty provisions with the federal government while mixed-blood members coalesced around Stand Watie, whose family had favored removal in hopes of securing better terms in their new land. Watie's Southern sympathies made him the natural target for Confederate agents. Eventually Stand Watie organized a regiment of Confederate cavalry, the First Cherokee Mounted Rifles, and became a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. Ross, fearing loss of tribal power, eventually agreed to Confederate promises for the Cherokees and signed a treaty of alliance. However, Ross and many of his warriors switched their allegiance to the United States after their capture by the Union Army.⁴¹

The Cherokees were not the only one of the Five Civilized Tribes to splinter over the question of Southern allegiances. Also torn by the political controversy were Creeks and Seminoles. Confederate agents organized two regiments of Confederate cavalry consisting of Creek warriors in 1861 and 1862. Many tribal members opposed any conflict, and hundreds fled Indian Territory right behind the withdrawing federal troops in April 1861. Other members of the Creek tribe, also continuing a conflict stretching from their removal from the Southeast, stayed in

⁴⁰ Halleck to McClellan, December 19, 1861, *O.R.*, I: 8, 447-450.

⁴¹ Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 41-64; Edward E. Dale and Gaston Litton, *Cherokee Cavaliers: Forty Years of Cherokee History as Told in Correspondence of the Ridge-Watie-Boudinot Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1939); Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 209-218.

the Indian Territory but repudiated the treaty signed by their tribe with the Confederacy and remained loyal to the United States. In mid-November 1861 tribal elder Opothleyahola led his Creeks, joined by Delawares, Seminoles, and Cherokees loyal to the Union, on a six-week escape from the Creek Nation to the Verdigris and Neosho river valleys in Kansas. Confederate Indians and Texans commanded by Col. Douglas Cooper mounted a series of pursuits to stop the exodus. Opothleyahola scored defensive victories against his Indian pursuers at Round Mountain on November 19 and at Chusto-Talasa (Bird Creek) on December 9. Anxious to quell the unrest among their new allies, Confederate leaders sent a larger force of Texans after the Creeks. At noon on December 26, the Texans charged on foot across the icy waters of Shoal Creek in northeastern Indian Territory and smashed the fleeing Creeks' armed resistance. Stand Watie and three hundred Cherokee horsemen arrived the next morning and pursued the scattered fugitives fleeing toward Kansas. More than seven hundred of Opothleyahola's followers perished, either because of the fighting or the weather, but hundreds more reached safety in Kansas. Many refugees moved into the Neosho Valley, settling around Humboldt, Walnut, Fall River, and Le Roy, and Union officers would recruit hundreds to serve in the First and Second Indian Home Guard regiments.⁴²

Despite the onset of winter weather, Confederate forces in Missouri supplied one more invasion scare before New Year's Day when Price again moved his forces northward. A stronger federal presence shattered his advance columns and his plans before the main body could cross the Osage River, and he remained humbled but intact in southwestern Missouri. In response, military officials ordered Montgomery to concentrate the troops under his command at Fort Scott. Officers ordered Jennison and part of the First Kansas Cavalry out of southeast Kansas, sending the unit south of Kansas City, to "protect the frontier of Kansas from incursions of the rebel bands now in the neighborhood."⁴³

At the end of 1861, Fort Scott has just begun its development into part of the unified Union effort to destroy the Confederacy. Until its integration was complete, the post remained under the sway of James Lane. Seen as peripheral to the main war effort, jayhawkers and bushwhackers in Kansas and Missouri remained free to conduct their personal vendettas and raids of plunder, visiting the horrors of war upon the civilians in the border counties. One of the men serving under Lane suggested to his wife that she join him if the troop went into winter quarters around Fort Scott, adding that "if the forces now under Lane are to remain here to protect the Union people in Western Missouri and at the same time Kansas, as it was first intended we think there will be no further trouble here." Hampered by the vast distances and small numbers allotted to their armies, both Union and Confederate commanders fought intensely on the infrequent occasions when they met, but army-to-army actions were rare in the theater. Southern success pushed pro-Union Indians out of the Indian Territory, foreshadowing

⁴² Annie Heloise Abel, *The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War* (Cleveland, Ohio: Arthur H. Clark, 1919); W. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); Angie Debo, "The Site of the Battle of Round Mountain, 1861," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 27 (Summer 1949): 187-206.

⁴³ C. Francis Clarke, Captain, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General, Special Order No. 8, December 10, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:8, 423.

southeastern Kansas' eventual role as refugee station for thousands of African Americans and Indians. For the rest of the state, Fort Scott stood as a guardian to Confederate invasion from Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Trego to his wife, Nov. 12, 1961, "The Letters of Joseph T. Trego," Part II, 298.

Chapter Six:

The U.S. Army Returns to Fort Scott, 1862

In the Civil War's second year, Fort Scott became an integral part of new organizational efforts in the West. The Union army returned to southeastern Kansas and Fort Scott was officially designated as a military post on March 29, 1862. It remained a U.S. Army district or subdistrict headquarters until the conclusion of the war. An army wins wars by imposing organization on the chaos of battle, using clearly defined orders and an overlying command structure to limit violence to only those actions that help achieve specific objectives. Conflicting purposes, internal friction, and commanders who sought to satisfy their own agendas wasted most of the Union's initial war efforts in Kansas. As a result, initial military operations in the West had been as confused and inefficient as any in the country. However, in February and March of 1862, military leaders reorganized all of the existing Kansas regiments with standard Army nomenclature according to their respective branch of service (i.e., artillery, cavalry or infantry). It took the combined efforts of the U.S. Army and the governor of Kansas and his military staff to accomplish this. In the process of bringing organization to Fort Scott, the Army almost completely stopped the frequent but widely scattered violence that was part and parcel of the largely personal way the Kansas irregulars, the Jayhawkers, waged battle.

This new federal presence came in many forms, exerting a series of influences upon the town of Fort Scott and the area that surrounded it. Following a year that saw a host of new construction projects and the infusion of troops into the area, the town hummed with activity. Military professionals assumed defensive responsibilities under a formal command structure, and one reestablished aspect of Fort Scott was a quartermaster department that again dominated the area's economy. Military camps surrounding the town housed troops with money to spend, and the town responded to this new source of federal funds. Across the border to the east an increased Union presence and changing military conditions in Missouri diminished guerrilla activities, although bushwhackers remained a constant danger until the end of the war. The stronger push to eliminate irregular activities across the state line meant diminished power for James H. Lane, the most radical of Kansas' abolitionists. Lane, the only man to hold high military rank while simultaneously sitting in the U.S. Senate, failed in his attempt to win command of the Army's Department of Kansas. He did manage to maintain a large degree of control through the appointment of his military protegee, James G. Blunt.¹

The reestablished military presence threatened Confederate operations in western Missouri and helped stabilize Union power across the region. Located to the west of southern forces marching north from Arkansas and bisecting well-maintained roads that traveled east into Missouri, Fort Scott was also able to counter rising threats from Arkansas and Indian Territory. Seeking allies in the lands to their west, the Confederate States of America recognized the military advantage of the Five Civilized Tribes from the onset of war. Many Indians retained

¹ James G. Blunt, "General Blunt's Account of his Civil War Experiences," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 1 (May 1932), 211-65.

southern views and held slaves. Enlisting Indians became part of southern strategy after Confederate setbacks in Arkansas early in 1862 drove southern Trans-Mississippi states to demand more action from Jefferson Davis and the Confederate government. Defeat in the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, early in March, muted this strategy as well as southern strength in the West. Union forces took the offensive in the West, capitalizing on the Pea Ridge victory. Federal commanders slowly moved out of defensive postures as their power increased, planning an excursion into New Mexico and conducting an expedition south into the Indian Territory. Because of military successes, 1862 brought a host of changes and an increased centrality for the federal forces in southeastern Kansas.

Federal efforts to halt ongoing jayhawking focused on Kansans during the first month of the new year. After almost six months of jayhawking raids into Missouri with little military purpose, federal leaders decided that the irregulars caused more trouble than gain. Lane's Kansas Brigade, supplied from Fort Scott but based twelve miles north at Fort Lincoln, was one of the worst offenders. It failed to offer serious opposition to a Confederate campaign in Missouri in September 1861, and instead raided and plundered homes, farms, and towns across western Missouri. As a result, frustrated Union leaders curtailed Lane's authority in southeastern Kansas. On January 3, 1862, Major General David H. Hunter, a former Army officer with personal ties to Lincoln that predated Lane's, commanded the newly established Department of Kansas with eight regiments of cavalry, three of infantry, and three artillery batteries. Federal officials ordered Hunter to work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to organize 4,000 Indians for federal service. By bringing Lane's forces into a new, more organized command structure, Hunter's superiors hoped to halt unauthorized raids and decrease the antagonism Jayhawkers caused among both northern and southern sympathizers across Missouri. In early January, Major General Henry Halleck, in charge of the Department of the Missouri that included Kansas, strongly condemned Charles Jennison, one of Lane's commanders, as well as the entire First Kansas Regiment. Halleck charged that the men had no business in Missouri and issued orders to his command to drive them out, or if necessary, to disarm and imprison them. "They are no better than a band of robbers," Halleck insisted, "they cross the line, rob, steal, plunder, and burn whatever they can lay their hands upon." Frederick Steele, commanding the federal garrison at Sedalia, Missouri, confirmed that Jennison's troops committed outrages against Missouri civilians, both pro- and anti-Union. The Jayhawkers' actions were so outrageous that federal officials even apologized to their enemies. In a January 27 letter to Major General Sterling Price, commander of the Missouri forces, Halleck substantiated Price's contention that "a band of outlaws on the Kansas frontier" caused the burning of houses and barns. Halleck disavowed the Jayhawkers and promised either to drive them out of the area or capture them himself.²

Despite nearly unanimous Army condemnation of Lane's actions, Lincoln supported the commander of the Kansas Brigade, but in the end, Lane's military power diminished. Lane

² Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind*, Authorized Edition (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 48-57; Lane to Hunter, January 3, 1862, United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as *O.R.*), 1: 8, 482; Halleck to Brigadier General Lorenzo Thomas, Adjutant General of the Army, January 18, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 507-508; Halleck to Price, January 27, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 528-529.

changed an early proposal for a federal expedition into Texas into a more limited one to push the Confederates out of Indian Territory and allow refugee Indians to return to their homes. He intended to lead the proposed expedition, but officials in Washington, D.C., rejected him as commander. They considered the plan too grand for a controversial leader. Aside from the political risks of placing a notorious Jayhawker in control, the plan represented a massive commitment of Union forces. The U.S. Army sent seven regiments of cavalry, three artillery batteries and four regiments of infantry to Kansas, and Lane initially received authorization to raise 8,000 to 10,000 Kansas volunteers. Lane persuaded Creek and Seminole leaders desperate to return to their homes to ask Lincoln to put him in charge. The President, looking for "a snug, sober column" of about ten thousand men, gave command of the scaled-back expedition to the



Samuel R. Curtis

West Point-trained Hunter. For a short time, Lane agreed to serve under Hunter. His new subservient position in Kansas spelled a stinging political defeat for the man who successfully exploited President Lincoln's favor for so long.³

Northern military forces developed a greater presence in Missouri during 1862. As part of the Union Army's reorganization for offensive operations, Col. George Washington Deitzler, appointed acting brigadier general on February 1, 1862, replaced Lane as head of the Kansas Brigade. Deitzler, organizer and publicist for the Free-Soil forces in Bleeding Kansas and since June 1861 the commander of the First Kansas Regiment, assumed command of the First, Fifth, and Sixth Kansas regiments at Fort Scott. Early in 1862, federal commanders in Missouri reversed the previous year's misfortunes, diminishing the threat from Deitzler's east. Under Brigadier General Samuel R. Curtis, a West Point graduate who commanded an Ohio infantry regiment in the Mexican War before election to the House of

Representatives from Iowa, federal forces drove the Confederates back 240 miles, maneuvering Price and his militia army out of Missouri without a major battle. Even after McCulloch joined him, Price could not match the federal force, eventually retreating south into the Boston Mountains of northern Arkansas.

The Confederate withdrawal created a vacuum in the region, but manpower and equipment shortages prevented any type of meaningful Union control. Curtis could not effectively pursue the Confederates into Arkansas, especially since irregular southern units

³ L. Thomas, Adjutant General, to Hunter, January 24, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 527-527; Lane to Hon. John Covode, House of Representatives, January 27, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 529-530; "To Our Great Father, the President of the United States," January 28, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 534; Lincoln to Stanton, January 31, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 538; Annie H. Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," *American Historical Review* 15 (January 1910), 281-96.

operating across southwest Missouri attacked supply trains from Fort Scott and from Rolla and Springfield, Missouri, to Union forces in northwestern Arkansas. By February 26, Curtis' position deteriorated. Longer supply lines forced Curtis to disperse his troops so they could live off the land. In addition, the Confederates also were concentrating superior forces in Arkansas.⁴

Union leaders planned a vigorous drive to secure the lands west of the Mississippi River. Recognizing the strategic value of driving Price out of Missouri, Halleck created the Military District of Southwest Missouri under Brigadier General Curtis, and ordered him to destroy or disperse Price's army. Halleck hoped that by diminishing the Confederate presence he could free thousands of federal troops from garrison duty in Missouri and prepare them for action in planned campaigns on the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland Rivers. Early in 1862, Curtis' Army of the Southwest regained the ground lost at Wilson's Creek the previous August and marched back to southwestern Missouri. Curtis seized Springfield and pushed the Confederates back into northwestern Arkansas. This first successful Union campaign in the region resulted in death of Benjamin McCulloch, the most effective Confederate military commander operating in Missouri, and the defeat of a numerically superior Confederate army at the battle of Pea Ridge on March 7-8, 1862. After the battle, Curtis' forces advanced to the west bank of the Mississippi River at Helena, Arkansas, denying the river to the Confederates and leaving Union army posts scattered across the region to deal with guerrillas and bushwhackers.⁵

Despite some successes in controlling the Jayhawkers, irregular raids bothered senior Union commanders so much that they took drastic action. Halleck decided that the only way to keep peace between the Kansans and Missourians was to keep them apart, and he ordered Hunter to prevent Kansans from crossing the state line. This ongoing problem plagued the Union military structure. Its political leadership sought two mutually exclusive objectives, placating Union sympathizers in Missouri without antagonizing abolitionist and radical Kansans. Edwin Stanton, Lincoln's new secretary of war, told Missouri's congressmen that the federal government would no longer tolerate the outrages Jennison's forces were committing in Missouri. At the end of January, army commanders in Kansas moved the Seventh Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment westward to Humboldt, about forty-five miles west of the Missouri state line. In a final display of federal intervention in the war against jayhawking activities, Hunter placed Kansas under martial law on February 8, 1862.⁶

As federal efforts to control unauthorized raids across the border succeeded, the architect of organized jayhawking pressed his most ambitious project. Regional commanders opposed

⁴ General Orders No. 14, Hdqrs. Department of Kansas, February 1, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 541; Edwin C. Bearss, "From Rolla to Fayetteville with General Curtis," *Arkansas Historical Review* 19, n. 3 (Autumn 1960), 225-259.

⁵ William L. Shea, "The Road to Pea Ridge," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 52, n. 3 (Autumn 1993): 205-222; Marvin R. Cain and John F. Bradbury, Jr. "Union Troops and the Civil War in Southwestern Missouri and Northwestern Arkansas," *Missouri Historical Review* 88, n. 1 (October 1993), 29-35.

⁶ Halleck to Hunter, February 2, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 828; Halleck to Hunter, February 2, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 829; Stanton to Thomas L. Price and James S. Rollins, February 6, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 546-547; General Orders No. 17, Hdqrs. Department of Kansas, February 8, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 547-548; McClellan to Stanton, February 11, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 552-553; Stephen Z. Starr, *Jennison's Jayhawkers: A Civil War Cavalry Regiment and its Commander* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 3-15; Simeon Fox, "The Early History of the Seventh Kansas Cavalry, 1861-1862," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society* 11 (1909-1910): 238-53.

Lane's Indian expedition, which had been kept from them because Lane presumed they would express dissent. Lane's supporters lied to Lincoln about "Lane's great Southern expedition," Hunter told Halleck on February 8. As far as national leaders were concerned, "the Kansas Senator would seem to have effectually 'jayhawked' out of the minds of the War Department any knowledge or remembrance of the general commanding this department." Lane and his supporters confused the issue, claiming that the senator retained command of the expedition. Growing uneasy over Lane's expanding adventure, Halleck countermanded any orders for troop movements that did not come from the Adjutant-General. The army finally succeeded in controlling the expedition, and Lane resigned his Army commission when he found his power curtailed, returning to the Senate. By the end of the month, the Army regained control over the Indian expedition and several Fort Leavenworth regiments that were part of the force were on the road to Fort Scott.⁷

The Union Army returned to Fort Scott in March, building up a supply depot for its widely scattered garrisons. As the mountains of military stores grew, the defense of the post became more crucial, and Lieutenant Charles H. Haynes of Co. D. of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment built fortifications. Bluffs and waterways protected three sides of Fort Scott, but the south remained vulnerable to attack across a wide expanse of open prairie traversed by the major roads that entered Fort Scott. Construction took time, and cannons for defense remained scarce across the department. In the face of continuing violence from both armies and irregulars, Union sympathizers often left their farms along the Missouri-Kansas border, leaving the fort with an inadequate warning system in case of Confederate raids.

In the middle of March, the only Kansas units prepared for active service in the state were the First Infantry Regiment, Sixth Cavalry Regiment, and the First Kansas Light Artillery Battery, all based at Fort Scott, and the Eighth Regiment, which served as a police force scattered across the border counties. Military leaders sent Jennison and the Seventh Kansas, known for its jayhawking, to Humboldt, seventy-five miles west of the Missouri border. In preparation for the proposed Indian expedition, Army commanders stationed regiments from other states, including the Ninth, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Wisconsin infantry regiments, the Second Ohio cavalry regiment and Rabb's Indiana Battery around Fort Scott.⁸

As the Army concentrated forces in southeast Kansas, the shortcomings of the garrison at Fort Scott became more apparent. By the time Hunter assumed command of the department, Lane's limits as a military commander were well known. A member of the Adjutant General's office who inspected Fort Scott in early 1862 reported that Lane's Kansas Brigade was in worse condition than even during their first week in the army. The camps around the town of Fort Scott — the Twelfth and Thirteenth Wisconsin Cavalry regiments to the west, near the Marmaton river; Rabb's Battery and the First Kansas to the south; and the Ninth Wisconsin Infantry and

⁷ Hunter to Halleck, February 8, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 829-830; Halleck to Hunter, February 13, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 554-555; McClellan to Halleck, February 13, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 555; Lincoln to Hunter and Lane, February 10, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 551; Charles Halpine, Major and Assistant Adjutant General, to Deitzler, February 28, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 574-575; Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border 1854-1865* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), 252-60; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 97-99.

⁸ Halpine to Halleck, March 14, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 615.



The federal presence in Fort Scott spurred the town's commercial development. Here military personnel and civilians intermingle on Wall Street.

Second Ohio Cavalry to the southeast — were “little better than vast pig-pens, officers and men sleeping and messing together,” and the men had abandoned all attempts at military drills or were off on furloughs in great numbers. As a whole, the brigade was “a mere ragged, half-armed, diseased, and mutinous rabble,” he observed, “taking votes as to whether any troublesome or distasteful order should be obeyed or defied.” He advocated mustering out many of the men in two regiments and merging the remainder into one new unit. Aside from the poor military condition of the units, the officer noted, soldiers had taken large amounts of property from the depots. He also reported people purchasing government horses with non-regulation orders, the men claiming the animals as personal property and drawing forty cents a day additional pay for their use.⁹

At least some units assigned to Fort Scott managed to perform military-related duties. About one hundred men from the Second Ohio Cavalry spent nearly a week building a bridge over the Marmaton River near the old military ford, north of the town. Other soldiers helped establish a “pony express” between the post and Fort Leavenworth, bringing mail over the route two days faster than the previous carriers. Men from the regiments surrounding Fort Scott also received orders for assignments in the post’s quartermaster, commissary, and hospital, a practice that eventually sparked a series of protests from an Ohio regiment serving at the fort. As the war dragged on, the Army’s control over civilians expanded and many troopers served in the provost

⁹ Maj. Charles Halpine, to Major General, Henry Halleck, March 14, 1862. *O.R.*, 1:8, 615-616; *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, March 31, 1862.

marshal's office, supplementing the area's civilian law enforcement officers. In the spring of 1862, the Army was still planning for an expedition to retake New Mexico, and preparations were under way for supporting the column from Fort Riley, Fort Leavenworth, and Fort Scott.¹⁰

In another attempt at improving the Army's condition in the Trans-Mississippi region, Halleck appointed Brigadier General James W. Denver as commander of the District of Kansas, which included the old Department of Kansas. Halleck believed that there were relatively few military problems in Kansas and Denver's qualities made him the ideal administrator for the moment. Denver's leadership would ease border tensions and he could assign more Kansas troops to the field, where they would be more useful to the Union cause. Under the existing circumstances, Halleck informed Stanton in late March, he was obligated to keep troops from other states positioned on the border "to prevent these Kansas troops from committing murders and robberies." The move to end jayhawking became a central part of Union strategy.¹¹

When the Third Wisconsin Cavalry arrived at Fort Scott in mid-June 1862, after a long and dusty march south from Kansas City, Mo., anti-guerrilla activities were the first order of business. Four days after making camp just north of the town, the regiment's Company C was off for a scout around Mine Creek. The patrol captured two suspected Confederates, and according to Sgt. Charles Porter, they were immediately confined in the "Bastillion of the Fort." Before commanders sent his company back out to the field, Porter tackled his Army paperwork, including making out the payroll. While he toiled in his tent, bothered by mosquitos and flies, his fellow soldiers occupied their time with cards and ball playing. Finishing the paperwork in three days, Porter toured the post. Outside the blacksmith shop he saw thirteen prisoners shackled in preparation for transportation to Fort Leavenworth, with the prisoners "quite jolly and [they] sported over their new acquisition of government jewelry." Another tour at the end of the month left Porter unimpressed with his new post. He reported the fort and government buildings as less-impressive than those at Fort Leavenworth, with only six 24- and 32-pound siege guns protecting the post, and the buildings in bad condition.¹²

As the Indian expedition took shape, Fort Scott's military importance increased in the new Department of Kansas. It again became a separate unit on May 2, 1862, and Brigadier General James Blunt, a Lane protegee, ended Brigadier General Samuel D. Curtis' six-week tour of duty as department commander. The new command structure enabled Kansas and Missouri department commanders to coordinate activities. On May 7, units from Fort Scott, including parts of the Ninth Wisconsin Infantry and Second Ohio Cavalry, crossed the border to counter a Confederate incursion into southern Missouri. By May 10, 1862, Fort Scott was the second largest military installation in Kansas, second only to Fort Riley, reflecting the post's new importance. Sixty-seven officers and 1,654 men from the Tenth Kansas, Ninth Wisconsin, Second Ohio Cavalry and Second Indiana Battery were present for duty there. Less than three weeks later, some of those regiments left to rendezvous near Humboldt for the expedition south

¹⁰ Fort Scott *Western Volunteer*, March 31, 1862; Halleck to Denver, April 5, 1862, *OR*, 1:8, 665.

¹¹ Halleck to Stanton, March 28, 1862, *OR*, 1:8, 648.

¹² Charles W. Porter, *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter: While in the Service of the United States during the Rebellion* (privately printed, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives), June 16-30, 1862.

to Fort Gibson. Col. William Weer of the Tenth Kansas, a longtime jayhawking ally of Lane who before the war was a lawyer in Wyandotte with a reported fondness for drinking, was in command. Weer served under Lane during Price's move against Fort Scott and the Kansas Brigade's retreat to Fort Lincoln in 1861.¹³

Desperately short of manpower, Army commanders in the West accepted the necessity to recruit nonwhite regiments as part of any new offensive operations. When the conquest of Indian Territory became one of Lincoln's political objectives, any top-level inhibitions against Indians in federal uniforms disappeared. The location of numerous Indian refugee camps surrounding Fort Scott further eased their recruitment. As a result, the Army issued orders in April to raise two Indian regiments. Commanders at first envisioned the units as defensive, to enable refugee Indians in Kansas to return to their homes in the Indian Territory and to protect them while planting crops, but military necessity eventually expanded their roles into the offense.

Still uncertain that the Indians could defend their homelands unaided, military leaders pondered their advance. Halleck, then commander of the Department of the Mississippi, provided two additional regiments of white volunteers, but the expedition began without the participation of Indian regiments. Early in June, Col. Charles Doubleday, commander of troops in Southern Kansas and Indian Territory, led a force of about 2,500 troopers from the Second Ohio Cavalry, Ninth Wisconsin Infantry, and Rabb's battery out of Humboldt. Fort Scott supported the column with a subsistence train of 100,000 rations, escorted by three companies of the Second Ohio Cavalry and four companies from the Tenth Kansas Infantry Volunteers. Doubleday sought to push back Stand Watie's Confederates, and then secure Shoal Creek for refugees, but he began his expedition with no news of when or how the Indian regiments were to join him.¹⁴

At the outset, the expedition into Indian Territory drew support from across the region. As more regiments left the southeast post, Lieut. Col. Lewis R. Jewell of the Sixth Kansas became senior officer and post commander at Fort Scott on June 1, 1862. Trying to coordinate across two departments, Blunt kept his counterparts in Missouri informed of his status. On June 3, he reported to Brigadier General E.B. Brown, Union commander at Springfield, that two regiments of infantry, two regiments of cavalry, one regiment of Indians and two batteries stood ready at Fort Scott and Humboldt. Fort Leavenworth sent about four hundred wagons south for the use by the expedition, carrying provisions, clothing, camp and garrison equipment, and ordnance stores. Indian agents at Le Roy received orders to turn over arms and military equipment for the Indian regiment organized there. One Indian agent, O.S. Coffin, soon joined the military

¹³ Fort Riley's garrison consisted of 158 officers and 3,143 enlisted men present for duty, while 976 officers and men were at Fort Leavenworth, the third-largest post in Kansas. Abstract from the Department of Kansas, May 10, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 376; Charles Doubleday, Col., commanding Indian Expedition, to Capt. Thomas Moonlight, AAG, Department of Kansas, May 25, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 397; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 82; Salomon to Sturgis, May 7, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 371-372; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 252.

¹⁴ L. Thomas, Adjutant General, to Halleck, April 4, 1862, *O.R.* 1:8, 660; Doubleday to Blunt, June 1, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 408.

effort and became quartermaster of the Indian regiments.¹⁵

The Indian Expedition began and ended in confusion. Operating against scattered and unsupported irregulars, Doubleday and his white regiments initially enjoyed success, routing Confederate forces completely at Cowskin Prairie on June 6. By the middle of the month, Blunt estimated he had about five thousand men near Fort Scott and Indian Territory, including two batteries of artillery and two regiments of Indians enlisted from the refugees driven out of Indian Territory the previous winter. The impressive numbers masked what would be a fateful lack of leadership. Col. Weer, the expedition's leader, traveled to Humboldt to inspect the Indian regiments. He arrived at the post on June 5 to discover that Doubleday and the white troops had already started south. Doubleday's troops were in action on that day, routing a Confederate force under Stand Watie at Round Grove, about eighteen miles southwest of Neosho, Missouri. The following day, Doubleday continued his drive south, breaking up a Confederate base at Grand River. While his white regiments continued into Indian territory, Weer, concerned with dividing his forces in the face of the enemy, dispatched a messenger south. He ordered Doubleday to stop where he was, reminding him that it was vital for Indians to accompany the expedition. Besides concerns about having part of his column already in the field, Weer complained about the complete lack of quartermaster support for Indian regiments; the wagons or supplies he requested were not at the fort. He also expressed concern about his officers, noting that the Army assigned a large number to other duties. Those who remained were more concerned about their next posting or promotion than their military duties. Weer predicted the general demoralization of his command. On June 6 Weer sought to move Indian regiments from Leroy and Humboldt to Fort Scott for easier outfitting, but before department commanders authorized any such move he was on his way south. His supply situation was unresolved, compounded by a lack of regimental records from the new and scattered units. Uncertain even of the type of guns supplied to his Indian recruits, Weer could only ask the Fort Leavenworth quartermasters to estimate the regiments' previous ammunition needs and send a similar amount to Fort Scott for his eventual use. The inadequate support meant that Weer led his troops into Indian Territory short of ammunition and supplies.¹⁶

Weer's expedition was not the only military operation in the region. As part of the drive into Indian Territory, Missouri state militia regiments guarded the expedition's eastern flank with an advance into Arkansas. The militia movement opened opportunities for irregulars across southwestern Missouri, and they increased the number and severity of their attacks. Successful guerrilla attacks in Missouri against Union soldiers and supply trains prompted a strong reaction. On June 26, the government ordered field commanders to treat all captured bushwhackers as criminals, not prisoners of war, with drumhead courts-martial and summary executions for the

¹⁵ Telegram, Blunt to Brown, June 3, 1862, National Archives, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Vol. 137; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 7, 1862; Thomas Moonlight, AAG, to Coffin, June 9, 1862, National Archives, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Vol. 137.

¹⁶ Blunt to Schofield, June 13, 1862, National Archives, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Vol. 137; Weer to Moonlight, June 5, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 418; Weer to Moonlight, June 7, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 420; Weer to Moonlight, June 21, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 421.

guilty.¹⁷ The orders subsumed larger objectives in the chaos of individual retribution.

Returning the refugee Indians to their homes remained a focus of the Army's strategy and Weer's initial actions furthered that goal. Blunt advised Weer to locate Cherokee leader John Ross and discuss the status of the tribe's allegiance with the United States. The nation was willing to fulfill its treaty obligations, including payment of annuities, to the Cherokee if they remained loyal. Weer's directive became easier to fulfill when Stand Watie's men retreated south after their defeat at Cowskin Creek. After defeating a small Confederate force at Locust Grove on July 3, Weer's expedition reached Tahlequah, the Cherokee capital, without incident on July 14, and captured Ross. While part of Weer's command continued south toward Fort Gibson, hundreds of Indians flocked to the Union camp, most seeking protection. A large number of Cherokees wanted to enlist and Weer initiated the organization of the Third Regiment of Indian Home Guards for his expedition. Col. William A. Phillips commanded the unit, and its organization was completed at Carthage, Missouri, on September 16, 1862. Union conquest of the Indian Territory seemed an achievable goal.¹⁸

The Union presence in Indian Territory remained precarious. Its total force of about 6,000 soldiers operating against unsupported guerrillas provided a strong position, but as the column advanced south, its supply lines back to Fort Scott lengthened. Before June ended, Weer complained of shortages in salt and medical supplies, and food shortages loomed. "Bacon is also a stranger to us," he wrote. Fort Scott's garrison of three cavalry companies was too small to supply adequate protection for the southbound trains and resupply efforts were furtive and tenuous. The operation seemed likely to bog down over material concerns.

Weer's advance faced another major threat. Reports of Confederate forces concentrated to his east drew the commander's attention. Army commanders dispatched Union forces once positioned to protect his advance to the Mississippi River, leaving his flank vulnerable. The threat changed military policy. Blunt ordered Weer to control as much ground as possible, and told him to accept any and all volunteers, despite their color. Blunt lacked the resources to support these volunteers; Weer's supply train could issue them rations, but their arms could only come from captured Confederates. Confident that Confederate lies had misled the Indians, Blunt expected that Cherokees who supported the South would shift allegiances once the Union Army reestablished control. He extolled the performance of the Union Indian regiments who served, telling Secretary of War Edwin Stanton that the new men "have more than met my expectations as efficient soldiers." Fort Leavenworth merchants were pleased with Weer's advance. Reviving prewar business arrangements with the Indian Territory was a priority, and Blunt's position assured them of rapid resumption of trade. By the middle of July, although the military situation remained unresolved, the department commander authorized what he called "some responsible

¹⁷ Thomas Moonlight, by Order of Blunt, June 26, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 451.

¹⁸ Blunt to Weer, July 12, 1862, National Archives, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Vol. 137; Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 48-50; Weer to Grecco, July 15, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 473; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 253-54.

parties" to resume commercial dealings with the Indians.¹⁹

After capturing John Ross and occupying the Cherokee capital at Tahlequah (Oklahoma), Weer's momentum stalled. He pondered his next move for more than a week, sitting in his tent, reportedly drinking, while his men ate their supply of rations. News from Fort Leavenworth that a large Confederate force left Arkansas and threatened his supply lines and Fort Scott may have triggered his uncertainty. Blunt warned him to be cautious and not leave his lines of communication unprotected, and the advice stopped the advance. Weer finally decided to continue to Fort Gibson, but before he could do so his officers mutinied. On July 19, Col. Frederick Salomon of the Ninth Wisconsin seized control, accusing Weer of drunkenness, insanity, and of exposing the expedition to destruction by refusing to return to Fort Scott to obtain supplies. The weak Confederate forces were nowhere near the northern column, but Salomon ordered all of the white regiments to fall back to Fort Scott, leaving the two Indian regiments and whatever volunteers officers could organize to defend the Indian Territory.²⁰

Reaction among the northern forces was swift. Salomon sent word of the mutiny to Fort Leavenworth and Blunt, stunned that Union officers had abandoned the expedition, raced to Fort Scott to take command. He also ordered two of the white regiments to remain in Indian Territory. When Blunt arrived at Fort Scott, he found all of the white regiments – including the two he ordered to remain in Indian Territory, although his orders reached Salomon at Baxter Springs. After sending reinforcements to join the Indian regiments, Blunt convened a general court-martial to investigate the mutiny. The demands of war and the fact that so many of the expedition's officers were involved undercut the legal process, and the Army never punished anyone. Accompanying the retreating white regiments were thousands of pro-Union Indians, seeking the protection denied them in Indian Territory. Many stopped at Baxter Springs where the government established a refugee camp under the command of Maj. John A. Foreman of the Third Indian Regiment.

Away from the energized atmosphere of the battlefield, the Union forces suffered through boredom, harsh weather, and bugs. Encamped in tents in the prairies around Fort Scott, members of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry were "tormented at night by mosquitos and a species of bug, these bugs run in our ears and keep up a constant scabble until drowned out and occasionally a snake takes lodging with us." The frequent rain storms provided most of the bathing water for the regiments, and as Sgt. Porter related, when time permitted, the companies would turn out in force for washing clothes, using the "Marmaton river for wash tub and large flat rocks for wash boards."²¹

Confederate interest in Missouri revived during the second half of 1862, when the Indian regiments were deep inside Indian Territory and most of the white units led by Salomon camped around Baxter Springs. The Confederates soon made their presence felt. A detachment from the

¹⁹ Henning to Weer, July 2, 1862. "Old Book 981-82. 988-92. Bound as 394 Dept. Mo." Roll 25, Department of Missouri: Telegraphs, Orders, Etc. Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Blunt to Weer, July 19, 1862, and Blunt to Stanton, July 21, 1862, National Archives, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Vol. 137; Weer to Moonlight, June 23, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 445.

²⁰ Col. Frederick Salomon to Blunt, July 20, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 484-85; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 97-99.

²¹ Porter, *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter*, July 26-29, 1862.

Vernon County, Missouri, on August 5, but the 1,500 Confederates pushed back the much smaller Union party. At Fort Scott, Maj. B.S. Henning reported that a large force threatened the post, a situation worsened by his total lack of artillery. Henning cautioned that the Indian expedition could not abandon Fort Scott, the source of its supplies. Confederates again exploited the poor communications, weak leadership, and general uncertainty of the Union attempt to take back Indian territory.²²

Fort Scott's position on Missouri's flank became a crucial part in defeating this newest Confederate threat. Early in August, southern sympathizers and guerrillas took the offensive across Missouri. On August 11, William Clark Quantrill captured Independence, just east of Kansas City. A Confederate force of 1,500 led by Colonel John T. Coffee avoided a powerful Union patrol near Springfield, and scouts reported that the column headed north, possibly toward a rendezvous with Quantrill. Army commanders sent two Missouri state detachments to block Coffee's advance, and Maj. General John Schofield ordered Blunt to cut off any Confederate retreat. Blunt was in Fort Scott on the day Quantrill attacked Independence, and delivered a speech following James Lane's "war talk" to the large crowd gathered in front of the Fort Scott Hotel. Two days later, Blunt reviewed the troops at Fort Scott, with two infantry regiments, two batteries of artillery and about 1,500 mounted troops marching past, before leading them against the Confederates. On August 14, Coffee's force, reinforced to about 4,500 by southern sympathizers who joined the successful column, defeated one of the Missouri detachments near Lone Jack, about twenty-five miles south of Independence, and marched on Lexington, east of Independence. Aware of Blunt's pursuit, Coffee gave up plans to attack Lexington and retreated south to Arkansas, with Blunt's forces in pursuit. The Kansans ended their march back at Fort Scott on August 22, covering almost three hundred miles in six days.²³

Confederate leaders soon granted new significance to the uncertain situation in the western theater. After the battle of the Seven Days in the eastern theater late in June, Confederate General Robert E. Lee reorganized the Army of Northern Virginia, shipping several generals deemed inadequate in combat to less crucial commands in the West. He assigned Major General Theophilus H. Holmes to lead the Trans-Mississippi Department, replacing Major General Thomas Hindman, who Lee reassigned to the District of Arkansas. Learning of Confederate successes at Independence and Lone Jack, Hindman planned to join forces with the withdrawing force for another attempt to conquer Missouri. He organized several regiments of exiled Missourians and called on Brigadier General Albert Pike, the special agent assigned to secure the support of the several tribes, to bring his Indian troops back to the fray. Pike was a Bostonian who won antebellum fame in a victorious lawsuit on behalf of the Creek nation and who captained Arkansas volunteers in the Mexican War. Less than a month after Southern batteries opened fire on Fort Sumter in April 1861, Pike proposed to Robert W. Johnson, Arkansas'

²² Henning to Lt. Blockie, AAAG, Indian Expedition, August 6, 1862. "Old Book 981-982, 988-992. Bound as 394 Dept. Mo." Roll 25. Department of Missouri Telegraphs, Orders, Etc., Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

²³ William E. Connelley, *Quantrill and the Border War* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: The Torch Press, 1910); Report of Maj. Benjamin S. Henning, Third Wisconsin Cavalry, August 6, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 210-211; Henning to Lieutenant Blockie, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General, Indian Expedition, August 6, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 543; Report of Brigadier General John M. Schofield, no date, *O.R.*, 1:15-16; J.M. Graham to Stanton, August 28, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 600; Fort Scott *Bulletin*, August 16, 1862.

congressional representative, that arms, artillery, funds and supporting Confederate troops be rushed to bolster Indian troops recruited south of Kansas. Pike recommended arming at least 3,500 Indians for duty. His idea solved several problems for the Confederacy and soon won acceptance, but inadequate logistical support and questions over use of the Indians outside the Indian Territory prevented a productive alliance. Still bitter over the Confederacy's attitude toward his Indian soldiers, General Pike refused, instead resigning. Douglas Cooper, Indian agent for the Choctaws and Chickasaws, replaced General Pike. In late July, he led his Indian regiments to join the advancing Confederate column, accompanied by Colonel Stand Waite, the Cherokee Chief who replaced John Ross after the Union Army captured Ross.²⁴

With most of Fort Scott's troops deployed either with Blunt or at Baxter Springs, the town's residents prepared to meet the new threat. The cannons of Capt. Job Stockton's Light Battery guarded the roads leading into Fort Scott, employees of the quartermaster's department became a company of two hundred, and civilians of the town organized themselves into a company of militia, similar to the one formed before Price's 1861 expedition. On August 24, 1862, detachments from the Second and Sixth Kansas cavalry regiments encountered a force estimated at more than eight hundred men led by Quantrill, Hays, and Col. Shelby on Coon Creek, near Lamar. After a short skirmish and some losses, the federal troops withdrew to Kansas, reaching Fort Scott the next day and reinforcing the fort's garrison. Adding to the post's defensive capabilities was the Second Kansas Battery, under the command of Charles W. Blair, of Fort Scott. The unit, authorized by Blunt the previous month, numbered one hundred and twenty-three men and officers. It fielded two twelve-pound field howitzers and four six-pound cannons captured from the Confederates. In preparation for the advancing Confederates, four companies of the Kansas Second Volunteer Cavalry Regiment arrived from Fort Larned on September 20, bringing two more siege guns for the post's defense. Across the state line, senior Union commanders countered the resurgent Confederate forces by combining all federal forces in the field into the Army of the Frontier, led by Brigadier General John M. Schofield.²⁵

The two columns came together at Newtonia, Missouri, on September 30. Hindman's invasion of Missouri comprised about 2,500 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, and 3,000 Indians, along with fourteen pieces of artillery, reinforced by fifteen hundred Missouri cavalymen. Before he could lead troops north from Arkansas, Confederate leaders called Hindman to Little Rock for a military conference. Brigadier General James R. Rains took charge, with strict orders against any offensive action while he was away. Despite the injunction, on September 24, Rains ordered his forces north into Missouri and the Confederate invasion began - without either formal approval

²⁴ Pike to Jefferson Davis, July 31, 1862. O.R., I:13, 860-68; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 255-57.

²⁵ Fort Scott *Bulletin*, August 23, 1862; Report of Brigadier General James G. Blunt, August 26, 1862. O.R., I:8, 257-258; Albert Greenc, "Campaigning in the Army of the Frontier," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society* 14 (1915-1918), 283-310; National Archives and Record Service, *Military Operations of the Civil War: A Guide Index to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Dallas D. Irvine, comp. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. National Archives and Records Service, 1961-78), 106; *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, for the Year 1864* (Leavenworth: F.H. Russell & Co., 1865), 705-5. The battery's Fort Scott connection remained strong throughout the war. Blair's second in command was E.A. Smith, who relinquished editorship of the Fort Scott *Bulletin* for the assignment. In addition, the unit, known as "Blair's Battery," after its commander, fought under a flag presented by "the ladies of Fort Scott" on Nov. 29, 1862. Fort Scott *Bulletin*, Nov. 29, 1862.

or its commander.²⁶

Fort Scott's officers believed themselves in danger from two directions. Besides the Confederate threat from Arkansas, Union commanders thought that Cherokee Indians under Col. Stand Watie and guerrillas led by Capt. T.R. Livingston approached Baxter Springs, south of Fort Scott. Blunt, Salomon's immediate superior, learned of the Confederate move himself when south of Osage Mission on September 25, Watie's Cherokees captured several Osage scouts and released them several hours later. When the scouts returned to Blunt's headquarters at Fort Scott, they told him that Watie planned to reach the mission by the next day. Salomon, commanding the First Brigade of the Army of Kansas, split his forces at Fort Scott, ordering troops sent southeast from Fort Scott to Carthage, Missouri, while sending Col. William F. Cloud's Third Brigade about thirty miles southwest to the Osage Mission, in Neosho County. The three or four buildings that made up the complex, southeast of Erie and near modern-day St. Paul, were on the road that ran from Lawrence and Humboldt, Kansas, to Fort Gibson, in the Indian Territory.²⁷

The Confederate invasion was real, and from a Union point of view, impressive in size and scope. Confederates concentrated what the Union scouts estimated to be eight thousand men at Newtonia, Missouri. To meet this threat, Union forces planned to unite at Sarcoxie and then advance. Curtis ordered Schofield to support the Union response, and ordered Blunt to act under Schofield's direction. One of Salomon's reconnaissance patrols, from the Ninth Kansas, discovered Confederates entrenched in strong positions at Newtonia. Salomon reinforced the patrol, ordering units from the Sixth Kansas and Third Indian Home Guard sent into action. His troops moved toward the small southwestern Missouri town from the north, spreading out to east and west. The Union assaults were successful initially, but Confederate reinforcements eventually forced the federal troops to retreat. After regrouping, Blunt's Kansas troops joined with Missouri troops and drove Rains and the Confederates out of their fortifications and back to Arkansas. Confederate leaders ordered Indian regiments and one artillery battery under Col. Douglas Cooper on October 15 to attack Fort Scott to divert Schofield's pursuit of Rains. Blunt, in hot pursuit of the Southern detachment, caught up with them a week later and defeated them at the battle of Old Fort Wayne, near Maysville, Arkansas, on October 22, 1862.²⁸

With cold weather approaching, Union forces began to settle down in winter camps in Kansas and Missouri. The Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment returned to its Fort Scott camp early in October after action in Missouri. The Sixth Kansas, one of the regiments that chased Cooper at Old Fort Wayne, moved to Camp Babcock, on Flint Creek near the Arkansas border, where it waited for commissary supplies from Fort Scott. The Eleventh Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, mustered into federal service at Fort Leavenworth two months before the battle at Old

²⁶ Report of Col. Douglas H. Cooper, September 30, 1862. *O.R.*, 1:13, 296-98; Edwin C. Bearss, "The Army of the Frontier's First Campaign: The Confederates Win at Newtonia." *Missouri Historical Review* 60, n. 3 (April 1966), 283-284; *O.R.*, 1:13, 672.

²⁷ Weer to Salomon, September 26, 1862. *O.R.*, 1:13, 671-672; Michael E. Banasik, ed., *Reluctant Cannoneer: The Diary of Robert T. McMahan of the Twenty-fifth Independent Ohio Light Artillery* (Iowa City, Iowa: Camp Pope Bookstore, 2000), 40.

²⁸ Report of Brigadier General Douglas Cooper report, Oct 22, 1862. *O.R.* 1:8, 335; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 257.

Fort Wayne, arrived at Fort Scott on October 6, only to march back to Missouri in the middle of the month. Another new regiment, the Thirteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, which saw its first action at Newtonia, marched into Fort Scott eleven days later.²⁹

While the federal troops looked forward to a winter's rest, the Confederates continued with plans for action across the region. Guerrillas burned Lamar, Missouri, on November 6. Quantrill led his men into a series of skirmishes against a detachment from the Sixth Kansas from November 6-11, 1862, around Dry Wood, Missouri, and Cato, Kansas, which was approximately fifteen miles south of Fort Scott. Fort Scott supplied the Union troops. The poor condition of the Kansas horses, worn out from their march across Missouri, prevented an effective counterattack. Henning believed that Quantrill was only waiting for the departure of a supply train and its escorts, which might sufficiently weaken Fort Scott to allow an attack. With \$2 million of government property at the post, Henning continually worried about his defenses.³⁰

As field operations apparently slowed for the winter, the Second Ohio decided it was time to complain about its treatment in the Department of Kansas. While encamped around Fort Scott, the regimental commander Col. Augustus Kautz wrote a series of critical letters to senior Army commanders and David Tod, governor of Ohio. He protested the illegal detachment of large numbers of his men to serve in an artillery battery, as bodyguard for General Blunt, as members of the provost guard, and for work in the post's quartermaster, commissary, hospital, and ordnance departments. He only had control of about three hundred of the 1,000-man regiment, and taking care of the regiment's unserviceable horses was their main occupation. Kautz told Tod that his men were "doing the drudgery of the Dept. and what is more there is a disposition on the part of the authorities to keep them so." Even worse, he heard rumors that his regiment had already been issued orders to return to Ohio for furlough and reorganization, but the Department had pigeonholed the paperwork. It took another month for response to the complaints, and the Second Ohio was back home by late December.³¹

The Confederates challenged Union control of northern Arkansas one last time in October and November of 1862, hoping to establish a base for operations in Missouri. Major General Thomas Hindman organized the push, pulling the scattered Confederate forces together into the First Corps, Trans-Mississippi Army. The main offensive threat was the cavalry division commanded by John Sappington Marmaduke, a West Point graduate who served the Confederacy since the earliest fighting in Missouri. Leading Hindman's advance north, Marmaduke collected several hundred mounted Missouri troops and a group of irregulars and evacuated Newtonia, Missouri, and moved them south through the Boston Mountains south of the Arkansas state line, planning to winter in the rich farmlands west of Fayetteville, Arkansas.

²⁹ Kansas Adjutant General's Office, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion* (Topeka: State Printing Office, 1896; Leavenworth, Kans.: W.S. Burke, 1870), 81; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, October 11, 1862, October 18, 1862.

³⁰ Report of Capt. Martin Breeden, November 6, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 348; Report of Maj. Benjamin S. Henning, Third Wisconsin Cavalry, November 11, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 352-354.

³¹ Col. Augustus Kautz, Second Ohio Vol. Cavalry to Col. N. [J. Assistant Adjutant General., November 4, 1862, and Kautz to Gov. David Tod, November 4, 1862, National Archives, RG 393 Army Continental Commands, 2nd Ohio Cav. Regt. Letter and Order Book

Quantrill's men joined the force there, although their commander was away in Richmond seeking a promotion. Upon receiving word of Hindman's reorganized force, Blunt changed plans to move his troops back to Fort Scott from their northwestern Arkansas bases and instead headed south with about five thousand men. He found the enemy camp near Cane Hill, Arkansas, on November 28 and attacked immediately. Outnumbered, Marmaduke retreated south through the mountains, pulling the northern troops forward into the confined hills. The troops skirmished through the brush-filled valleys until Blunt, fearing an ambush, withdrew back to Cane Hill, allowing the Confederates to continue their retreat unmolested. During the skirmishing, the Sixth Kansas Cavalry lost its leader, former Fort Scott commander Col. Lewis R. Jewell, and the regiment brought his body back to Fort Scott for burial.³²

Believing the southern forces done for the season, Blunt settled his troops into camps around Cane Hill, only to discover less than a week later that Marmaduke was again heading north, followed by at least 15,000 men collected by Hindman. The ill-supplied Confederate infantry trudged through the icy Boston Mountains. Union troops camped at Wilson's Creek raced one hundred-and-twenty-five miles south to reinforce Blunt. Hindman sought to destroy the newcomers before they could unite with Blunt. The two weary columns met near Prairie Grove on December 7 and fought to a draw, with a cautious Blunt waiting about eight miles away for an attack that never came. He finally arrived at the battlefield where the two armies battled to a standstill until Hindman retreated under cover of night. Blunt's actions won him promotion to major general. Historians often describe the battle at Prairie Grove as a draw, but the virtual dissolution of the Confederate army followed it in the West. The resulting Union takeover of northern Arkansas at last provided a measure of protection for southwestern Missouri, and Fort Scott continued in its role as supply post and rest area for the Army of the Frontier.³³

As the Union continued to seek military success in the East, its Trans-Mississippi commanders, learning from the previous year's mistakes, began closer cooperation between departments, increasing their effectiveness and exploiting the growing Confederate weaknesses. Fort Scott played a key role in the first attempt to regain control of Indian Territory, although the Union's offensive operation was less than a stellar success. The re-established military presence threatened Confederate operations in Missouri and helped protect eastern Kansas. The jayhawker-bushwhacker war continued to plague area civilians, although the problem lessened as the Union Army tightened control over the region. A clear indication of the military's influence was the growing importance of Fort Scott, home to portions of several cavalry, artillery and infantry regiments, a ever-growing supply depot, a major hospital facility and the accompanying cemetery, one of the first national cemeteries established by the federal government. One result of the federal war effort during 1862, seen clearly in Fort Scott's role, was the reduction in influence of regional leaders such as James Lane and the rise in a coordinated national military strategy. Continuing the often costly educational process of combat, throughout this second year of war commanders slowly increased the professionalism of Army actions.

³² James Paul Huff, *Fort Scott's Regiment: The Sixth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, 1861-1865* (M.A. thesis, Pittsburg State University, 1987), 99-120; Kansas Adjutant General, *Military History*, 81; Michael E. Banasik, *Embattled Arkansas: The Prairie Grove Campaign of 1862* (Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1998), 250-304.

³³ Banasik, *Embattled Arkansas*, 305-468.

Chapter Seven:

Fort Scott at the Midpoint, 1863

After two years of fighting, the United States military had not made significant progress toward ending the rebellion. The Confederate States of America still enjoyed a viable chance to win foreign recognition or garner support for a compromise solution among northern voters. Throughout 1862, while federal armies operating in the West had made significant gains in securing control of the Mississippi River and establishing firm authority over Missouri, the Confederates held a military edge in the war's main theater of operations along the eastern seaboard. Irreplaceable casualties in the Southern armies and an increase in command capabilities in the federal ranks improved the North's military fortunes during 1863. Fighting a different kind of war in the southeast corner of Kansas, Fort Scott played a significant role in keeping its neighboring border state under Union sway, and during the year its forces and supply stores helped stabilize western Missouri and win back the Indian Territory from Confederate control.

Union leadership still sought to deny Confederates foreign recognition, a continuing problem exacerbated by President Abraham Lincoln's inability during the war's first two years to find a military commander who matched his political talents. The North's leadership disadvantage became worse on June 1, 1862, when General Robert E. Lee was assigned command of the newly reorganized Army of Northern Virginia. Lee directed forces to victory in the Seven Days Campaign from June 25 to July 1 and recorded a decisive triumph at the second Battle of Bull Run on August 30, 1862, where the first major battle of the war had been fought the year before. Despite this new and vibrant leadership, the Confederates faced clear limits. Antietam in 1862, although not a clear federal battlefield success, blunted Lee's mid-September drive into Maryland and secured several strategic advantages for the North. In the weeks after the costly battle, Antietam provided a final reason for Lincoln to remove the ineffective George B. McClellan from top command of the Union army. Its long-range results were to block English and French recognition of the Confederacy, and provide the political climate for the president to change his war aims and objectives. The new strategy led to the Emancipation Proclamation, with its injunction for the rebelling states to re-enter the union by the end of the year or face legal emancipation of slaves within territory occupied by the Union Army.¹

Lincoln's proclamation, which became effective January 1, 1863, introduced a radical change in the political nature of the war. The stated purpose of the document was extremely limited in scope, seeking only reunion of the nation, not the abolition of slavery. It pledged freedom solely for those blacks outside the control of the federal government, leaving untouched

¹Jeffrey Rogers Hummel, *Emancipating Slaves, Enslaving Free Men: A History of the American Civil War* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1996), 204-217; Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative: Fort Sumter to Perryville* (New York: Random House, 1958), 704-710; see also James M. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964). For northern opposition to emancipation, see V. Jacque Voegeli, *Free But Not Equal: The Midwest and the Negro in the Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

blacks in the border states as well as conquered areas of the South. It also offered slave owners in the states that rejoined the United States compensation for freed slaves and the voluntary colonization for freed blacks, either in North America or on another continent. The president's constitutional powers limited his ability to end slavery, and he only did so under his authority as military commander. The proclamation also contained a measure calling for slavery's eventual abolition across the nation, but more importantly for the war effort, it sanctioned the already existing practice of enlisting black soldiers and sailors.²

As 1863 opened, Lincoln faced a range of political problems brought on by the rebellion. Radicals within his Republican party pushed the president to expand his agenda to include the national abolition of slavery. Many within that camp saw the use of black troops in combat as an integral part of emancipation. Others also supported arming blacks, but for non-political reasons. The ever-increasing casualty lists sent from battlefields and reports of the realities of life in uniform deterred enlistments across the north. The economy, booming with federal war business, sharply decreased both the unemployment rate and available manpower pool. In addition to combat losses and large numbers of desertions and injured men, the Union Army faced the end of two-year enlistments from 1861, and nine-month enlistments from 1862. The relentless demand for men in uniform pushed federal leaders to boost sagging enlistments. Military circumstances, most notably casualties and the need to guard conquered territories, changed the army's earlier opposition toward arming nonwhite populations. These measures began tentatively during the first two years of the war, but became formalized in 1863. In this process, Fort Scott became one of the Army stations to play a key role in the enlistment, training, and supplying of both black and Indian regiments throughout the Civil War.³

Thanks in part to the manpower provided by these nonwhite troops, the Union Army registered a series of battlefield victories in the western theater after two years of combat. Federal armies pushed Southern armies away from St. Louis in 1862, firmly securing Missouri for the Union although the Confederate government was not ready to give up the border state. Southern armies would return to Missouri in 1863 and 1864, aided by hundreds of pro-slavery sympathizers. On other fronts, the Union Army reoccupied the northern part of the Indian Territory and occupied major cities in Arkansas. These advances helped safeguard the Union thrust down the Mississippi River, the key objective of the western theater, and one of Lincoln's most important war aims.⁴

The Civil War in Kansas continued to involve political as well as military spheres. Senator James Lane spent most of 1863 in Washington, D.C., but he retained his unique ability to

² James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988): 562-563; the seminal work on Black Civil War soldiers remains Dudley T. Cornish's *Sable Arm: Negro Troops in the Union Army* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966; New York, Longmans, Green, 1956), but a new major study, Noah Andre Trudeau's *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1998) is now available. Other works include Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: Free Press, 1990), James M. McPherson's *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted During the War for the Union* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), and Benjamin Quarles' *The Negro in the Civil War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953).

³ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 492-510, 600.

⁴ Alvin M. Josephy Jr., *The Civil War in the American West* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1991).

exert an unequalled influence in his adopted state. His Indian expedition of the previous summer proved a strategic failure, but his choice for a military leader in Kansas, James G. Blunt, remained in command of the area, and Lane continued to receive the patronage benefits of newly formed Kansas regiments, including officers' commissions for the newly organized black and Indian regiments. Antagonisms across the border counties of Kansas and Missouri continued outside of the battlefield. Cravings for revenge sparked during the years of "Bleeding Kansas" remained strong, and Army officers stationed in Kansas addressed a range of different military problems: large numbers of irregular troops, Confederate deserters joined with civilians seeking personal plunder along the border counties, sympathizers fighting surreptitiously for the South, Indians to the south waging their own civil war, in addition to continually reorganized uniformed Confederate armies threatening from Arkansas, Texas, and Missouri.⁵

Located adjacent to Missouri and the Indian Territory, Fort Scott's military commanders faced threats from multiple directions, but some of the most serious problems were internal. After the failure of the 1862 Indian expedition, thousands of Indian refugees fled north to southeastern Kansas. Hundreds who accompanied the Indian troops were joined by many more seeking federal protection from Southern sympathizers. The overwhelming majority of the refugees arrived in Kansas destitute, and many local merchants capitalized on the opportunity to sell necessities to the Indians, relying on federal funding for repayment. Most of the relief funds came from trusts held by the government for several of the southern Indian tribes. National politics, especially concern for the war's progress, combined with entrepreneurs' greed to keep them in a bereft condition. Not everyone benefitted from the refugees, and as the number of refugee Indians soared, calls for their speedy return to Indian Territory also increased. By December 1862, the Bureau of Indian Affairs had spent \$193,000 on subsistence for Indian refugees in Kansas, reinforcing congressional demands for their early return, but Washington, D.C., failed to provide the means to accomplish that end. Aside from the displaced Indians, other groups seeking the Indians' quick return to the south included the Department of the Interior, which bore the responsibility for feeding and housing their charges while they were in Kansas camps; the Army, which hoped to tap that manpower to secure its control of Indian Territory; and whites in Kansas seeking to clear Indian title to lands.⁶

Indians joined with Union officers to push for a speedy return to Indian Territory. Cherokee leader John Ross met with Lincoln in September 1862, seeking to regain federal financial and military support by explaining the Indian defection to the Confederacy. Ross argued that the federal government failed to meet its treaty provisions guaranteeing to protect the Indian nations from "domestic strife and foreign enemies." General Samuel Curtis, when queried in

⁵ For more on Confederate Indian troops, see W. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), Larry C. Rupp, *The Civil War in the Indian Territory* (Austin, TX: Presidial Press, 1975). Books focusing on Stand Watie include Kenny A. Franks' *Stand Watie and the Agony of the Cherokee Nation* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1979) and Frederick Cunningham's *General Stand Watie's Confederate Indians* (San Antonio, Texas: The Naylor Company, 1959); James G. Blunt, "General Blunt's Account of his Civil War Experiences," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 1 (May 1932), 211-65.

⁶ David A. Nichols, *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978), 25-64, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 142.

early October by Lincoln, disclosed plans for a new southern expedition in the upcoming year and promised that the Confederates would be pushed out of Indian Territory. Most of the Indians refused to go back until the Confederates and their Indian allies were neutralized. Adding to the pressure was the passage in early 1863 of a Senate bill introduced by James Lane calling for removal of Indians from Kansas.⁷

Despite its increasing importance to the federal war effort, after two years of war Fort Scott retained a haphazard look despite its establishment as a permanent military post a year before on March 29, 1862. The civilians who bought the buildings following the post's closure the previous decade expanded the town beyond the original fort grounds. The former parade ground became the town square, suitable for penning hogs, hanging laundry and parking wagons. It was also used for military parades, inspections, band concerts and local celebrations. By late January 1863 the Army presence in the town itself was confirmed by large fortifications erected late in 1862 and early 1863, mainly by black troops. Two of the large earthworks, known by the military engineers as lunettes for their half-moon ditch, guarded the fords over the Marmaton River to the north, and the other two protected the military roads coming in from the south, although the effectiveness of the fortifications was minimal since Fort Scott possessed only two pieces of field artillery until May. A year later, in an 1864 letter to the District of the Border headquarters, Col. Charles Blair commanding Fort Scott described the improved fortifications and lunettes as follows:

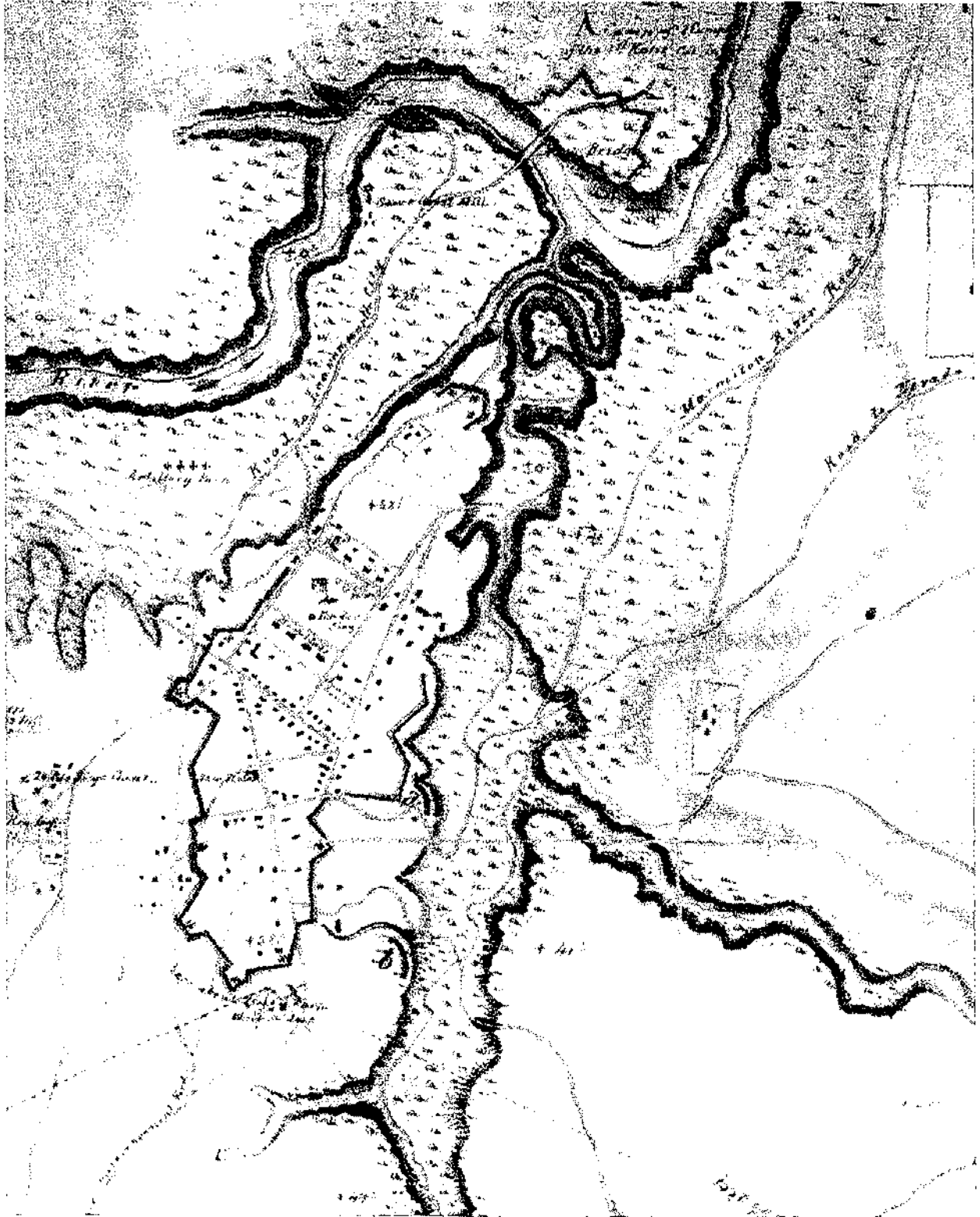
First, that there is a line of rifle-pits southeast, south, and southwest of this place, extending about a fourth of a mile, and connecting with ravines, which, by opening into the Marmaton River bottom, completely encircles the town. Second, there are two lunettes, field-works, inside this line, and distant about 300 yards from the same, on the south and southwest of the town, which command the heights from the northeast clear around to the south west. They are formed of earth and fascines, and are substantial and well constructed, having been superintended by a competent engineer.

The one to the southwest is named Lunette Henning, and has platforms for four guns and a subterranean magazine for ammunition. There are two 24-pounder siege guns in position upon the platforms, and in excellent condition. Lunette Blair, to the south, is a smaller work, having platforms for but three guns and a subterranean magazine. There are also two 24-pounders in position here in admirable condition.

These works are in the State of Kansas, to defend Fort Scott, the lunettes forming the inner line, and are respectively on the Cato and Military roads. The name of the officer immediately in charge of these fortifications is Capt. George J. Clark, Company E, Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry, acting ordnance officer of the post.⁸

⁷ Secretary of the Interior Caleb Smith to Lincoln, September 29, 1862, Roll 4, M606. Letters Sent, Indian Department. Interior Department, Record Group 48, cited in Nichols, *Lincoln and the Indians*, 56; Ruth A. Gallaher, "Samuel Ryan Curtis," *Iowa History of History and Politics* 25 (July 1927), 331-58.

⁸ Blair to Lt. J.M. Hadley, Jan. 15, 1864, United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as *O.R.*), 1:62, 89.



A portion of the Holke map printed Jan. 28, 1863, showing how the existing defenses guarded the town's southwest, southeast and northeast approaches. The post's parade ground is marked by a small American flag in the middle of the map.

For the sick and wounded men, the Army rented the large military hospital built in the 1840s, and supplemented it with several adjacent buildings and large ward tents placed on the town square adjacent to the former hospital as necessary. All of the other supply and support functions carried out by the post were mostly confined to rented buildings and temporary structures built on rented lots. A large two-story military prison was constructed to house enemy soldiers, southern sympathizers, spies, Union soldiers and civilians, including women, who violated civil or martial law. The one structure apparently was not sufficient to hold all the prisoners, because in June 1863, Henning proposed moving the Fort Lincoln blockhouse south to Fort Scott and expanding it to two full stories. The move, he wrote to his superiors, "would hold all its prisoners & they could be used here to advantage for fatigue duty. Or dividing it into four apartments they could be classified & thus prevent much evil." Despite the plans, the Fort Lincoln blockhouse remained where it was. An August visitor toured the abandoned post, calling it "a position commanding nothing and easy to be reduced." It consisted of an enclosure protecting one building about eighty feet long and a well. The visitor noted that "The city of Fort Lincoln consist of two families, one out side and one inside the fort. Geo. Walrod, from Sycamore, Ill., commands the fort, holding all the offices from high private to Brigadier." As the logistical and strategic importance of Fort Scott increased, the defensive significance of Fort Lincoln was reduced, but it remained an active Union post which protected the ford where the 1859 Fort Scott-Fort Leavenworth Military Road crossed the Little Osage River. Horse-mounted couriers connected Fort Scott to its outlying stations, and off-duty soldiers frequented the saloons and hotel bars. The majority of the uniformed men lived in tent camps on the prairie surrounding the town, most concentrated along the Marmaton River, where water and firewood still were readily available.⁹

Originally created on the Permanent Indian Frontier as a barrier to separate the Euro-Americans from the Indians, Fort Scott retained its geographic and military position as an influence between Union and Confederate possessions. It also retained a key role in the north's Indian policy. The Confederates' early influence in Indian affairs had been curtailed during 1862, in part as a result of the aborted summer expedition but more importantly by manpower demands to the east, as Southern leaders sought to block Union takeover of the Mississippi River. With white Confederate soldiers headed for the Mississippi River, those left behind in Indian Territory were mainly the Indians, continuing to fight their own civil war. Indians, northern and southern sympathizers alike, killed, burned and looted across the territory, aided by the occasional federal or rebel regiment.¹⁰

Positioned as part of an extensive supply line that stretched along the Missouri River from St. Louis to Fort Leavenworth and then overland one-hundred-and-sixty miles, Fort Scott assisted with the supplying of Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, Fort Smith, Arkansas, and distant Union operations in Arkansas and the Indian Territory. Fort Scott was also responsible for supplying satellite Union posts in southwestern Missouri and eastern Kansas. These posts were

⁹ Post Returns, Fort Scott, National Archives, Microcopy No. 617, Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1137, Fort Scott, Kansas, January 1861 — October 1865; C.M. Chase letter, August 19, 1863, Fort Scott, August 19, 1863, Folder "Misc. - Chase, C.M.," Miscellaneous Collections, Chas-Ci, Kansas State Historical Society; Maj. B.S. Henning to General, June 9, 1863, Frame 0264-65, Roll 25, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

¹⁰ Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, 369-370.

established to suppress guerrilla activity, warn of enemy operations, maintain communications and to protect roads and fords crossing strategic waterways. Outlying posts supplied stretched approximately 30 miles east into Missouri, south to Drywood, Pawnee Creek, Baxter Springs (60 miles), Osage Mission (75 miles), west to Iola and Humboldt (40 miles), and north to Trading Post and Barnesville, Kansas. Col. William A. Phillips and the three Union Indian Home Guard regiments under his command, reinforced by a battalion of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry and four artillery pieces captured at Old Fort Wayne, were assigned to patrol northwestern Arkansas. The northern section of Indian Territory was deserted by military forces for most of early 1863, except for occasional raids by Phillips' men or Stand Watie's Cherokees. During the year Union armies marched into Arkansas, relying on Fort Scott for sustenance until they reached Fayetteville or Fort Smith.

The post was more than a supply depot. Casualties from battles across the nation, including Stones River south of Nashville on the first two days of the new year, continued the demand for uniformed manpower. In response, Fort Scott expanded its recruiting and training responsibilities in the first months of 1863, as the First Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment mustered into federal service on January 13. Col. James M. Williams became the commanding officer of this regiment, which he helped to recruit in August and September of 1862. The majority of soldiers in the regiment were former slaves who had escaped from Missouri, Arkansas and the Indian Territory. Despite the increased influx of black troops into the Union army, racism still existed throughout the military. The War Department refused to commission Lieut. William D. Matthews, a black man from Maryland and recruiter of the regiment's Company D, and black soldiers continued to be paid at a lower rate than their white counterparts. At the same time that the black troops were entering service, white enlistments in Kansas continued. On February 23, Kansas Governor Thomas Carney authorized the raising of three companies for the Sixth Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment, including one recruited at Fort Scott.¹¹

The Army often stood in for civilian law enforcement, and the post at Fort Scott acted as the duty station for the provost marshal of southeastern Kansas. In one case, Major B.S. Henning, provost marshal in February 1863, ordered a Third Wisconsin officer to send out a party to track down a man named Duneway who attacked a woman, threatening her and her stock. The soldiers were told "Tell him to quit or he will have to get out of the neighborhood." Fort Scott's commanding officer told another Third Wisconsin officer that the Davis family had been ordered to move south, but instead had settled on the Drywood. He was ordered to lead a detachment "and notify the family to leave at once and see that they do it. If there are others in the same fix, serve them in the same way." This role inspired tension in the region, as the goals of settlers and the obligations of the military often led to negative feelings on both sides.¹²

¹¹ Trudeau, *Like Men of War*, 19-20; Kansas Adjutant General, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion*. Topeka: State Printing Office, 1896; Leavenworth, Kans.: W.S. Burke, 1870., 84.

¹² By Order of B.S. Henning, February 18, 1863; Chas. Blair to Lt. Pond, August 1863, both orders in RG 393, Army Continental Commands, Third Wisconsin Cavalry Letter Book and Order Book and Company Order Book and Morning Reports, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives, p. 21.

The fallout from the failed expedition into Indian Territory in the summer of 1862 plagued federal leaders. Col. William Phillips, commanding officer of the Indian Brigade (three Indian Home Guards regiments) suggested that the Bureau of Indian Affairs could return more of the refugee Indians living in Kansas south to their former homes in the Indian Territory. However, on February 24, 1863, the Superintendent of the Southern United States Indian Agency, William G. Coffin, was concerned about the wisdom of such a move when approved it, "but not, I must confess, without some misgivings as to the safety of the movement." The agency secured contracts with civilian teamsters for wagons to transport seeds and implements. In April, Coffin forwarded the results of a refugee census to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. At the Sac and Fox agency in Neosho Falls, agents counted 3,290 Creeks, 170 Chickasaws, 250 Cherokees; 901 Seminoles; in Belmont, 1,789 Wichitas and affiliated tribes; at the Ottawa Reservation, 690 Quapaws, Senecas, and Seneca Shawnees, for a total of 7,090 Indian refugees. Throughout spring and summer 1863, the Indians hoped that they could return to their homes in Indian Territory, but they remained in Kansas, trapped in poverty and uncertainty. Conditions for those Indians still living in Indian Territory remained just as desperate. One Indian who moved north to Kansas reported there was no bread to eat and only a small amount of corn that they could hide from the Confederates. "They say that none within their knowledge have enough to do them until spring, and must be furnished there, leave the country, or starve," an agent wrote of the Indians.¹³

In April 1863, soon after Major Charles Blair, a Fort Scott resident serving in the Second Kansas Cavalry, assumed command of Fort Scott, the U.S. Army mounted a new expedition to regain control of Indian Territory and undo the damages suffered in 1862. A shortage of white troops forced the Department of Kansas to design the operation using mainly Indian Home Guard regiments supported from Fort Scott. The Indian Brigade, commanded by Col. Phillips, located in northern Arkansas where it had spent the winter, was ordered to lead the expedition into the Indian Territory. Accompanying Phillips' column were about one thousand Creek, Seminole and Cherokee families from the crowded refugee camps near Neosho, Missouri, which was close to the border of Missouri and Arkansas. By April 9, Phillips' column and the refugee train from Neosho carrying the Indians entered Park Hill in the Cherokee country of the Indian Territory. Four days later, on April 13, 1863, Phillips' column and the remaining refugees (Creeks and Seminoles) re-occupied Fort Gibson. In addition to rebuilding the fortifications at Fort Gibson, Phillips' men continued their drive to clear the Confederate forces from the northern part of the Indian Territory. On April 24, 1863, Col. Phillips commanded a 600-man cavalry force which advanced south across the Arkansas River and defeated the Confederate forces commanded by Col. Stand Watie at the Battle of Webber Falls. Many of the Creek and Seminole refugees settled near Fort Gibson and planted corn and other crops because the Confederate forces still occupied

¹³ U.S. Congress, 37th, 2^d Sess. House. House Report 132, Serial 1138. "Relief of Indian Refugees in Southern Kansas": William G. Coffin to William P. Dole, February 24, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 313. Coffin to Dole, February 7, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 312; Edmund J. Danziger, Jr., "The Office of Indian Affairs and the Problems of Civil War Indian Refugees in Kansas," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 35, n. 3 (Autumn 1969), 257-75.

their lands.¹⁴

While Fort Scott's military strength increased early in May as the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment reached full strength, the Department of Kansas initiated a series of military misadventures that ultimately brought Indians a new round of suffering. Southern morale was buoyed by positive news. In the eastern theater, the Confederates stretched to their military highpoint with a May victory at Chancellorsville, Virginia. In the bloody battle, Union forces lost seventeen thousand men, but the Confederates suffered a serious blow with the death of General Stonewall Jackson. Under Lee's command, the southern troops gathered momentum toward Gettysburg. The Confederate's western forces achieved victories on a smaller scale. Cooper's men continued to plague Phillips' command, bottling the Indian regiments up inside Fort Gibson. Directly to the east, Arkansas troops forced the withdrawal of federal forces in northwestern Arkansas, threatening the Indian Home Guards' supply lines back to Fort Scott.¹⁵

While the Union and Confederate armies clashed, smaller struggles continued. The civilians in the Bureau of Indian Affairs reported a series of ongoing troubles with military officers, especially in securing escorts for the various supply trains sent south to the refugees. Indian Affairs agent Justin Harlan reported that he sought four men to escort a returning train, but was refused, and in another instance he requested four men to protect a wagon carrying seeds for distribution and was again rebuffed. The lack of escorts was a harbinger of a worse problem, for again the Union troops could not provide protection for the returned Indians. A resurgent Confederate offensive in Missouri drew off many of the supporting soldiers and Arkansas forces threatened the supply lines from Fort Scott. As a result, the military leadership again prepared to evacuate the Indian Territory. Aggravating the regional problems was a series of raids by Stand Watie and other southern forces that drove the Cherokees off their farm plots and into Fort Gibson. In May, an Indian Affairs agent estimated that six thousand Cherokees and one thousand Creek Indians crammed into the post, with more coming in every day. By mid-June, most of the refugees were huddled in and around Fort Gibson. Despite promised reinforcements from Blunt, no significant military reinforcements were sent south, the Confederates continued to harass the Indian settlements, and the exodus into Fort Gibson accelerated.¹⁶

Early in May, while camped at Baxter Springs, Kansas, en route to Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment, with support from the Second Kansas Light Artillery Battery, reinforced a Fort Scott detachment ordered to attack a Confederate camp at Centre Creek near Sherwood, Missouri.¹⁷ Two companies of the black troops and one piece of

¹⁴ Josephy. *The Civil War in the American West*, 370.

¹⁵ Josephy. *The Civil War in the American West*, 370-71.

¹⁶ Coffin to Dole, June 11, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 320; Justin Harlan to Dole, May 26, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 320-321; Coffin to Dole, May 2, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 317.

¹⁷ Sherwood, Missouri was located approximately sixty miles south of Fort Scott, near the present community of Carl Junction.

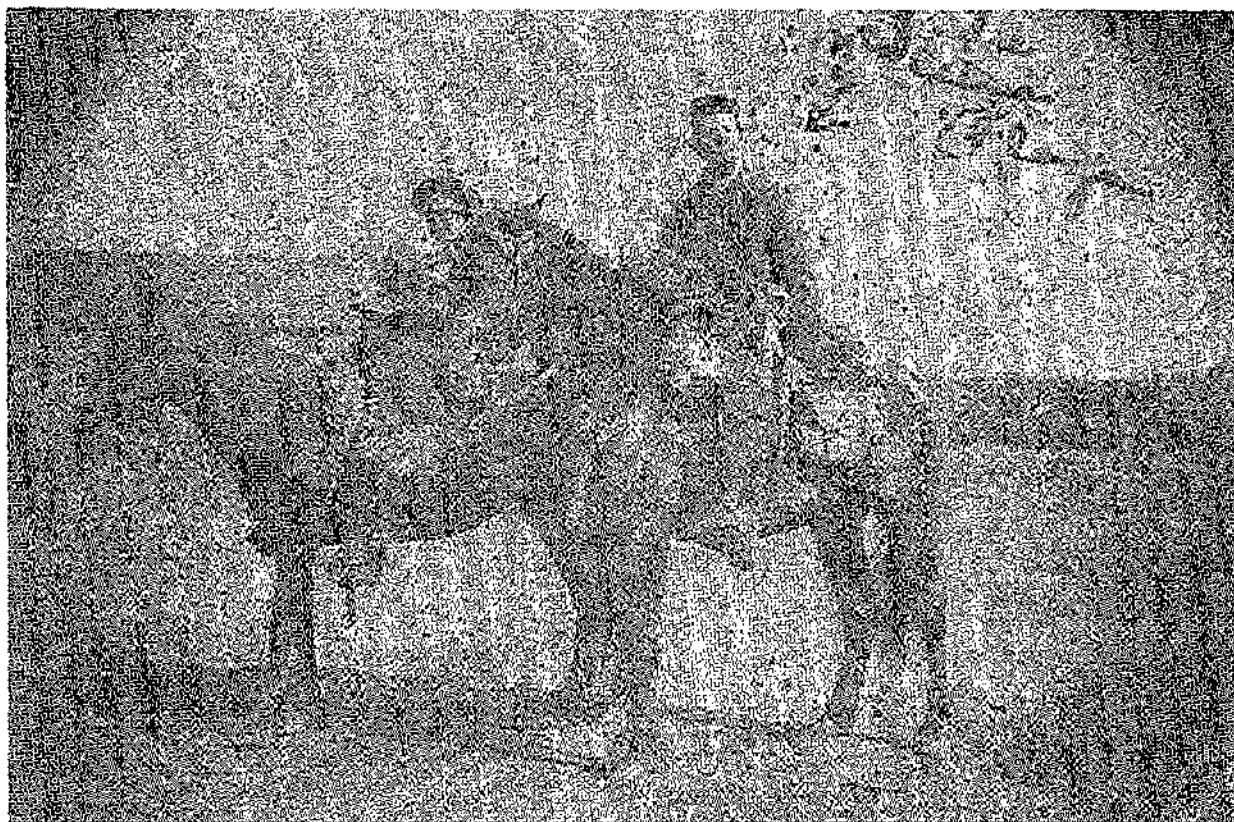
artillery assisted the Union force in destroying two guerrilla bases occupied by more than 200 men and capturing more than 50 horses and mules.

On May 18, 1863, while still encamped at Baxter Springs, a foraging party from the First Kansas (Colored) and Second Kansas Light Artillery returned to the Sherwood area. This detachment, consisting of twenty-five soldiers from the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry and twenty artillerymen, was attacked and defeated by Major T.R. Livingston's guerrillas, who were returning to Missouri from the Indian territory. The Union reports listed three white soldiers from the Second Kansas and 16 black soldiers from the First Kansas as being killed during the battle. Five Union soldiers were captured by Livingston's men. The three white soldiers from the Second Kansas Artillery were exchanged, but one of the two black First Kansas prisoners was shot and killed. In retaliation for the killing, Col. James Williams, commanding officer of the First Kansas Colored, ordered that a Confederate prisoner captured during the battle was to be executed. Within thirty minutes one prisoner was killed by a gunshot.

The following day, May 19, 1863, Williams arrived at the Sherwood battlefield. He reported that for the first time in the war he "beheld the horrible evidences of the demoniac spirit of these rebel fiends in their treatment of our dead and wounded. Men were found with their brains beaten out with clubs, and the bloody weapons left by their sides, and their bodies most horribly mutilated." In retaliation for the disfiguring of the dead Union soldiers, Williams ordered that the town of Sherwood and all of the homes of southern sympathizers within five miles of the town were to be burned. As a result of this order, Sherwood was completely destroyed and was never reconstructed. In his report, Livingston described how three hundred Union infantrymen, backed by two companies of cavalry returned to Sherwood and burned the town and eleven nearby farmhouses. The guerrilla leader noted the northern forces "put 10 of their dead (negroes) that had been left on the battleground the day preceding, and together with the body of Mr. John Bishop, a citizen prisoner, whom they had murdered, into the house of Mrs. Rador, and burned the premises," before returning to Baxter Springs.¹⁸

Not all of the Union military action in the region involved uniformed combatants, and the formalities and protections of what was regarded as the humanitarian aspects of war were often ignored on the frontier. Osage Indians living near Humboldt played a significant role in maintaining peace across the West when on May 15 a small band intercepted a small patrol of about twenty men, sent out by General Kirby Smith, commander of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi West. Senior Southern leaders dispatched the group that included three colonels, one lieutenant colonel, one major and four captains to treat with several Indian groups and incite them to raid settlements, especially in Kansas, as well as organize Confederate sympathizers in Colorado and New Mexico. A small band of Little Osages encountered the whites, and demanded that they accompany them to Humboldt, in accordance with instructions given them by Union officers from Fort Scott. The Confederates refused and fired upon the Indians, killing one. The outnumbered Osages withdrew and returned to their village for reinforcements. About two hundred turned out and began pursuing the Confederates, finding them about five miles from the Verdigris River. Surrounded by the Osage, the Confederates fought a running gun battle to

¹⁸ Maj. Charles Blair to Gen. James Blunt, May 9, 1863. *O.R.* 1:22 (S# 32), 320-322; Cornish, *The Sable Arm*: 145-146; Kansas Adjutant General's Report: *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments*, 248.



Cpl. George McCoon, of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, mounted with another man at Fort Scott.

reach the distant timber.¹⁹

The one-sided conflict ended when the Little Osages, reinforced by about four hundred Grand Osages, pushed the small band back onto a sand bar on the Verdigris River and surrounded and wiped them out. Fearing they had inadvertently killed Union officers, the Osages reported the incident to a federal unit at Humboldt, but withheld identification papers and documents carried by the officers. Accompanied by several Osage warriors, the commander of Union troops led a small detachment to the battle site. The men found the mutilated bodies of the Confederates, with the dismembered heads also scalped. Long gashes had been cut the entire length of the bodies. One member of the detachment remembered that one of the slain men, believed to be the force commander, "was entirely bald, but had a very long and heavy full beard. This head had not been scalped, but the beard had been removed, and was hanging on a pole with the scalps in front of a teepee in the village." The officer recovered documents disclosing the Confederates' mission and praised the Indians' action, allowing them to retain the horses and

¹⁹ William L. Bartles, "Massacre of Confederates by Osage Indians in 1863," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society* 8 (1903-1904), 62-66; Danziger, "The Office of Indian Affairs;" Coffin to Dole, June 10, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 324-325.

arms.²⁰

Aside from the normal duty of providing escorts for military supply trains, such as a May 19 patrol that entailed thirty men from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment conveying a supply train to Baxter Springs, Fort Scott's soldiers were often called upon to guard civilians traveling in the region. In April, Blair ordered the Third Wisconsin to provide "a sufficient escort" for Dr. Gilpatrick on his way to Neosho, to "go as Dr. Gilpatrick desires and when." A week later, the regiment provided an escort for "Messrs. McDonald, White and Party," who transported refugee goods to Neosho. Some escorts were smaller than others, as when a guard of three or four men accompanied a civilian traveling to Greenfield, Missouri, in December, or when one noncommissioned officer was detailed to accompany a representative of Barton and Jasper counties, Missouri, as far as Springfield, Missouri, on Nov. 3.²¹

While accumulating the troops for a full-scale push against the Union positions in Indian Territory, Confederate partisans sought to weaken the enemy by cutting communications with Fort Scott. On May 24-25, southern soldiers attacked the Union escort for a supply train to Fort Gibson, although federal troops eventually reached the post. In a major drive to force out the enemy, the Confederate leadership assembled about six thousand men at Honey Springs under General D.H. Cooper's command. Upon receiving word of the planned attack, General James Blunt ordered supplies and troops sent south from Fort Scott. In early June, he ordered the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry, Second Colorado Infantry, and a section of the Second Kansas Battery south to Fort Gibson to reinforce Phillips' command, a dramatic change in Union Army policy of whites directly helping Indian refugees. On the way south, the troops served as an escort for a supply train of three hundred commissary wagons sent south to Fort Gibson.²²

In addition to distant threats, guerrillas operating near the post became a constant menace. Partisans commanded by Livingston attacked a small Fort Scott detachment guarding a grazing herd on June 8, the same band that killed several Union men the previous month. One man from the Second Kansas Light Artillery battery was reported killed, and two taken prisoner. The report of guerrillas operating in the Fort Scott area usually prompted a patrol. One scout of about forty men from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry in July 1863, left for Balltown, Missouri, northeast of the post in response to word of bushwhackers known locally as "Knights of the brush." Moving slowly in the summer heat to keep their horses in good condition, the patrol took a little more than a day to travel the twenty-two miles. Union sympathizers in the area often provided information on the guerrilla's base and movements. After a day of fruitless searching, the Fort Scott detachment learned that another Third Wisconsin company met a guerrilla unit east of Balltown, killing two of the group at the cost of one soldier and temporarily chasing "the Knight

²⁰ Bartles. "Massacre of Confederates by Osage Indians in 1863." 62-66.

²¹ Major Charles W. Blair, to Lt. James B. Pond, May 19, 1863; By Order, C. W. Blair, April 12, 1863; Blair to Commanding Officer, Co. C, April 17, 1863; M.M. Ehle, Post Adjutant, to Pond, November 3; Blair to Pond, December 14, 1863, all from RG 393, Army Continental Commands, Third Wisconsin Cavalry Letter Book and Order Book and Company Order Book and Morning Reports, Roll 24, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

²² LeRoy H. Fischer. "Indian Territory's Gettysburg: The Battle of Honey Springs." *Oklahoma Today* 21, n. 1 (Winter 1970-71), 15-18; Charles Freeman. "The Battle of Honey Springs." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 13, n. 2 (June 1935), 154-168.

of the brush" out of the region.²³

The military split along the Kansas-Missouri state line divided the Army's response to a new increase in guerrilla attacks. That inefficiency, as well as a personality clash between Blunt and John M. Schofield, in charge of the Department of the Missouri, and reports of corruption in the area prompted another boundary change. On June 9, Schofield reorganized the District of Kansas, combining the northern and southern tier of Missouri's westernmost counties into the Department of the Border, under Brigadier General Thomas Ewing, Jr., General William T. Sherman's brother-in-law, and the Department of the Frontier, under Blunt, and headquartered at Fort Scott. One unstated effect of the shift was to remove Blunt from involvement in the lucrative quartermaster contracts at Fort Leavenworth.²⁴

By the middle of 1863, Union forces began to achieve successes to the east of Kansas. During the first three days of July, General Robert E. Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania halted in a dramatic and pivotal battle at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and on July 4, Grant's lengthy campaign to capture Vicksburg, which began March 29, finally succeeded. The Union captured a Confederate army of forty thousand men. Soldiers operating from Fort Scott scored their own success on July 1 and 2, driving an attacking Confederate column of Indians and Texans two thousand strong away from a supply train of more than three hundred wagons bound for Fort Gibson. In the battle of Cabin Creek, south of Baxter Springs, the Union expedition of about eighteen hundred men, backed by five howitzers, pushed past the twenty-two hundred Confederates led by Gen. Cooper and Stand Watie after two and one half days of fighting. The original escort for the supply train was six companies of the Second Colorado Infantry Regiment, three companies from the Sixth and Ninth Kansas Cavalry regiments, and the Second Kansas Light Artillery, "Blair's Battery." After receiving information that Confederate forces planned an attack, Col. Williams of the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment, marched south out of Baxter Springs to join the train. The Union forces were soon reinforced by three hundred men from the Third Indian Home Guard Regiment.

The two forces skirmished lightly at Cabin Creek on July 1, where the Union officers decided to wait one day while the creek, swollen by a recent rainstorm, was too high for the infantry to ford. After camping for the night, the supply train was drawn up on the prairie on the north bank and guarded by a portion of the escort, while Williams led the balance of the force, about twelve hundred soldiers, against the Confederates. After a two-hour battle the Confederates were driven from their positions, with about one hundred killed. During the combat, Union Cherokees from the Third Indian Home Guard fought Confederate Cherokees led by Stand Watie. Cabin Creek was the first Civil War battle in which African Americans and white soldiers fought side-by-side, and it marked the first time the First Kansas Colored fought as a regiment.²⁵

The attack on the supply train at Cabin Creek was abnormal for Trans-Mississippi

²³ Charles W. Porter. *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter: While in the Service of the United States during the Rebellion* (privately printed. Fort Scott National Historic Site archives), July 10-12, 1863: O.R., 1:12 (S# 32), 322.

²⁴ Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, 373.

²⁵ Annic R. Cubage. "Engagement at Cabin Creek, Indian Territory." *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 10 (March 1932), 44-51; Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, 371; Kansas Adjutant General's Office. *Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion* (Leavenworth, W.S. Burke, 1870), 410-12.

combat, both in the number of Confederates gathered to attack and in the escorts provided by the Union army. Most convoys relied on smaller escorts, and remained tempting targets for small bands of guerrillas, bushwhackers, and Confederates. The problems of supplying distant posts with wagons hampered the North throughout the war. A supply train sent to the Indian Territory post in early July left two hundred and fifty sacks of flour behind because Indian agents could not overcome the civilian teamsters' fears of traveling with the entire load and only a small escort was available to protect it against Stand Watie and other guerrillas. One Bureau of Indian Affairs official wondered how the Indians would be supplied when bad weather made the roads impassable. Unknown to him, military authorities were reconsidering maintaining the Indians south of Kansas. By the middle of July, Coffin reported that Army officers in Indian Territory no longer sought to move additional refugees south and instead, "have got enough of them in that locality." Phillips urged the agent at Fort Gibson to bring twelve hundred Indians back to Kansas when his wagons returned, but the agent refused, saying that since the Indians had been moved south at Phillips' recommendation and that Blunt was still promising to clear Indian Territory of bushwhackers then the refugees might as well stay in their own country.²⁶

As its soldiers struggled to supply Fort Gibson to the south, Fort Scott's immediate guard posts received periodic turnovers. Early in July, the Third Wisconsin Cavalry left its scattered posts around Rolla, Missouri, and returned to southeast Kansas. The command at Fort Scott ordered two of the companies to duty as provost marshals at the post, and assigned the remainder of the regiment to Big Dry Wood Creek for outpost duty. Those assigned provost duty could enjoy the civilian comforts of the town, including its restaurants, saloons, and social affairs such as balls and parties. The men, living in camps close to Fort Scott, often took the occasion to improve their tents with makeshift beds to keep them off the ground, and screens to block some of the sun's heat.²⁷

On July 8, Blunt, now a major general in search of redemption from Schofield's criticisms, traveled south into Indian Territory to take personal command of Phillips' force, which totaled about three thousand men guarding about seven thousand Indian refugees inside Fort Gibson. From scouts and spies, Blunt learned the Confederates planned to combine their forces and attack the post's federal forces with about 9,000 men. Blunt decided to move first, transferring additional troops and artillery to southern Kansas and the Indian Territory. The campaign began on July 10 with Fort Scott's reinforcement by the Thirteenth Kansas Infantry Regiment, and by the two companies of Third Wisconsin Cavalry returning from Rolla, Missouri. The news that Vicksburg had finally fallen to Grant arrived in Fort Scott on that day,

²⁶ Henry Smith to Coffin, July 16, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 329-330; Coffin to Dole, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 327-328; Coffin to Dole, July 18, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess. 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 328.

²⁷ Remarks for the Month of July 1863, Company K, Third Wisconsin Cavalry, RG 393, Army Continental Commands, Third Wisconsin Cavalry Letter Book and Order Book and Company Order Book and Morning Reports, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Porter, *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter*, July 5, 1863.

cheering Union forces.²⁸

Once on the scene in Indian Territory, Blunt took personal command. The general led his force, including the First Kansas (Colored) and the Indian Home Guard brigade fighting alongside white Union soldiers, on a night march across the Arkansas River, attacking the supply depot at Honey Springs on July 17. Five thousand Texans and Confederate Indians, supported by four cannons, faced him, but Blunt's twelve artillery pieces were too much for the southerners. Aside from cannons, the Confederates were drastically underarmed with personal weapons. About a quarter of the Confederate troops did not have arms, and were trained to follow the advancing front line and pick up rifles from fallen soldiers. A morning rainstorm turned much of the Confederate gunpowder to useless paste, rendering what rifles the troops did have inoperative.²⁹

The Confederates concentrated their artillery, three 12-pound howitzers and one experimental bronze field piece, behind the Twentieth and Twenty-Ninth Texas Cavalry Regiments, opposite the First Kansas (Colored) Regiment, which was supported by four 12-pound Napoleons, the mainstay of the Union army. Blunt ordered the First Kansas (Colored) forward to seize the Confederate artillery battery, and his black soldiers fixed bayonets. When the Second Indian Home Guard Regiment accidentally moved between the Kansans and their opposition, they were immediately ordered to withdraw. The two Texas regiments saw the withdrawing troops and assumed the federal forces were retreating and moved forward in pursuit. The First Kansas (Colored) delivered heavy fire into the charging Texans, causing the Confederates to retreat. Although they retreated, the Texans fought a successful rearguard action, allowing the Confederates to remove most of the supplies and artillery from Honey Springs. The battle marked the apex of Confederate power in Indian Territory, and the Union victory opened the way to the capture of Fort Smith and eventually all of Arkansas.³⁰

Despite the North's battlefield victories, the situation for the Indians remained perilous. Guerrillas operated across Indian Territory, and by August the Indian agent at Fort Gibson recommended removing the Indians back to Kansas, possibly in the Verdigris River region, citing the enormous cost of supplying them at Fort Gibson. In addition to criticizing the failure of Blunt and the Fort Scott command to offer adequate protection in the territory and promised escorts for Indian Affairs supply trains, one senior Indian Affairs official complained to a superior that if the Army concentrated on clearing the Confederates out of Indian Territory instead of interfering with Interior Department affairs, "the refugee Indians in Kansas might have long since been enabled to return to their homes." Bureaucratic wrangling hampered resolution of this pressing

²⁸ Fort Scott Post Returns, July 10, 1863; Remarks for the Month of July 1863, Company K, Third Wisconsin Cavalry, RG 393, Army Continental Commands, Third Wisconsin Cavalry Letter Book and Order Book and Company Order Book and Morning Reports, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

²⁹ Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, 371.

³⁰ Report of Major General James G. Blunt, July 26, 1863, O.R., 1:22/1 (S #32), 477; Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, 371-372.

human problem.³¹

To increase security and protect lines of military communication in response to the constant guerrilla menace, additional subposts were established around Fort Scott in Vernon County, Missouri, and southeast Kansas. In July, four companies of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry left Fort Scott and established outposts at Balltown, Missouri (Co. A, Capt. Robert Carpenter), Deerfield, Missouri (Co. F, Capt. D. Vittum), Lambert's Ford, south of Deerfield (Co. D, Capt. Leander Shaw) and Drywood, Kansas, at the ford on the Old Military Road 12 miles southeast of Fort Scott (Co. C, Capt. Homer Pond).

By August, Fort Scott was the commercial center of the region. C.M. Chase, who visited the town on August 18, 1863, wrote

"[Fort Scott] was formerly one of the frontier Indian Forts, until the rebellion broke out, containing nothing but the buildings in the Fort. But as the war broke out it was filled with soldiers and all the southwestern government business was transacted here. Business men began to move in and build adjoining the Fort, until now it is the largest in Southern Kansas, numbering between one and two thousand permanent and many more transient residents. Good buildings are going up in every part of town, the streets are constantly crowded with people, and every thing presents an air of life, enterprise and progress. The Fort buildings are situated around a large square, while the new town is built adjoining the Fort. Like all towns springing up in a day and containing a large temporary population, Fort Scott is a "fast town." It would require no effort to get up a race, a bet, a drunk, a fight, or any other little amusement common among men. The town contains many well stocked stores, a good hotel, a countless number of beer saloons, a couple of dozen of billiards, two or three ten pin allies, &c, &c. The theatre goers are accommodated with a barn fixed up with temporary conveniences, supplied with two or three changes of scenery, one or two tolerable performers for stars, and a half a dozen very scurvy stock performers."³²

In contrast to the town's bright economic possibilities, the refugees forced to live nearby were destitute and pessimistic. Chase noted how the "refugees and contrabands from Missouri and Arkansas, the most dirty, shiftless, ignorant specimens of the genus homo imaginable," lived in squalor in a strand of timber along a stream near Fort Scott, a ravine known as Buck Run. Chase condemned their despondency, writing that "Sprawled out on the ground in squads, they while away the time unconcerned about the next meal or the frost of the coming winter. The town offers them work, but they do not incline to accept. When the severity of the winter drives them from their bowers and tents, Fort Scott will be compelled to provide for their comfort." The situation could only get worse, Chase warned, pointing out that some estimated fifty to one

³¹ Justin Harlan to Coffin, August 8, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 332-333; Coffin to Mix, August 31, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 333.

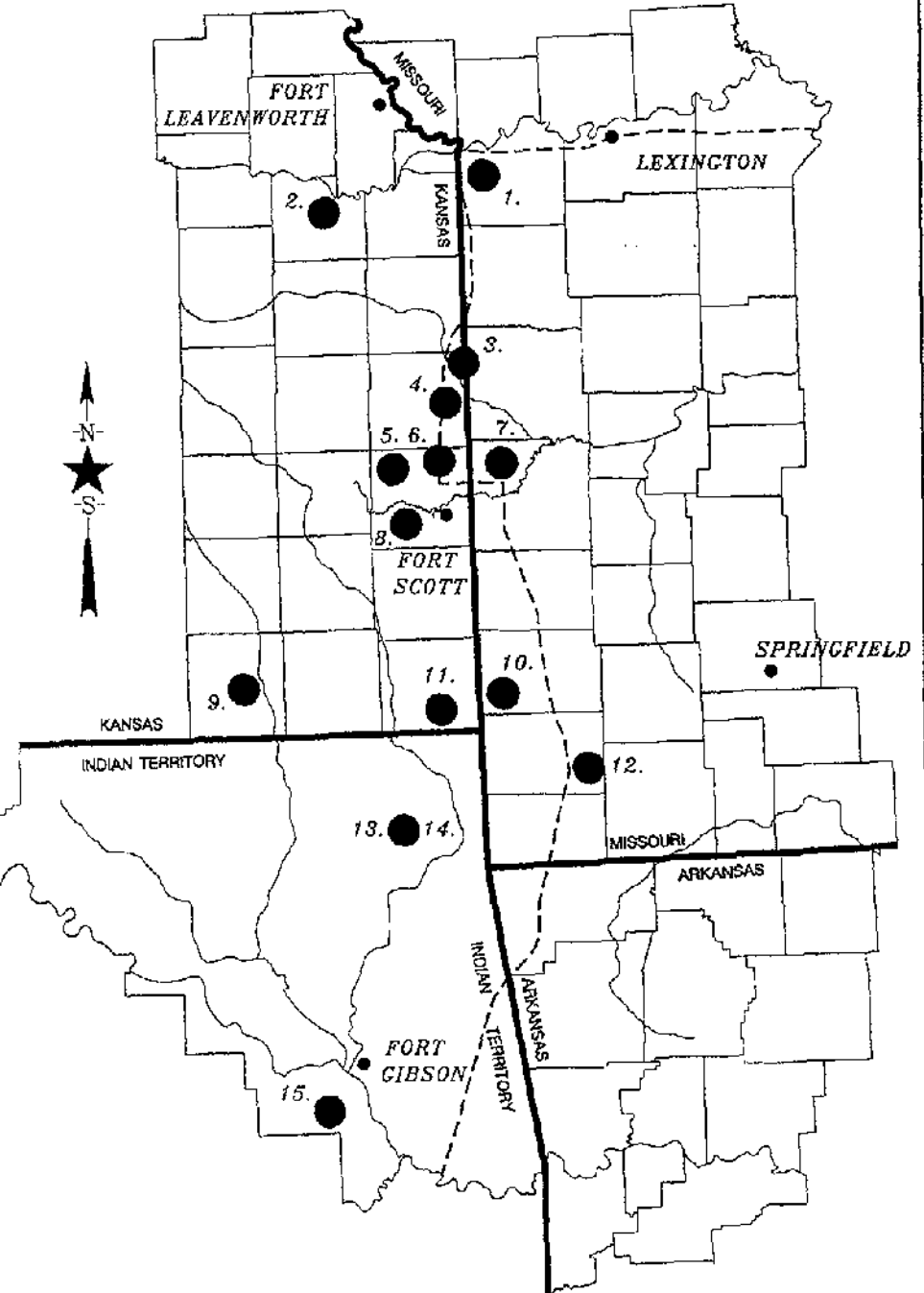
³² Folder "Misc. - Chase, C.M.," Miscellaneous Collections, Chas-Ci, Kansas State Historical Society.

LATE CIVIL WAR 1863-1865

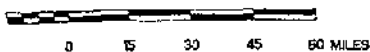
LEGEND

BATTLE SITE	●
FORT / TOWN	●
COUNTY BORDER	— — — — —
STATE LINE	—————
PRICE RAID (1864)	- - - - -

1. WESTPORT (OCT. 23, 1864)
2. LAWRENCE (AUG. 21-22, 1863)
3. TRADING POST (OCT. 25, 1864)
4. MINE CREEK (OCT. 25, 1864)
5. FORT LINCOLN (OCT. 25, 1864)
6. LITTLE OSAGE (OCT. 25, 1864)
7. CHARLOT'S FARM (OCT. 25, 1864)
8. MARMATON MASSACRE (OCT. 25, 1864)
9. DRUM CREEK (MAY 15, 1863)
10. SHERWOOD (MAY 18, 1863)
11. BAXTER SPRINGS (OCT. 6, 1863)
12. NEWTONIA (OCT. 28, 1864)
13. CABIN CREEK (JULY 1-2, 1863)
14. CABIN CREEK (SEPT. 19, 1864)
15. HONEY SPRINGS (JULY 17, 1863)



SCALE



hundred refugees fled westward from Missouri every day. "They emigrate during the night," Chase wrote, "in squads and families, accompanied generally by a span of good mules and a lumber wagon with what ever portables they can seize upon."³³

Chase compared the refugees to local settlers, and looked with favor on the whites' efforts. He met George Crawford, who emigrated to the region in 1857 and bought a farm adjoining the fort. For three years, Crawford remembered, he could do little except farm and hope for future opportunities. "But the rebellion came, and with soldiers came the business men. He immediately laid off his farm into lots, and sold them as fast as he could make out his deeds. I remarked that good luck had followed his three years of the blues. 'Yes,' he said. 'I'm in town now.' Today he is selling his lots from \$50 to \$500 each. His farm is yielding untold profits, and he is in the very midst of the fastest society."³⁴

The Union Army continued to develop a permanent military presence in southeast Kansas. Troops at Fort Scott were ordered to establish a permanent outpost at Baxter Springs near the state's southern border on the Old Military Road in mid-August. The garrison was commanded by Lieut. James B. Pond, Third Wisconsin Cavalry, and consisted of 150 soldiers from two regiments. It included one company from the Second Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry and two companies from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry. The purpose of this outpost was to protect a mail/relay station, provide additional security to military convoys traveling to and from forts Gibson and Smith and to curtail guerrilla operations in the area. If additional protection was needed, the Department of Kansas authorized Pond to muster in loyal Osage Indians living in the vicinity of the Catholic Mission near present day St. Paul, Kansas.³⁵

The horror of "Bleeding Kansas" returned to Lawrence on August 21, 1863, when William Quantrill's irregulars looted and burned the city, known a few years earlier as the center of Kansas abolitionism. Eluding Union patrols stationed on the border, the large force raced into the unprotected city at five o'clock in the morning, indiscriminately killing more than one hundred and fifty civilians. Seventeen recruits of the Fourteenth Kansas were trampled to death, while most of the black recruits at a nearby encampment escaped. One of Quantrill's main targets, James Lane, slipped out of his house clad only in his nightshirt to safety in a nearby cornfield. As the guerrillas rode through the town looting and killing, they yelled out "Jennison," "Butler," and "Osceola," as their reasons for the raid. The four hundred and fifty men commanded by Quantrill withdrew into Missouri, where they skirmished with units of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry at the end of August but escaped with minimal casualties.³⁶

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Blair to Pond, August 16, 1863, RG 393, Army Continental Commands, Third Wisconsin Cavalry Letter Book and Order Book and Company Order Book and Morning Reports, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives, 23; *History of Vernon County, Missouri, Written and Compiled from the Most Authentic Official and Private Sources. Including a History of its Townships, Towns and Villages. Together with Condensed History of Missouri; A Reliable and Detailed History of Vernon County - Its Pioneer Record, Resources, Biographical Sketches of Prominent Citizens; General and Local Statistics of Great Value, Incidents and Reminiscences* (St. Louis, MO, Brown & Co., 1887), 321; Ramp, *The Civil War in the Indian Territory*, 39.

³⁶ Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 124-143.

In direct response to the Confederate attack on Lawrence, Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Ewing, commanding the District of the Border issued "Order Number 11," on August 25, 1863. The measure was designed to calm Kansas residents that another attack would not occur, and curtail bushwhacking and jayhawking raids to and from Missouri and Kansas. Missouri residents living along the border, in Jackson, Cass, and Bates counties, and the northern part of Vernon County within the District of the Border, except those living within one mile of Kansas City, Independence, Hickman, Mills, Pleasant Valley, and Harrisonville were ordered to leave their homes within fifteen days. Rural residents loyal to the Union were settled in federal areas of control such as the large towns or cities, or across the border in Kansas. Those refusing to take a loyalty oath were ordered out of the district. Federal troops then burned abandoned properties and crops to ensure that rebel sympathizers did not use them to aid the guerillas. The only Fort Scott troops affected by Order Number 11 were those manning outposts in northern Vernon County. By the end of September more than two-thirds of the civilian population in the affected counties had left their homes.³⁷

While his home state shuddered from the horrors inflicted by Quantrill, Blunt continued his campaign in Indian Territory. On August 22, reinforced by 1,500 Kansas cavalymen commanded by Col. William F. Cloud, Blunt again crossed the Arkansas River and headed east. The Confederate forces in front of him split up into two retreating forces. Blunt followed one south into Choctaw country, destroying supply depots at Perryville and North Fork. He then turned east, and on September 1, Blunt and his soldiers occupied Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The last half of September saw two Confederate victories in the western theater. In Georgia, southern troops under Gen. Braxton Bragg won a costly victory, their last in the western theater, at Chickamauga, pushing the Union army into Chattanooga at a cost of eighteen thousand killed, wounded, or missing. The northern force, with about sixteen thousand casualties in all, received a new leader soon after, when Lincoln appointed General Ulysses S. Grant commander of all Union armies between the Appalachians and the Mississippi. Across the river, the Confederate cause was electrified on September 22, when Jo Shelby and six hundred men of his Iron Brigade began a long raid into Missouri, eventually reaching Boonville on the Missouri River, 750 miles north of their starting point. After forty-one days, federal forces finally pushed the Confederates into Arkansas, but not before they killed or wounded scores of Union soldiers, destroyed almost \$2 million in Union supplies, and heartened Southern sympathizers across the region. The long Confederate raid was



William Quantrill, the Confederate commander of attacks on Lawrence and Baxter Springs in Kansas

³⁷ Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 142-53.

the final blow to Blunt's military career in Kansas, as General Schofield, upset with continuous reports of corruption and inefficiency, replaced Blunt with Brig. General John McNeil on October 1, 1863.³⁸

Before he received word of his dismissal, Blunt lost whatever military credibility he regained in the Indian Territory on a road near Baxter Springs in the first few days of October. The small outpost, consisting of a camp protected by a low dirt and wood embankment, was garrisoned by a company of troops from the Second Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment, organized a few days before at Fort Scott, and two companies of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, all under the command of Lieut. James B. Pond of the Third Wisconsin. Early on the morning of October 6, when his cavalry was away on a foraging party, Pond and the remainder of his garrison were surprised by Quantrill and his men, who encountered the post on their way south to winter in Texas. Pond and his men raced to their weapons, fighting off the attack after a short struggle, highlighted by Pond's solo operation of a twelve-pound cannon outside the fortifications, for which he received the Medal of Honor. Driven off by the effective fire, Quantrill's scouts saw an approaching wagon train and the guerrillas shifted targets. The oncoming force was the personal escort of General Blunt, with wagons carrying documents and records of his headquarters as well as members of the Third Wisconsin's regimental band. A small cavalry detachment acted as an escort.³⁹

The convoy was traveling south from Fort Scott on the military road because Blunt, commanding the District of the Frontier, was transferring his district headquarters from Fort Scott to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. When the guerrillas were first seen, Blunt and his men initially thought the men, wearing captured blue Union uniforms, were an honor guard from Pond's garrison that was going to escort the convoy to the Union camp. Quantrill's men suddenly fired upon Blunt's party of about one hundred staff officers, clerks, and bandsmen, which broke under the surprise volleys and raced away. Blunt escaped unharmed thanks to his superb horse. The Union death toll was seventy-nine, with many murdered by the guerrillas, including most of the unarmed bandsmen. Also killed at Baxter Springs was General Blunt's adjutant, Major Henry Zarah Curtis, the son of Brigadier General Samuel R. Curtis, former district and field commander in the Departments of Missouri and Kansas. The remains of Major Curtis were escorted to Fort Scott by an honor guard from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, where they were received by his wife and subsequently transported to his home for burial. Approximately one year later, in 1864, General Curtis named a new fort protecting the Santa Fe Trail, Fort Zarah, after his son. Quantrill returned to the fort after destroying the wagon train, demanding its surrender. Pond refused and the guerrilla leader opted to resume his march south. Blunt struggled into Baxter Springs later that evening, and after resting, returned to Fort Scott about four days later, where he sharply condemned his escort for its "disorderly and disgraceful retreat." On October 19, Schofield proceeded with his plans to relieve Blunt, and McNeil was given command of the District of the

³⁸ John N. Edwards, *Shelby and His Men; or, The War in the West* (Cincinnati: Miami Printing and Publishing, 1867); Joseph, *The Civil War in the American West*, 374-375.

³⁹ Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 158-160; Action at Baxter Springs, Report by General James G. Blunt, October 19, 1863, O.R., I: 22/1 (S #32), 688-689.

Frontier.⁴⁰

Despite all the success achieved by Union forces in Indian Territory during the year, the refugee situation in the Indian Territory remained perilous and the approach of winter only worsened the possibilities of disaster. Their circumstances were only worsened by continued poor relations between civilian and military officials. In mid-October, an Indian agent warned William Coffin that the number of refugees was increasing, prospects for transporting adequate amounts of food and supplies from Kansas would surely decrease with the onset of winter weather, and the lands to the south were still occupied by Confederate forces. Coffin recommended delaying the return of those Indians still in Kansas to Indian Territory until the Confederates could be fully removed. Unless Army management in the military department improved, he warned, the Interior Department would have to sustain the refugees for the upcoming winter, as well as the following summer and winter.⁴¹

The military situation involving Fort Scott remained serious as the year ended, and enlistments and post improvements continued. On November 1, 1863, the Second Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment mustered into federal service, three weeks before the Fourteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment joined the Union Army at the post. Midway through the month, in a bid to improve communications, army engineers received authorization to obtain enough supplies to build a telegraph line from Kansas City to Fort Scott. The surrounding county to the south and east of the post was reportedly completely free of bushwhackers, except for small bands in Montevallo and Nevada City, in Missouri. The main threat to area peace remained Stand Watie and his Cherokee Regiment, with residents in Humboldt worried about a raid up the Neosho Valley.⁴²

Union efforts to completely secure the Indian Territory remained hampered by bureaucratic fighting between the Interior and War departments. Late in November, Indian agents reported about ten thousand loyal Cherokees in Indian Territory, with about eight thousand dependent upon federal relief. The agent wrote that for the Indians to supply themselves "it will be absolutely necessary to have the hearty cooperation of an efficient military force. This they have, so far, been deprived of," and as a result, all the lands outside the immediate protection of Fort Gibson were uninhabitable. In addition to the complete lack of protection, the military was blamed for "reckless disregard paid by troops to Cherokee property," with soldiers reported killing cattle and taking just a few cuts of meat, leaving the rest to rot. With the exception of Fort Gibson, most of the white troops in the region had moved east to Fort Smith, where they assisted the effort to push the Confederates out of Arkansas. Until the army sent a military commander able to work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the agent predicted, the dire situation would remain. In one last military display, Stand Watie's Indian forces attacked the Union Indian

⁴⁰ Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 158-161; Blunt report, October 19, 1863.

⁴¹ Milo Gookins to Coffin, October 17, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 338-339; Coffin to Dolc, October 23, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 338.

⁴² *O.R.*, II:4: 844; Post Returns, Fort Scott, National Archives, Microcopy No. 617, Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1137, Fort Scott, Kansas, January 1861 — October 1865.

regiments at Fort Gibson in December, but the Confederates were driven off.⁴³

The Army's efforts to professionalize the war by imposing its organizational structure and regulations over the state's military forces continued to produce success on the battlefield. After three years of conflict, Fort Scott had grown into a well-organized supply and mustering site, ringed by protective subposts and connected to superior officers by telegraph lines. What had been a disorganized, dirty encampment for men led by James Lane had been turned into a post containing warehouses full of quartermaster and commissary supplies, protected by a ring of siege guns and well-built fortifications. The post's economic benefits continued to reverberate through Bourbon County and the rest of southeast Kansas, while the troops' paychecks fueled the development of Fort Scott. While the North had seized the momentum in the Civil War, Fort Scott stood ready for any further Confederate offensives.

⁴³ A.G. Proctor, Late Special Indian Agent, to Coffin, November 28, 1863, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, serial 1184, vol. 3, 1st sess, 38th Congress (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 340-341.

Chapter Eight:

“Relieved from a vile bondage”

Raising Regiments at Fort Scott

Throughout the Civil War, Fort Scott exerted significant influence on Union military endeavor despite its location in a remote corner of the western theater of operations. Supplying Army troops with quartermaster and support services, the post provided an excellent combination of factors for recruitment of whites, African Americans, and Indians as it guarded southeastern Kansas. As one of the larger population and market centers in the sparsely populated frontier state, Fort Scott served as an excellent point for recruiting regiments for the Union army. Refugee camps containing whites, Indians and African Americans surrounded Fort Scott, providing hundreds of volunteers for new regiments. Fort Scott's regiments helped to stabilize southeast Kansas, occupy western Missouri and eventually win back the Indian Territory, while providing crucial manpower for the drive that occupied northern Arkansas. The combination of these campaigns assisted in gaining federal control of the Mississippi River and the eventual severing of the Confederacy into two separate parts.¹

Fort Scott served as a recruiting and mustering center for southern Kansas from the war's first year, organizing white, African American, and Indian regiments. Most of the earliest organized units consisted exclusively of white volunteers. The Sixth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment originated in three infantry companies formed in July 1861 as the Fort Scott Home Guards. Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon authorized raising the units and placed Major William R. Judson in command to protect southeastern Kansas from guerrilla attacks from Missouri. The original force was inadequate for the task, and in August the Army reorganized the Home Guards into a regiment. Five new companies, four mounted and the fifth of infantry, were added. The original three infantry companies remained on garrison duty at Fort Scott until September 1, when they marched to Fort Lincoln following the battle of Drywood and the resulting evacuation of Fort Scott. On September 9, 1861, the regiment's companies held elections for field officers and the troops elected Judson colonel. The regiment accompanied James Lane on his mid-September Osceola expedition, finally returning to Fort Scott for garrison and patrol duty. In a reorganization ordered in spring 1862, the three original Home Guard companies mustered out. The state's adjutant general reassigned the remaining infantry company to the Eighth Kansas, making the shortened Sixth Kansas a pure cavalry regiment. By May of 1862, the Army scattered the companies, “for a long time the only protection of this frontier,” according to their hometown

¹ Alvin M. Josephy Jr., *The Civil War in the American West* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); Laurence M. Hauptman, *Between Two Fires: American Indians in the Civil War* (New York: The Free Press, 1995). Headline quotation from Col. J.A. Williams, addressing the men of the First Kansas (Colored) Volunteers, July 12, 1863. “You are but just relieved from a vile bondage, and have had but few opportunities for learning the importance of saving carefully the proceeds of your toil.” Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

newspaper, in small outposts along Kansas' southern border, with headquarters in Paola.²

The Fifth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment originated at Fort Leavenworth on July 12, 1861, when two companies of mounted soldiers formed. In July, Col. William Weer led the troops to Harrisonville, Missouri, where they met a supply train and accompanied it to Fort Scott. Three companies joined the regiment there, and Col. Hampton P. Johnson assumed command. Two companies of infantry also raised at Fort Scott joined the regiment. The men of Company C came mostly from Modina, Missouri, and Decatur, Iowa, while Company D's roster principally comprised men from Mound City and Fort Scott. After taking part in the battle of Drywood Creek early in September, the regiment then moved into Missouri. In October, the mounted units returned to patrolling duties around Fort Scott and Fort Lincoln.³

One of the major population centers for southeast Kansas, Fort Scott served as the mustering post for two other Kansas units of white soldiers. In 1862, Brigadier General James Blunt ordered Maj. Charles Blair, Second Kansas Cavalry, to raise and command a battery of light artillery — two 12-pound field howitzers and four six-pound guns, all captured from the Confederates. The Second Battery Light Artillery mustered in at Fort Scott, September 10, 1862. One-hundred-and-twenty-three officers and men received immediate assignment to the Army of the Frontier. The Army formed some mustered regiments for a specific purpose. Tracing its origins to a four-company detachment formed early in 1863 as an escort to Brig. Gen. James Blunt, the Army formally mustered the Fourteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment into federal service at Fort Scott in November 1863. It was common for many officers of these state units to serve simultaneously in several capacities. In one example of the multiple duties assigned to many Civil War officers, Capt. George J. Clark of the Fourteenth also served as ordnance officer at Fort Scott.⁴

The North's white male population pool was large, but not limitless, and calls for recruitments of minorities soon arose. Seeking to continue what they saw as a tradition of relying solely upon white troops, many in the national government initially opposed using Indians and African Americans as soldiers. When the Chippewa nation offered one hundred warriors for federal duty early in 1861, Secretary of War Henry Cameron turned down the offer, stating that "the nature of our present national troubles forbids the use of savages." A large number of Osages, in full war dress, came into Fort Scott in August of that year to offer their services, but officers told them the Army did not need their assistance. News from Southern sources indicated that the Confederacy was seeking Indian soldiers, sparking concern among federal officials. In

² Charles E. Cory, "The Sixth Kansas Cavalry and its Commander," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society* 11 (1909-1910), 217-38; Fort Scott *Western Volunteer*, April 5, 1862; Donald L. Gilmore, "Total War on the Missouri Border," *Journal of the West* 35, n. 3 (July 1996), 70-80.

³ *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-'65*, Vol. 1 (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Company, 1896), 66-72.

⁴ The history of the Second Battery Light Artillery is contained in Frederick Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, Vol. 2 (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside, 1979), 1185-86, William S. Burke, comp., *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments During the War for the Suppression of the Great Rebellion* (Leavenworth: W.S. Burke, 1870), 438-45 and *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-'65*, Vol. 1, 263-67. The Fourteen Kansas Regiment is discussed in Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, Vol. 2: 1184-85; Kansas Adjutant General's Office, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments*: 374-81; and *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-'65*, Vol. 1, 228-32.

July 1861, Congress asked Secretary of War for a report on Confederate use of Indian and African American troops. Although the Army definitely confirmed southern recruitment of American Indians, Cameron, continuing his department's reluctance to break with its white tradition, quickly reported his department had no information on the matter.⁵

Although northern sentiment generally opposed placing minorities in uniform, when circumstances forced recruitment of Indians and African Americans, the public was more receptive to arming Indians. By the middle of the nineteenth century, American society saw Indians as a doomed race, destined for extinction in the face of white progress. Indians retained mythic status in literature, but they no longer threatened expansion of the nation as they had before the battle of Tippecanoe in 1809. The federal government moved the great majority of Indians away from white settlements along the Atlantic coast, further distancing them from most white Americans. In comparison, African Americans lived in cities and towns across the nation, and in literature and folklore stereotypes of laziness and lack of intellect limited any chance that Americans might entrust them with protecting national safety. Some thought that any training or weapons African Americans received could present new hazards when they returned to their homes after the war.⁶

The cannons that shelled Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor initiated a change in American attitudes. As the war began, abolitionists called for recruitment of African Americans. They saw the creation of all-African American units as the catalyst that would shift what was a war to restore the union into a fight to free the slaves, and help justify African American calls for equality. Other northerners joined in the campaign to allow former slaves and freemen to volunteer, but their reasons were less idealistic. African Americans, some believed, were more resistant to tropical diseases found in the South; others saw them as more than adequate to serve as cannon fodder. Some believed that the South would recruit African Americans, and the North must not give up such an advantage. A minority of advocates proposed to recruit African Americans for use as laborers, freeing whites from physically draining duties.⁷

Confronted with its numerical inferiority, the South used its minority population much earlier than the Union. While the Confederate government staunchly opposed arming African Americans, it used hundreds of them in non-combat functions. Slave owners rented many of those slaves who aided the Southern cause to the Confederate government in defense of their homeland. Fearful of the effects armed African Americans would have on the slave population in general and mindful of recent slave revolts, southerners relegated their volunteers to non-combat assignments. Some units did fight, most notably the Native Guards, Louisiana Militia, which by

⁵ Cameron to D. Cooper, May 9, 1861, United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as *O.R.*), 3:1, 184; Motion of Mr. Wickliffe, July 22, 1861; *Fort Scott Democrat*, August 24, 1861; Cameron to Galusha A. Grow, Speaker of the House of Representative, July 25, 1851, *O.R.*, 3:1, 340-41.

⁶ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1982), 1-31; Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Knopf, 1979); Gerald Astor, *The Right to Fight: A History of African Americans in the Military* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1998).

⁷ Ira Berlin, ed. *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867; Series II: The Black Military Experience* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 74.

the end of 1861 totaled about 440 men in fourteen companies, but most African Americans served away from the fighting. In 1862, Confederate regiments hired four cooks per company, each paid \$15 a month. The Confederate quartermaster department hired African Americans teamsters, and they also served as hospital stewards, ambulance drivers, and stretcher bearers. Hundreds of slaves worked on Southern railroads, in armories, and on defensive fortifications. Even out of uniform, African Americans proved crucial to the southern cause, and northern military leaders began joining the abolitionists' push to free slaves as the magnitude of their contribution became apparent. As the war's fortunes turned against them, Confederate officials considered wide-scale recruiting of African Americans for combat troops. The southern Congress passed such legislation in March 1865, authorizing the enlistment of 200,000 with the promise of emancipation if they remained loyal throughout the war. The war ended before the Confederacy could organize any units.⁸

Southerners had few qualms about recruiting Indian troops. Following the outbreak of hostilities, leaders of the Confederate States of America considered seizing control of the Indian Territory and using Indians as a source of military troops in the West. By May 13, 1861, Confederate leaders authorized Brigadier General Benjamin McCulloch to lead three regiments from Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana into Indian Territory and ordered Southern agents to recruit and organize three Indian regiments.⁹

Other attempts at military alliance followed. A day after issuing orders to McCulloch, Secretary of War Leroy Walker sent David Hubbard, superintendent of Indian Affairs, to Indian Territory in hopes of securing tribal allegiances. Walker believed that Hubbard must convince the Indians that "their cause has become our cause." On May 20, 1861, two Missouri State Militia officials proposed raising an Indian army. The men told Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America, that the Cherokees and other Indian Territory occupants owned slaves and believed Indian "interests and feelings are wholly with the South." They predicted that six white regiments raised in Texas and Louisiana, combined with the South's natural allies in Indian Territory, could split the eastern United States from its Pacific Coast states by driving the Union army out of Kansas, Missouri, and Colorado. Despite such optimism, a consistent lack of arms crippled Confederate attempts to organize the Indian Territory population into reliable military regiments.¹⁰

Confederate Indian units joined the Confederate advance into Missouri in the late summer of 1861. In August, the Choctaw and Chickasaw mounted rifle regiments made up one-fifth of Ben McCulloch's command that pushed Union forces out of central Missouri, a campaign that

⁸ Hondon B. Hargrove, *Black Union Soldiers in the Civil War* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 1988), 1-6; Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998), 1-10.

⁹ Annic Heloise Abel, *The American Indian as Participant in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1919; paperback reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992, with a new title: *The American Indian in the Civil War, 1862-1865*) and *The American Indian as Slaveholder and Secessionist* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1925; paperback edition, University of Nebraska Press, 1992); Robert L. Duncan, *Reluctant General: The Life and Times of Albert Pike* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1961); Arrel M. Gibson, "Confederates on the Plains: The Pike Mission to the Wichita Agency," *Great Plains Quarterly* 4 (Fall 1964), 7-16.

¹⁰ Walker to Hubbard, May 14, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 577-578; F.J. Marshall and R. H. Weightman to Jefferson Davis, May 20, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:3, 579.

culminated in the battle of Wilson's Creek. Most of the Cherokees, led by Stand Watie, the most prominent Indian general of the Civil War, refused to join the expedition, arguing that their treaty with the Confederacy limited their involvement to protection of their homes. Only a small number marched north, joining the Arkansas regiment. Following their defeat at Wilson's Creek, Union commanders withdrew to central Missouri and began preparations for the next campaign. The following spring, northern troops commanded by Samuel Curtis began a new effort to reverse their fortunes.¹¹

The two armies met at Pea Ridge, just south of the Arkansas state line, on March 7, 1862. Confederate forces had been wintering in camps in southwestern Missouri, and as warmer weather approached, commanders ordered a withdrawal further south for resupply. Upon hearing of the Union advance, the Southerners ended their retreat and marched north, reinforced by about 1,000 Cherokees and Creeks and a unit of Texas cavalry. Led by Brigadier General Albert Pike, the Indian units arrived in Confederate camps only to find that white soldiers had appropriated most of their promised guns, clothing, and supplies. When the armies met, the Confederate Indians raced into action using their own shotguns and hunting rifles. John Drew's Cherokees and a squadron of Texas horsemen charged forward, followed by Stand Watie's dismounted soldiers. The screaming masses of men unnerved the federal troops, and the Indian-Texan rush achieved initial success on the battle's first morning. The combined unit overran a Union artillery position, but the Indians refused to complete their victory by pursuing the retreating federal troops, instead dancing in triumph around the seized cannons. Union soldiers regrouped nearby, drove off the Indian regiments and recovered the artillery pieces. Unable to push the Indians back into a battle formation, Confederate officers could only pull their regiments back behind the Southern lines, where they did not see any more action that day.¹²

After the battle, several northerners were found scalped and dismembered. Union commanders condemned Pike and his regiments. In a letter to his Confederate counterpart, Curtis expressed his shock at finding his soldiers "tomahawked, scalped, and their bodies shamefully mangled." Northern newspapers amplified the charges. Confederate officials distanced themselves from the accusations, and focused the blame on Pike. Stung by the charges, the leader of the Indian forces withdrew his command back into Indian Territory and away from unified action with other Southern armies. The Indian regiments had proven to both sides to be of value, as the complaints of the North amply demonstrated. Indian soldiers also had unparalleled ability to become the center of controversy.¹³

After Pea Ridge, the Union army pushed back the Confederates, encountering new

¹¹ Out of a total of 5,393 in McCulloch's Brigade, the two Indian regiments contributed 1,085 men, Abstract from Monthly Report of McCulloch's Brigade, *O.R.* 1:3, 690; Wilfred Knight, *Red Fox: Stand Watie and the Confederate Indian Nations During the Civil War Years in Indian Territory* (Glendale, Calif: Arthur H. Clark, 1988); W. Craig Gaines, *The Confederate Cherokees: John Drew's Regiment of Mounted Rifles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989); Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), 216.

¹² Roy A. Clifford, "Indian Regiments in the Battle of Pea Ridge," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 25 (Winter 1947-48), 314-22.

¹³ T.I. McKenney to Earl Van Dorn, March 9, 1862, *O.R.* 1:8, 194; Curtis to Capt. J.C. Kelton, March 13, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:3, 195.

problems, some directly induced in part by their battlefield success. As the North won a series of battles early in the conflict, federal control extended to the Indian Territory and Arkansas. To guard these new possessions and to compensate for the diversion of western troops to the eastern theater and mounting combat losses, military leaders sought other sources of soldiers. The region remained peripheral to the war effort, further accentuating the need for indigenous manpower.¹⁴

African Americans contributed to the country's military needs even before its creation, serving as troops in the Revolutionary War, but discrimination emerged during peace time. The Military Act of 1792, which restricted enlistments to "free able-bodied white male" citizens, typified the barriers African Americans faced. Military necessity led Andrew Jackson to use volunteer African American units in the Battle of New Orleans in 1814, but their acceptance lasted only until the war ended. Excluded by recruiting regulations, few African Americans served in the nation's pre-Civil War combat units, although there were no rules prohibiting the employment of African Americans as laborers. In 1842, Quartermaster General Thomas Jessup reported 106 African Americans employed by his department, all slaves in Florida mainly working as deckhands and laborers. Army engineers hired 570 African Americans that year, the overwhelming majority serving as laborers.¹⁵

During the war's first years, the United States Army remained an overwhelmingly white force, continuing its prewar tradition of excluding nonwhites. Northern populations, at first seeing the Civil War as a battle to preserve the Union, rejected the concept of nonwhites wearing uniforms. Politicians hoped for a short conflict, and saw any recruitment of African Americans as antagonistic to southerners and harmful to reconciliation efforts. Senior military officers also held that the insurrection would be short-lived. Their initial manpower estimates were low. President Lincoln called upon the states to provide 75,000 militiamen serving for ninety days as reinforcements for the Army's 17,000 troops. An early rush of white volunteers flooded into Union recruitment stations, straining the Army's ability to organize, clothe, train, and lead the new regiments. The confusion added new and compelling reasons to refuse African American volunteers. Battlefield losses, publication of long casualty lists, and the widespread realization that military life was boring, dangerous, and dirty soon quelled the initial surge of enthusiasm. As government leaders finally accepted that victory required massive numbers of men, amounting to more than 2.2 million, and resistance to conscription became a feature of wartime life in the North, the hunt began for other sources for troops. Soon American Indians and African Americans received the opportunity to serve.¹⁶

The earliest deployment of minorities in Civil War uniforms came in the Union Navy, where African Americans served beginning in September 1861. Many African Americans

¹⁴ Wiley Briton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War* (Kansas City, Mo.: Franklin Hudson, 1922); Thomas Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers: Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-1890* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

¹⁵ Morris J. MacGregor and Bernard Nalty, eds., *Blacks in the United States Armed Forces: Basic Documents, Vol. 1: A Time of Slavery* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1977).

¹⁶ For a general history of African Americans in the Civil War, see Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987), Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

working in the nation's merchant and fishing fleets found a home in the naval service because they possessed the technical skills needed to operate ships. The rapidly expanding Navy, which soared from 76 vessels in March 1860 to 671 in December 1861, also remained the only military branch that would accept African American volunteers. Many slaves escaped to freedom onboard naval ships, and several Northern ship commanders recommended their employment. On September 16, 1861, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles authorized the enlistment of fugitives into the Navy if officers saw a need for their services. The cramped quarters onboard the ships reduced discrimination and segregation, and African Americans typically slept and ate in common quarters with their white counterparts; many African Americans won advancement in rank and supervised white sailors. By the end of the Civil War African Americans made up a quarter of total naval personnel.¹⁷

Political and social inhibitions delayed recruitment of African Americans in the Army, but Indian soldiers found quicker acceptance. The limited success of the Confederate Indian participation in the battles of Wilson's Creek and Pea Ridge was only one factor that led to organization of Union Indian units. James Lane had long advocated recruiting such regiments, and by 1862 influential voices such as General David Hunter, former commander of the Kansas department, and William P. Dole, Lincoln's Commissioner of Indian Affairs, joined him. Indian regiments were an obvious solution to the ongoing troop shortage in the West. The growing numbers of Indians in refugee camps and small reservations across Kansas provided a fertile source of recruits, especially when many displaced Indians were excited to fight to reclaim their homes. The Army established a large refugee camp and military staging area about twelve miles south of Fort Scott, where the old military road crossed the Drywood Creek. Quartermasters used the area as a rendezvous and point of departure for southbound convoys, allowing the long formations of mule- and ox-drawn wagons room to line up while they awaited escorts. Convoys coming back from Indian Territory transported wounded Union soldiers and captured Confederate as well as white, Indian and African American refugees. Wagons typically carried these refugees as far as Drywood Creek, where a refugee camp formed on the north side of the creek. Under orders from commanders at Fort Scott, the district quartermaster stationed at the post provided the refugees with subsistence, shelter, clothing, and blankets. Other large concentrations of Indian refugees formed to the west of Fort Scott in the Neosho River valley, near Humboldt, Iola, Leroy, Fall River and Walnut, Kansas. Compounding the Indian problem was the absence of federal agents near their assigned tribes, with the men joining either the Confederacy or unwilling to place themselves in physical danger by remaining in Indian Territory. In a typical example, the Osage agent relocated to the town of Fort Scott when the war broke out. As the Union gradually regained control over Indian Territory, the federal government

¹⁷ Martha S. Putney, *Black Sailors: Afro-American Merchant Seamen and Whalers Prior to the Civil War* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987); W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997); Herbert Aptheker, "The Negro in the Union Navy," *Journal of Negro History* 32 (April 1947), 169-70; Joe H. Mays, *Black Americans and Their Contributions Toward Union Victory in the American Civil War, 1861-1865* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 59-68.

reestablished the agency system.¹⁸

Political circumstances continued to dominate military use of Indian regiments. Lincoln approved an expedition to reoccupy the Indian Territory that included authorization to raise two Indian Home Guard regiments. On April 4, 1862, the Army's Adjutant General's office ordered Major General Henry Halleck, senior commander in the Department of Missouri, to begin organizing two Indian units. Limits on the new regiments stemmed from fears of Indian behavior. The refugee Indian soldiers were only to defend their homes and the Indian Territory once Union forces reoccupied it. Seeking to mute possible criticism of Indian outrages against whites, Halleck further limited their scope, ordering that the new units "can be used only against Indians or in defense of their own territory and homes." Nebraskan Col. Robert Furnas commanded the First Indian Regiment, consisting of mostly Creek refugees. The Army mustered it into federal service at Leroy, Kansas, northwest of Fort Scott. The Second Indian Regiment soon followed. Commanded by Col. John Ritchie, the regiment organized near Humboldt, Kansas, and consisted of Osages, Cherokees, Quapaws, Seminoles and members of other smaller Indian tribes. One unintended consequence of this organizing effort was the inclusion in the regiment of African Americans, former slaves and freemen who lived among the Indians.¹⁹

The civilian population initially opposed Indian regiments. Kansas newspaper editors agreed with the North's position that excluded Indian soldiers. Warriors would rather fight than eat, the *Topeka State Record* observed, but the newspaper beseeched the federal government, bowing to humane considerations, not to follow the southern example of arming Indians. While condemning the Confederates for employing "wild Indians," the newspaper expected that "if this war continues for any length of time the Indian will become an element in it." That prediction came true for the North within six months. The Fort Scott newspaper, reporting that Weer was in Humboldt training Indian regiments, expressed a characteristic sentiment of the time and place: "Their principal use is to devour Uncle Sam's hard-bread and beef, and spend his money. They will be as valuable as a flock of sheep in time of action. They ought to be disbanded immediately."²⁰

Attempting to integrate the warriors of two totally different societies proved to be a long and difficult experience that political circumstances made even more complicated. As the Confederate threat to Missouri and Kansas became clearer during the first year of combat, leaders in Washington, D.C., reassessed their hands-off policy in Indian Territory. Caleb Smith, Lincoln's first Secretary of the Interior, broached the idea of raising two or more regiments of

¹⁸ Wendell H. Stephenson, "The Political Career of General James H. Lane," *Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society* 3 (1930), 123-33; Edmund J. Danziger, Jr., "The Office of Indian Affairs and the Problem of Civil War Indian Refugees in Kansas," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 35, n. 3 (Autumn 1969), 257-75; David A. Nichols, *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policies and Politics* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978); David Banks, "Civil War Refugees from Indian Territory in the North, 1861-1864," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 41, n. 3 (1963), 286-98

¹⁹ L. Thomas, Adjutant General, to Gen. Henry Halleck, April 4, 1862 and Halleck to Brigadier General J.W. Denver, April 5, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 664-65; Josephy, *The Civil War in the American West*, 354-55; Edwin Redkey, ed., *An Army of Grand Black Men. Letters from African American Soldiers 1861-1865* (Cambridge University Press, 1992).

²⁰ *Topeka State Record*, August 17, 1861; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 21, 1862; Wiley Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War* (Kansas City, Mo.: Franklin Hudson Publishing, 1922).

loyal Indians in the spring of 1862. He hoped to relieve the refugee problem in Kansas while keeping the Confederates away from northern territory. Initially, the Army assigned few white officers to the units, leaving the companies that made up the regiment under the control of Indian officers. The informal nature of leadership limited training for the new regiments, and in the Army's estimation the units were not ready for combat. Their brigade commander believed that the addition of even a few experienced officers would dramatically increase the regiment's effectiveness. After active campaigning in June and July, the First Indian Home Guard Regiment became demoralized; uncertainties about returning to their homes and intertribal conflicts worsened the companies' leadership problems. The government had to reorganize the regiment in October, with Army lieutenants replacing their Indian counterparts. Eventually, the Army promoted white noncommissioned officers out of veteran regiments, commissioning them to instill the army way into the Indian regiments.²¹

The Second Indian Regiment displayed the effects of ineffective leadership even more dramatically. The Osages and Quapaws never adjusted to Army regulations and procedures, and the government mustered them out after a series of mass desertions. To replace them, the Army turned to Cherokees and mixed-bloods. The unit became slightly more effective but in the opinion of military leaders, it still needed more regular army officers. The Third Indian Home Guard Regiment evolved in a different fashion. It consisted mostly of Confederate Cherokees who had deserted from the regiments commanded by John Ross and John Drew in the late spring and summer of 1862. The Union Army mustered this regiment at Carthage, Missouri, on September 16, 1862. The brigade commander predicted their ultimate usefulness, noting that "they are brave as death, active to fight, but lazy. They ought invariably to be mounted; they make poor infantry, but first-class mounted riflemen." Despite the regiments' shortcomings, its soldiers served in the summer Indian Expedition of 1862 and remained in Indian Territory as the principal Union military force and provided a measure of effective defense.²²

In addition to Indians allied with the Confederacy, the Army also had to deal with threats and sporadic attacks on settlers and travelers by Plains Indians in central and western Kansas. Most remained quiet for the first two years of the war, but white settlers periodically complained of threatened attacks, forcing a response from Fort Scott. When he sent a Second Ohio patrol to Humboldt in October 1862, post commander Major B.S. Henning warned his men to avoid confrontations with Indians but to threaten them with the "serious displeasure of the Federal Government." In preparation for a similar mission mounted four days later, Henning informed the patrol commander that if white settlers were to blame for the disturbances, regulations authorized Army officers to punish them. By November, Henning informed superior officers in St. Louis of a possible outbreak among the Osage Indians, sparked by the government's failure to honor its promise to pay Indian volunteers. Hoping to avoid a new military problem, Henning recommended that the Army or the Interior Department send a replacement agent west to handle the Indians complaints before violence erupted. As the Union's military situation brightened, more soldiers became available for frontier duty and Kansas was spared the horrors of any

²¹ L. Thomas to Gen. Henry Halleck, April 4, 1862, *O.R.*, I:8, 659-660; Col. William Phillips to Curtis, January 19, 1863, *O.R.*, I:22, 56-62.

²² Col. William Phillips to Major General Curtis, January 19, 1863, *O.R.* I:22/2, 57-58.

serious Indian war until 1864.²³

While African Americans could serve in United States warships, political concerns, chiefly Lincoln's desire to keep the four border states in the Union camp, initially prevented the widespread use of slaves in the army. The president regarded the Confederacy as a group of rebelling states rather than a nation seeking independence. He believed the United States Constitution limited his legal right to confiscate a citizen's property without compensation. The restrictions also included freeborn African Americans. When a group of northern freemen sought the right to enlist, Secretary of War Simon Cameron declined their services, saying that his department had no intentions of recruiting "any colored soldiers." Cameron did display some signs of support for recruiting African Americans in his annual report for 1861, but before he could advance this idea the federal government assigned him as minister to Russia on January 11, 1862.²⁴

For the most part, military officers faithfully adhered to the administration's anti-abolitionist stance, although some bent presidential directives to suit their purposes. Dissenters came from two camps. Some held avid anti-slavery beliefs; others felt that slaves were a military resource that the Army should deny to the Confederacy. During spring 1861, Gen. Benjamin Butler gave asylum to several runaway slaves in Virginia, refusing to return them to their owners. Since Virginia claimed no longer to be part of the United States, he reasoned, federal laws did not apply to it. Beyond starting a legal precedent, Butler added to the complicated Civil War lexicon when he declared the newly freed fugitives "contrabands of war." Newspapers across the North used the phrase and it came to be applied to all slaves who crossed into Union territory. Congress approved the reasoning in the First Confiscation Act of August 1861, which punished treason by confiscation of property. The act forfeited ownership rights of anyone who permitted slaves to work for the Confederate war effort. The act left the slaves' legal status in limbo, releasing them from their owners but denying them actual legal freedom. The increasing flood of African Americans refugees seeking protection in the North heightened both public and government awareness that depriving the South of African American service could only help Union chances of victory.²⁵

Major General John C. Frémont, the well-known pre-war explorer commanding the Western Department, promoted his own anti-slavery policy. On Aug. 30, 1861, he proclaimed that all slaves held by people in rebellion to the United States to be free men. Less than two weeks later, Lincoln rescinded the proclamation, telling Frémont the general overstepped his authority. The Union defeat at Bull Run helped spark a change in national attitudes, as visions of a swift war evaporated and Army officers sought new ways to cripple the South's war machine. On the political front, abolitionists won more support for their battle against slavery. The federal government soon modified its stance, broadening the limitations of Lincoln's restrictions and

²³ Henning to Capt. Stauhope, 2nd Ohio, October 6, 1862, "Old Book 981-82, 988-92. Bound as 394 Dept. Mo." Roll 25, page 54, Department of Missouri Telegraphs, Orders, Etc., Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Henning to Col. N.P. Chipman, November 13, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:8, 790.

²⁴ Cameron to Jacob Dodson, *O.R.* 3:1, 107, 133; Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 121-147.

²⁵ Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative* (New York: Random House, 1958), 95-96.

antebellum law. On October 14, 1861, the War Department authorized Brig. Gen. Thomas Sherman, commander of a federal expedition to South Carolina, to use any person, including escaped slaves, as he saw fit, "as ordinary employees, or, if special circumstances seem to require it, in any other capacity," provided he promise just compensation to any loyal slaveholders who lost their laborers.²⁶

The inability to win a decisive victory in the first half of 1862 led to two significant pieces of federal legislation that would directly affect Fort Scott. Under a new militia act calling up a draft of nine-month volunteers, the president received discretionary power to recruit African Americans for any service, including combat. Congress passed the Second Confiscation Act in July 1862. The new law confiscated the property of traitors and freed their slaves, with the president given the authority to use their labor in any manner he saw fit.²⁷

Out in Kansas, Fort Scott became a source of African American soldiers, as it became a refugee station for former slaves fleeing from Missouri, Arkansas and the Indian Territory. Once the Union Army leadership accepted the advantages of recruiting African Americans and Indians, Fort Scott and Fort Leavenworth in eastern Kansas became the logical places to start. They were home to trained officers, adequate amounts of military supplies and a large number of former slaves and refugee Indians. From 1860 to 1865, the African American population in Kansas soared from 627 to 12,527, and by the end of the war, African Americans made up almost one-quarter of Fort Scott's population. Many lived in a large contraband camp in the woods along Buck Run, a small stream on the town's east side, but as one writer noted "Some are glad to get work and prove their manhood and usefulness; others lounge in idleness, refusing good offers, preferring to live on the hospitality of those who have erected little shanties and are earning a living."²⁸

On the islands off the South Carolina coast, the Army continued to experiment with African Americans regiments. Col. David Hunter, the former commander of the Department of Kansas, reversed his opposition to James Lane's minority units. After his reassignment to the southern coast early in 1862 he declared all captured slaves freed and organized the First South Carolina Colored Regiment. Continuing the policies he followed in reaction to Frémont in Missouri and Cameron in his Annual Report of 1861, Lincoln disavowed Hunter's attempt at emancipation. The African American unit soon disbanded. The presidential rebuke was not as sharp as his earlier responses. As part of the message to Hunter, the president indicated that military powers granted to the nation's commander in chief in time of war might supercede political considerations that prevented a civilian leader from seizing property protected by the Constitution. A further hint of Lincoln's shift in policy came later in 1862. The army transferred Gen. Benjamin Butler to Louisiana after he began the "contrabands of war" argument in Virginia.

²⁶ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 353-56; Thomas A. Scott, Acting Secretary of War, to Sherman, October 14, 1861, *O.R.*, 1:6, 176-77.

²⁷ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 355, 498-501; Foote, *The Civil War*, 539-40.

²⁸ U.S. and Kansas census figures cited in Richard B. Sheridan, "From Slavery in Missouri to Freedom in Kansas: The Influx of Black Fugitives and Contrabands into Kansas, 1854-1865," *Kansas History* 12, n. 1 (Spring 1989): 28-47; Louis F. Burns, *A History of the Osage People* (Fallbrook, CA: Ciga Press, 1989), 341-52; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, November 29, 1862; C.M. Chase, August 19, 1863, Folder "Misc. - Chase, C.M.," Miscellaneous Collections, Chas-Ci, Kansas State Historical Society.

In August 1862 the president issued General Order No. 63, which authorized the formation of three African American regiments, subject to presidential approval. By late October the government organized and mustered the First and Second regiments of the Louisiana Native Guards into service, without the president's approval but without the clear rejection he previously evinced.²⁹

Kansas was ahead of the nation in its move to arm African Americans in part because of its troubled formation. One consequence of "Bleeding Kansas" was the recruitment and organization of Missouri fugitive slaves in separate regiments, and Kansas became the first of the free states to encourage African American soldiers. Reflecting the abolitionist sentiment in the state, many people, including James Lane, affirmed that putting African Americans into uniform represented the surest means of ending slavery's power. Far from any direct federal control, the state could easily do as it pleased in such matters.³⁰

Lane implemented his philosophy, and recruitment of African Americans began in Kansas. Appointed as commissioner of recruitment for the Department of Kansas in July 1862, Lane started raising volunteers for two regiments. Other Jayhawkers such as Charles Jennison and James Montgomery supported Lane. On August 4, 1862, Capt. James Williams and Capt. H.C. Seaman began recruiting across the northern and southern areas of Kansas. Many of the large number of African Americans, including fugitive slaves from Missouri, Arkansas and the Indian Territory, volunteered, displaying "a willing readiness to link their fate and their perils with their white brethren." By early August, Lane collected enough volunteers to fill four white regiments and two African Americans ones.³¹

Not everyone was happy with the policy, but Lane persisted. A July editorial in the Fort Scott newspaper strongly opposed African American soldiers. Opponents countered by charging that Lane and his officers kidnaped slaves from Missouri. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton warned Lane that he lacked the authority to recruit African Americans and the Army would not accept them into federal service, but Lane did not slow recruitment efforts. By mid-October, nearly five hundred African Americans had volunteered, including fifty in the Fort Scott area. The continual threat of attacks from guerrillas based in Missouri and Price's march directly to the east of the Kansas state line, coupled with the inability of the federal government to assign more white troops, helped cause a change in southeast Kansas' opposition to African American regiments. The Fort Scott newspaper offered the recruitment drive backhanded support, noting "we are heartily glad to be rid of them." Enough men gathered to organize into the First Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment.³²

²⁹ Butler to Halleck, October 24, 1862, *O.R.*, 1:15, 158; Butler to Halleck, November 6, 1862, *O.R.* 1:15, 162; Foote, *The Civil War*: 533-541.

³⁰ Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind* (authorized edition, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 90-94.

³¹ Berlin, *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation*.

³² *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-65* (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Company, 1896), 574-99; *Fort Scott Democrat*, July 26, 1862; Sheridan, "From Slavery in Missouri to Freedom in Kansas," 43-46; Dudley Taylor Cornish, *Kansas Negro Regiments in the Civil War* (Topeka: State of Kansas Commission on Civil Rights, 1969), 417.



The First Kansas Colored Infantry Regiment in combat at the Battle of Island Mound, as depicted in Harper's Weekly of March 14, 1863.

Even before their muster into federal service, the men of the First Kansas (Colored) found themselves in battle. African American recruits were drilling at Camp Jim Lane near Wyandotte, Kansas, by September. At the end of October in 1862, while encamped at Fort Lincoln en route to Fort Scott, five companies of the First Kansas (Colored) conducted a foraging expedition into adjacent Butler County, Missouri. On October 28 and 29, approximately five hundred mounted guerrillas attacked the encamped First Kansas (Colored), near Butler, Missouri, about thirty-five miles from Fort Scott. In a confused series of actions that involved flanking movements around the guerrillas, African American soldiers repelled a charge by mounted rebels. The Union infantrymen advanced through a prairie fire set by the Confederates and poured one decisive volley into the enemy. The troop of 225 African Americans drove off the numerically superior force, losing only ten men killed. This engagement became known as the Battle of Island Mound or Toothman's Mound. In a post-battle report, one white officer praised his men's efforts, writing that critics of African Americans in uniform "had received an answer to the often mooted question of 'will they fight.'"³³

The next small step toward accepting African Americans regiments came in January 1863, when Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation against a national backdrop of increased resistance to conscription and general weariness of combat losses. As the initial flood of white volunteers dried up, federal officials reexamined their opposition to arming African

³³ Capt. Robert Ward to Col. J.M. Williams, n.d., *O.R.* I:53, 455-56; Cornish, *Kansas Negro Regiments*.

Americans. The Army finally accepted Lane's African American soldiers of the First Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment into federal service on January 13, 1863, initially forming a battalion of six companies at Fort Scott. By May 2, the government organized four more companies and the Army ordered the now-complete regiment to Baxter Springs. In addition to freeing all those held as slaves in states involved in the rebellion, the Emancipation Proclamation publicly endorsed the idea of recruiting African American soldiers. In May 1863, the government established the Bureau for Colored Troops to regulate the recruitment and organization of African American units. The Army mustered in the first regiment of U.S. Colored Troops in Washington, D.C., on June 30, 1863. In 1864, after numerous African American Regiments had entered the Union Army, there was a major reorganization of all the black units. The government redesignated all of the state regiments as United States Colored Troops. The First Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment became the 79th United States Colored Infantry Regiment and the Second Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment became the 83rd United States Colored Infantry Regiment. The federal government still classified them as volunteer regiments, but they now represented the United States, not any one state.³⁴

Life for African Americans in the Army paralleled the boring and tedious experience of their white counterparts. Some of the First Kansas (Colored) men, like their counterparts in white regiments, entered service at too young an age, aided by zealous recruiters willing to accept any and all volunteers. If Army officers discovered them, the government dropped the underage recruits from the company rolls and returned them to their parents. Beyond the hazards of the battlefield, African American regiments encountered problems with their own army. One of the most decisive issues was collecting equal pay with their white and Indian counterparts. Privates in all other units received \$13 a month and an allowance in clothing of \$3.50 a month and one ration each. However, under the 1862 militia act, the Army paid African Americans \$10 a month, three dollars of which could be in clothing. African Americans protested the pay inequality until Congress in 1864 authorized all of those mustered into federal service to receive "the same uniform, clothing, arms, equipments, camp equipage, rations, medical and hospital attendants pay and emoluments, other than bounty." The government did not completely address the pay inequity until March 1865, when Congress authorized retroactive pay to African Americans units whose members had not received their promised pay.³⁵

Salary discrimination, combined with many cases of difficulty in getting paid at all, drove many early volunteers to desert. Often commanders dispatched the First Kansas (Colored) regimental chaplain, G.W. Hutchinson, to find the missing soldiers. Throughout the Army, African American soldiers continually provided more than their share of fatigue duties. In some instances, officers ordered them to set up and police the camps of neighboring white regiments. The Kansas troops ran into their own examples of discrimination. The regimental commander prohibited the unauthorized use of African Americans as cooks and waiters for officers in July

³⁴ Burke, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments*: 407-10.

³⁵ An Act to Amend the Act Calling Forth the Militia to Execute the Laws of the Union, July 17, 1862, *U.S. Statutes at Large*, cited in MacGregor and Nalty, *Blacks in the United States Armed Forces, Vol. II*: 25; Law of 15 June 1864, *U.S. Statutes at Large*, cited in MacGregor and Nalty, *Blacks in the United States Armed Forces, Vol. II*: 137; U.S. Statutes at Large, March 3, 1865, cited in MacGregor and Nalty, *Blacks in the United States Armed Forces, Vol. II*: 160.



The First Kansas Independent Light Artillery Battery (Colored), the first all-African American unit in the United States Army, training at Fort Leavenworth in 1865.

1863. Even after they proved themselves in combat, the Army's African American regiments often found themselves fighting their own government as well as the Confederates.³⁶

Six months after the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment entered federal service, the Army authorized another Kansas regiment of African Americans. Like its predecessor, most of the Second Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment came from the state's larger population areas along the eastern border, including Leavenworth and Wyandotte, with one company manned by Missouri volunteers. The government mustered the companies into federal service at Fort Scott as they filled, taking from August to mid-October. Applying the lessons learned from the Indian expedition, the regiment's officers were enlisted men recruited from battle-hardened regiments. Samuel J. Crawford, who became a governor of Kansas after the war, was the unit's commander. The regiment's first deployment came two days after K Company mustered, when commanders assigned it to escort a large supply train from Fort Scott to Fort Smith, Arkansas.³⁷

The early success of African Americans in uniform allowed the Army to expand its use of the minority troops. After proving their worth as infantry troops, African Americans received the

³⁶ Special Orders No. 28, Headquarters, District of the Frontier, Fort Blunt, August 16, 1863, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Cos A-K 79th Inf. (1st Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry), Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm Roll 2, frames 1685, 1680, 1600.

³⁷ Cornish, *Kansas Negro Regiments*, 12-15; *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-'65*; Burke, *Official Military History of Kansas Regiments*, 423-30.

opportunity to take the field with cannons. The Army sought recruits for the First Kansas Independent Light Artillery Battery (Colored) in Fort Scott and Fort Leavenworth between July and December of 1864. First Lieutenant William D. Matthews was one of the three African American officers assigned to organize this unit and he opened a recruiting office in Fort Scott during August of 1864. In 1862 Lieutenant Matthews recruited a company of African Americans for the First Kansas (Colored) Infantry Regiment, but the Army refused to commission him as an officer because the government had not authorized the War Department to accept black officers into the Army. Mustered in at Fort Leavenworth in January of 1865 and commanded by Captain H. Ford Douglass, the Independent Colored Battery was the first all-African American unit in the United States Army.³⁸

At the war's midpoint, the political objectives of restoring the union had shifted to ending slavery across the nation, and African Americans became a crucial element in that movement. Despite the growing influence of the anti-abolitionist movement, the use of African American troops in Kansas was the result of military necessity, not political pressures. Short of manpower in the West, the Union Army turned to other minorities. The recruitment of Indian regiments was also the result of military necessity. The Army eventually removed its initial limitations to their fighting in defense of their homes and not against white troops and they fought in Arkansas. Fort Scott was in a unique position to serve as the mustering point for the minority regiments. The state's frontier status had a limited white population; political circumstances arising from its location near slave owners and Indian Territory provided a ready source of recruits; military and political leaders in Kansas benefitted from the state's distance from senior officials in Washington, D.C.; and Fort Scott had a ready supply of officers, ammunition and other military necessities in place for supporting white regiments. Concentrating its efforts in the East forced the Union Army in the Trans-Mississippi region to fight an aggressive Confederacy with limited local resources. Thanks to the slave population of Missouri, Arkansas and the Indian Territory, and the refugee Indian population driven into Kansas, Fort Scott was positioned to assist in overcoming that shortage.

³⁸ *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas. 1861-'65*, 17.

Chapter Nine:

Supplies, Service, and Succor

Beyond being a recruiting center for soldiers during the Civil War, Fort Scott evolved into a major supply depot, serving widely scattered garrisons in Kansas, Missouri, and eventually the Indian Territory. It also furnished rations, weapons, and clothing for major expeditions mounted by the Army. To support those functions, the military eventually accumulated tons of supplies at the southeast Kansas post. The Army also rented numbers of buildings and vacant lots across town and soon large structures full of military material dominated the city. Miles of supply trains from Fort Leavenworth, made up of wagons pulled by mules, rolled down the old military road and into the new depot. Complementing the incoming supplies, quartermaster officers at Fort Scott purchased vast amounts of local agricultural products. The town newspaper advised area residents that "Everything in the shape of farm produce brings highest cash prices in Fort Scott." As part of the expanded military presence, the Army rented the original hospital building built by Thomas Swords for the 1842 military post and returned it to use as a medical facility. The government added several rented and newly constructed medical buildings and the post hospital developed into a General U.S. Army Hospital, the largest type of Union hospital. The town's rapid expansion and many soldiers' deaths filled the town cemetery and caused civic leaders and army officers to sponsor a drive to locate a new cemetery farther away from town.¹

Once an isolated frontier post, Fort Scott quickly became a significant base for the Union war effort. By May 10, 1862, sixty-seven officers and 1,654 enlisted men were present for duty there out of a total of 355 officers and 7,036 men in the Department of Kansas. Col. Frederick Salomon of the Ninth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry Regiment then commanded the post and the regiments stationed there included his own regiment; the Tenth Kansas, commanded by Col. William F. Cloud; Col. Charles Doubleday's Second Ohio Cavalry; and the Second Indiana Battery, led by Lt. M.K. Haines. Like soldiers everywhere, the Union troops stationed at Fort Scott created their own comforts. Cloud's regiment won recognition from the town newspaper for the arbors built in front of their tents, creating "a cool and pleasant retreat during the heat of the day." The civilian population added other diversions. Aside from a host of saloons and lager houses that catered to the off-duty troops, George Dimon installed a marble-bed billiard table in his hotel.²

As senior army officers applied the lessons of early combat, the methods of supplying troops changed from the slow-paced, financially strapped prewar organization to a more disciplined structure. The small storehouses chiefly located in Eastern cities gave way to huge

¹ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 31, 1862; *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, April 5, 1862; *Western Volunteer*, May 10, 1862.

² Abstract from Return of the Department of Kansas, May 10, 1862, Harney, "Proclamation to the People of the State of Missouri," May 21, 1861; United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as *O.R.*) 1:8, 376-377; *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, May 17, 1862; *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, May 17, 1862.



Fort Scott's civilian population, including these women shopping in a downtown store, enjoyed the fruits of federal dollars pouring into southeast Kansas.

numbers of immense warehouses scattered across the North. Large staging areas for gathering and distributing supplies — known as general depots — operated in New York, St. Louis, Fort Leavenworth, and San Francisco, under the command of the associated geographic department. St. Louis was the most important general depot in the trans-Mississippi region. Smaller depots, such as Fort Scott, were found within a military department, drawing supplies from the nearest general depot while under the control of the department's military commander.³

Economic interests often became involved in the military considerations for establishing supply depots. The Army had built a wide range of new buildings throughout Fort Scott, and continually fueled the area's economic engine. Directly to the west of town, the Army built a wood and coal yard, and to the southeast troops constructed a forage yard, corn cribs, hay press and the forage master's office. About a quarter-mile south of the hospital were the post stables. The Army also rented buildings and property for stables and other structures, taking up most of the town's available space. By May 1862, riding the crests of government spending, the town newspaper was calling for construction of more commissary and quartermaster buildings. It noted the expenditures would "relieve our citizens from

a great inconvenience now felt for want of room, every house in the town that can be obtained for that purpose being filled with Uncle Sam's property." Fort Scott residents had to deal with criticism from competing merchants in Fort Leavenworth. In November 1862, the *Leavenworth Bulletin* and the *Missouri Republican* charged that the northern Army post could easily handle the region's military needs, especially since Fort Scott consisted of little more than "some half dozen dilapidated wooden sun houses situated on the open prairie," totally lacking in fortifications. In response, the *Fort Scott Bulletin* attacked those "pecuniarily interested" in Fort Leavenworth's supply and transportation business, answering that in fact Fort Scott possessed some of the region's finest military storehouses, equal to any at Fort Leavenworth. The southeast Kansas town, guarded by the Army of the Frontier, was well protected, and well situated to supply troops nearby and further south, the newspaper thundered. If the government moved Fort

³ Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps 1775-1939* (Washington, D.C.: Quartermaster Historian's Office, Office of the Quartermaster General, 1962).

Scott's military activities to Fort Leavenworth, the *Bulletin* warned, "the whole country south of the Kansas River will become a desert."⁴

When the Army abandoned Fort Smith, Arkansas, in May 1861, because of the Confederate threat, Fort Scott became the main supply post for the Union's southern forts. The southeast Kansas post received supplies from Fort Leavenworth and St. Louis and shipped the tons of clothing, food, ammunition and other military goods to units and posts across the region. As Union troops marched south, Fort Scott retained responsibility as the main supply point for Forts Gibson and the reestablished Fort Smith. The post also supplied smaller subposts across southwestern Missouri and southeastern Kansas, sending out laden wagons on the network of roads. While the Civil War saw the first extensive use of railroads added to traditional river transportation, many of the nation's inland depots, including Fort Scott, remained heavily dependent upon wagon transport for shipment of supplies. A good six-mule team, in the best season of the year operating on good roads, could haul 3,730 pounds plus its own forage load of 270 pounds, but wagons seldom operated under such ideal conditions. Poor roads and weather, lack of trained teamsters, and ill-fed animals all too often reduced wagon loads below maximum.⁵

During its existence as a frontier post in the 1840s, Fort Scott never had physical fortifications, relying instead on its garrison and good defensive location on the high ground. The two dragoon companies based there patrolling across the plains provided the offensive weapons to deter attacks. The Army garrisoned an infantry company at the post to provide whatever close-in security it might have needed.

During the Civil War Southern forces did not directly threaten the Army buildings until September 1861, and that Confederate force did not get closer than twelve miles. U.S. Sen. James Lane, serving simultaneously as an Army officer, based most of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Kansas regiments, known as the "Kansas Brigade" or "Lane's Brigade," at Fort Scott in 1861. The mostly undisciplined men heightened already strained border tensions by undertaking a number of "jayhawking" raids into Missouri. After Gen. Sterling Price's victory at Wilson's Creek on August 10, the Missouri commander declared his intention to clear the jayhawkers from southwest Missouri. On September 2, his troops skirmished with Kansans at the Drywood Creek near the Kansas-Missouri border, driving them back into Kansas. Lane, believing Fort Scott to be indefensible because of the surrounding hills, ordered his Kansas Brigade to fall back twelve miles to Fort Lincoln, on the north bank of the Little Osage River in northern Bourbon County. Before and after the threatened attack, Lane's messages to superiors at Fort Leavenworth continually bemoaned his lack of artillery and promised success in the field if only he could have several cannons. Panic gripped troops in Fort Scott and they fled north to Fort Lincoln, with many men seizing the opportunity to loot the homes and stores of the town. Price abandoned his plans to attack the town upon learning that federal forces had retreated north, and he did not want

⁴ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 28, 1862; November 8, 1862; Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 440; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 31, 1862; Erwin N. Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Site Identification and Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Division of History, 1967).

⁵ *O.R.*, I: 8, p. 654; Risch, *Quartermaster Support*, 420-421.

to antagonize the citizens of Kansas.⁶

The vast distances of the West diluted the importance of fortifications but there were some fortified locations in southeast Kansas early in the war. Fort Lincoln was one of the earliest, constructed in September 1861. Lane placed the post there to protect the ford where the 1859 road from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Scott crossed the Little Osage River. After the threat from Price passed in 1861, Fort Lincoln assumed new duties, becoming a structure to keep people in, rather than out. Fort Lincoln eventually housed a prison that was an annex to the larger military prison in Fort Scott, along with its own hospital, stables and post office, all protected by breastworks. The First Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment camped near Fort Lincoln late in 1862 as it underwent regimental organization, and lived at Camp William Phillips, named after the commander of the Indian Brigade. The following year, when the Second Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment organized, the Army based it near Fort Lincoln, at Camp Emancipation.⁷

When the Army reactivated Fort Scott as a post in 1862, it prepared serious defensive measures to protect the headquarters and main supply point for the Department of the West and the Army of the Frontier. By the following year, four defensive works guarded the approaches to the town of Fort Scott. Two of the blockhouses inside the city limits, lunettes Blair and Henning, overlooked the southerly roads including the old military trail to Fort Gibson. Lunette Insley guarded the post's northeast corner and the Marmaton's river crossing and a fourth fortification on Fort Scott's western edge overlooked the road to Neosho.

Despite the impressive looking structures, the fort's protection was incomplete without heavy artillery, and the big guns were late on the scene. The blockhouses were two stories high, protected by long wooden palisades, but the post's armaments were limited to light field artillery until three heavy cannons arrived in the spring of 1863. By September the Army mounted four heavy siege cannons for the town's protection. Engineers placed one at each blockhouse, and guarded the blockhouse with a line of rifle pits. Men from several regiments worked on the fortifications under the command of Capt. Charles H. Haynes, including three noncommissioned officers from the Second Battery assigned to the project from January through June 1863. The First Kansas Colored regiment supplied many fatigue parties for the hard labor. Because of the strenuous labor involved, the post commander authorized a ration of whiskey for the workers. In mid-June, Capt. J.M. Steele, Co. E, Twelfth Kansas, replaced Haynes, with orders to complete Lunette Blair and the rifle pits as quickly as possible.⁸

The subposts that surrounded Fort Scott housed small garrisons, some to fight guerrilla

⁶ Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 49-52.

⁷ Consolidated Report, First Regiment, Infantry, Kansas Colored Volunteer, October 1862, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; A.W. Pickering to Gov. Carney, April 29, 1863, Carney file, Kansas Historical Society.

⁸ Fort Scott post returns, May 1863, National Archives, Microcopy No. 617, Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1137, Fort Scott, Kansas, January 1861 — October 1865, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Remarks for the Month of January, Second Battery, January 26, 1863 Fort Scott National Historic Site archives microfilm; Special Order No. 11, March 1, 1863, Fort Scott National Archives microfilm, frame 1640; By Order of Charles M. Blair, Major, 2nd Kansas, Special Orders No.7, Headquarters Fort Scott, June 17, 1862, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives microfilm no. 275, frame 880; Col. Charles Blair, March 26, 1864, RG 393, Part II, Vol. 395, Entry 3348, p. 24-5, National Archives.

units. Other outlying bases, such as Fort McKean, about twelve miles south of Fort Scott, protected the large supply trains that traveled south along the military road to forts Gibson and Smith on an almost continual basis. Many of the outgoing trains, with columns of horses and wagons stretching for miles, needed the long expanse of the Military Road to organize and line up before heading south. Built in 1863, Fort McKean was constructed on the bluff overlooking the intersection of the Military Road and Drywood Creek. In addition to its Union Army responsibilities of protecting the gathering wagons, the small post stood guard over the large refugee camp located on the north side of Drywood Creek. Fort McKean formed a keystone for Fort Scott's southern defenses through 1865.⁹

Other outposts ringed Fort Scott to the south and east, with garrisons assigned to different locations as military circumstances warranted. Units from Fort Scott continually garrisoned a post on Drywood Creek, scene of skirmishing between Union and Confederate forces in September 1861. A company from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry called the position Camp Insley when the Army stationed it there late in 1862. During the summer and early autumn, the Wisconsin troopers brought in wooden planks to fortify their position against surprise guerrilla gunfire from the brush. The Army identified the small garrison at Baxter Springs, south of Fort Scott on the Kansas-Indian Territory border, as Camp Hooker.¹⁰

Acting as a subordinate base to Fort Leavenworth, Fort Scott received huge amounts of items from the northeast Kansas depot. Out of the flood of material shipped from Fort Leavenworth for the year ending June 1862, Fort Scott received more than eight million pounds, more than any other post. To supplement its government supplies hauled in by wagons, Fort Scott looked to local markets. The Quartermaster and Commissary departments were responsible for buying needed items, such as food and animals, and disposing of captured goods. During the war the two departments had a dramatic impact on southeast Kansas' regional economy. The Commissary Department assigned Lieut. Robert W. Hamer, U.S. Volunteers, to Fort Scott in May 1862, where he replaced Capt. A.C. Wilder. Hamer received his commission August 9, 1862, and served until resigning June 4, 1864. Capt. Merritt H. Insley, who had the dual responsibilities of Depot and Post quartermaster, reached the post the following month. Insley received his commission in the Kansas volunteers on August 6, 1861. The government promoted him to the Regular Army on March 13, 1863, where he served until the end of the war.

The presence of Fort Scott represented an enormous boon to the regional economy. From the public sale of three hundred head of captured animals on July 5, 1862, to the purchase of thousands of bushels of corn and pounds of bacon, tons of hay, cords of firewood, and hundreds of horses and mules, Hamer, Insley and their fellow officers poured thousands of federal dollars into the pockets of area residents. In just one example of the thousands of transactions, the Army bought more than 40,000 pounds of bacon in May and June 1862, with the Fort Scott firm of McDonald and Company turning in more than 13,000 pounds in a single consignment. In August, Insley was seeking horses for the artillery service, with those having good horses likely to "find a ready market and fair price with the Captain," the town paper noted. For the year

⁹ James P. Pond file, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

¹⁰ Charles W. Porter, *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter: While in the Service of the United States during the Rebellion* (privately printed, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives), December 9, 1862, September 16, 1863.

ending July 31, 1863, the Quartermaster Department alone spent almost \$97,000 at Fort Scott. During that year, teamsters operating out of Fort Scott moved 846 tons of subsistence items, 72 tons of ordnance, 201 tons of quartermaster supplies, and seven tons for the hospital department. Insley regularly employed an average of two hundred and fifty wagons and teams transporting supplies to the Army of the Frontier and the command at Fort Blunt (another name for Fort Gibson) in Indian Territory.¹¹

Federal patrols seized hundreds of animals and wagons as well as tons of crops from suspected Confederate sympathizers across Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory, and the Army developed a formal procedure for inventorying and disposing those seizures. Detailing his activities for the year ending June 30, 1863, Insley reported receiving as contraband 294 horses, 670 mules, 320 ponies, colts and asses, five wagons, seventy-two oxen, 2,824 mixed cattle, 17,531 bushels of corn and 457 tons of hay. The items had a total value of \$40,000. The Army sold the stock and wagons at public auction at Fort Scott for \$20,051.20, with the money expended at the depot, while government animals consumed the captured hay and corn.

Throughout the Civil War years, overland transportation remained the principal method of moving Army men and materials. One of the original reasons for establishing Fort Scott in 1842 was the protection it offered to the military road marked out between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Gibson, and those responsibilities only increased after 1861. New construction supplemented the initial north-south road adjacent to the town. In 1859, the federal government constructed a new road that went north through Mapleton, Fort Lincoln and Mound City to Fort Leavenworth. This road was approximately 12-15 miles west of the original military road. During the Civil War, the Army built a more direct, safer road south of Trading Post to Fort Scott. This road eliminated the use of a dangerous section of the original military road that was very close to Missouri on which Union military traffic was subject to guerrilla attacks. Fort Scott also had trails and roads leading to the subposts surrounding Fort Scott, including Trading Post, Ottawa, Iola, Garnett, Humboldt, Osage Mission, and Baxter Springs in Kansas and Missouri towns Nevada, Deerfield, Lambert's Ford, Adamson's Ford, Drywood, Balltown, and Lamar.

Army quartermasters were responsible for supervising the construction of all buildings and structures erected on rented lots during Civil War in the town of Fort Scott, since the Army considered such construction temporary, and not the responsibility of the Engineer Department. The Army in the 1840s built some buildings rented by the Civil War quartermasters. Commissary officers took over the former dragoon stables early in 1862 and the stalls were removed so the building could be used as a warehouse for stores, giving the building the capacity for a million rations, most prominently hard bread. After taking control of the large building, the Army installed a new roof. Quartermaster crews built structures on rented plots for other military purposes, including a large blacksmith shop on the east side of the parade grounds, an ice house, and a saw and corn mill on Mill Creek three miles west of town using equipment brought in from Missouri. The Army also rented larger lots outside Fort Scott, including eighty acres leased from former post sutler Hiero T. Wilson for use as a camping ground, military prison and guardhouse, and another eighty acres rented from J.E. Dillon for a corral. Directly to the west of the post was

¹¹ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 7, 1862, June 28, 1862, August 16, 1862; Major L.C. Easton to Gen. M.C. Meigs, Sept. 21, 1863, *O.R.*, I:53, 751.

a wood and coal yard and to the southeast was a forage yard, corn cribs, hay press and the Forage Masters' Office.¹²

Military necessity sometimes required more than buildings in the town of Fort Scott. Flood waters in March 1862 finally convinced the military that relying on the old ford across the Marmaton River was no longer practicable. Officers took a detachment of several hundred soldiers from the Second Ohio Cavalry off their horses and put them to work. The men built a strong wooden bridge over the river in several days, the Fort Scott newspaper reported, rendering crossing both easy and safe. Heavy flood waters soon destroyed the new structure, but the Army again ordered out its soldiers and built another bridge. Coordinating military activities out of Fort Scott early in the war proved difficult due to its remote location. In the first year of combat the closest telegraph stations to the post were in Springfield, Missouri, and at Fort Leavenworth. In November 1863, the department commander authorized construction of a telegraph line from Kansas City to Fort Scott, and the U.S. Military Telegraph Service built a line the following year. By March 1864, Fort Scott was in direct communication with department headquarters at Fort Leavenworth.¹³

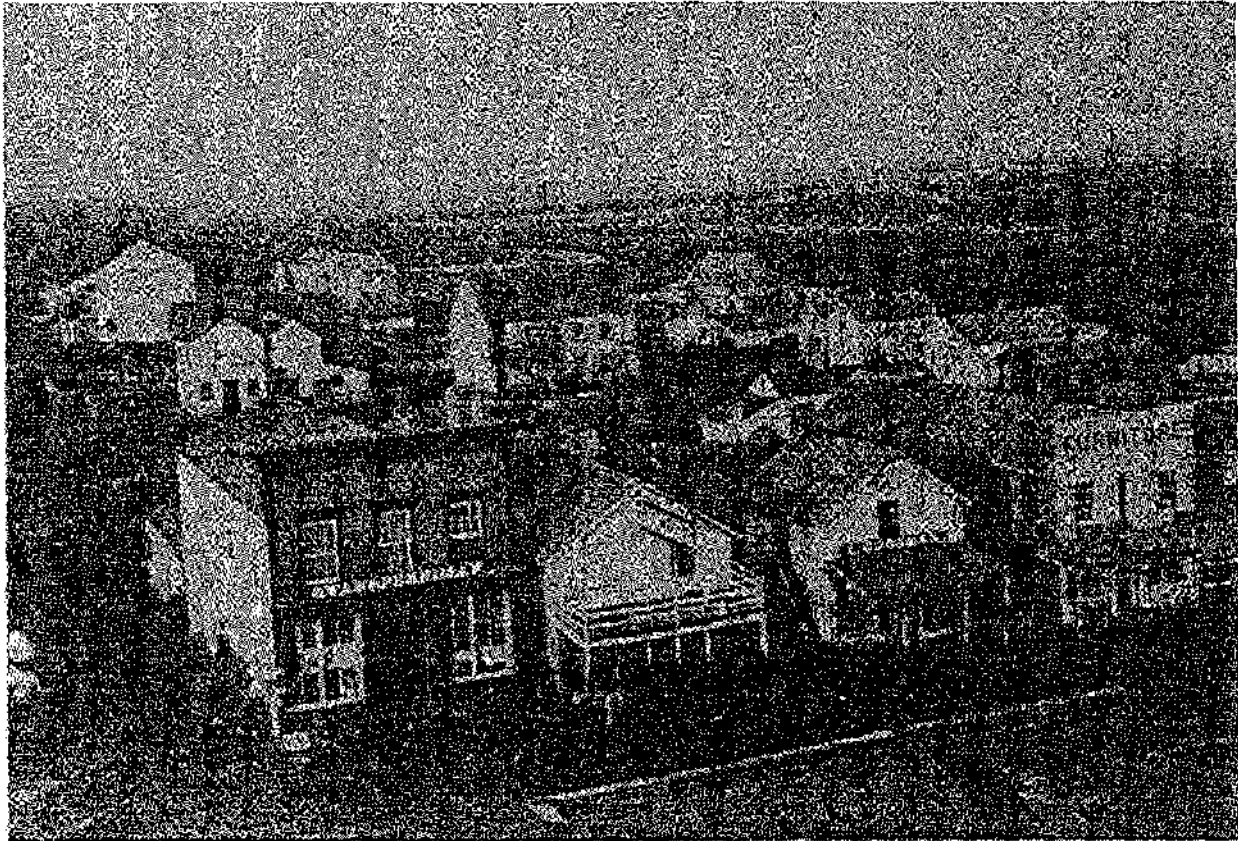
War's outbreak caused a disruption in many aspects of national life, and the Army imposed many elements of its judicial organization on civilians to help supplement the beleaguered legal system. One of the most important was the military police force, the provost marshals. Long a part of the American military structure, provost marshals served in George Washington's Revolutionary War army. The men patrolled camps in search of thieves, rounded up stragglers, prevented desertions during battles, and gradually assumed responsibility for guarding prisoners of war. The provost marshals, organized again in 1863 to act at the Army's police force, originally were responsible for the pure military functions of maintaining order within the regiments and aiding the Army's conscription effort. Its officers and men arrested deserters and assisted recruiting officers by enrolling men for the draft and enlisting volunteers. The army draft came to southeast Kansas in August 1862, when the county commissioners appointed C.F. Drake to enroll all men between the ages of 18 and 45 who were eligible for military duty. At first strictly a military unit, as sheriffs and marshals struggled to cope with upheavals brought on by the Civil War, eventually the duties of the Army's provost marshals expanded to include the protection and control of the civilian population.¹⁴

Provost marshals had unique responsibilities in helping civilian law enforcement agencies fight the irregular combat units that continually struggled along the Kansas-Missouri border. Brig. Gen. Samuel Curtis, commanding the Department of Kansas, described their duties as "care for property, watch paroled rebels, report conspiracies, and keep our friends advised and our foes in fear." When Major B.S. Henning of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment assumed the duties of deputy provost marshal of the District of Fort Scott on June 10, 1862, his

¹² *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 21, 1862; July 12, 1862; July 26, 1862; August 9, 1862; Capt. M.N. Insley to Maj. Gen. Meigs, June 30, 1865, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

¹³ *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, March 31, 1862; Capt. George Smith to Col. Anson Stager, October 25, 1864, *O.R.* 3:4, 844.

¹⁴ Robert K. Wright, Jr. *Military Police* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1992), 3-6; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, August 23, 1862.



Fort Scott's quartermaster quadrangle, behind the stores on Market Street, circa 1867.

responsibilities included preserving law and order in the vicinity; suppressing robbery, kidnaping, jayhawking and bushwhacking; and supporting all civil authorities. Senior officers instructed Henning to apprehend and hold for trial all violators of the law, with the proviso that if necessary, "you will not hesitate at the last resort to rid the State and society of these characters." Not all of the duties were matters of life or death. One officer in the Tenth Kansas, serving as Fort Scott's provost marshal, worked hard at improving the town's sanitary condition, organizing efforts to collect and burn the trash that littered the streets and lots. One month later the town newspaper went a step further, recommending the military give "secesh prisoners" the job of cleaning up town's litter and rubbish. It took several months for the Army to act on the suggestion, but by September large gangs of prisoners roamed the city, sweeping up the streets and picking up trash.¹⁵

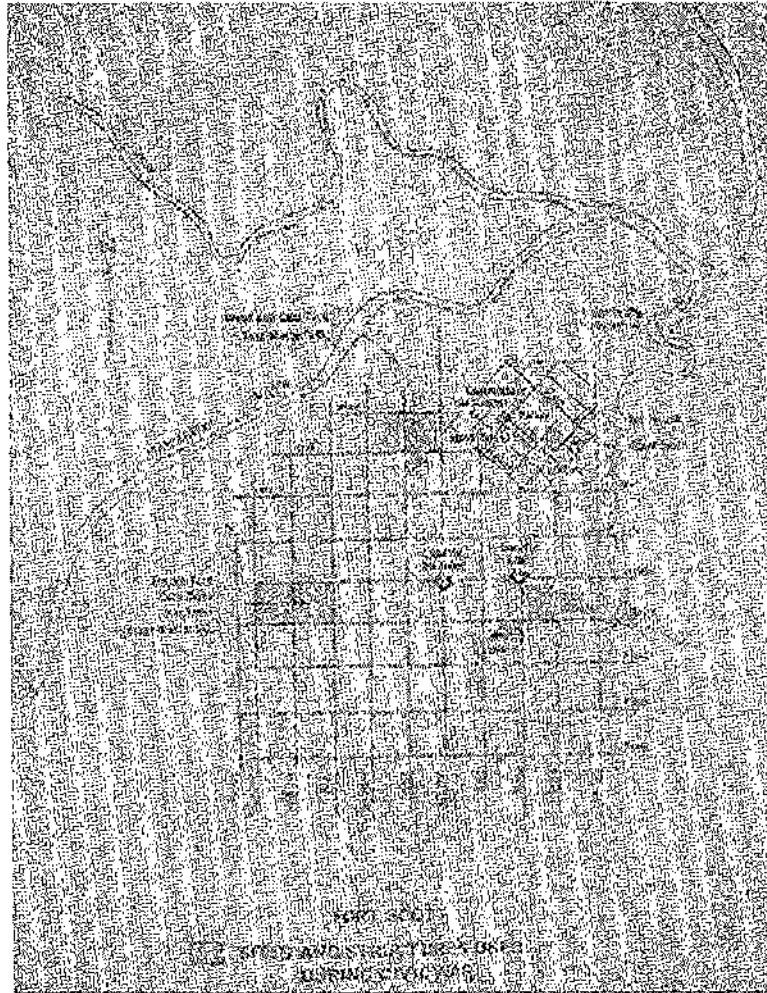
A new military prison housed many of those captured Confederates. The needs of the expanding hospital forced it to take over Fort Scott's original guardhouse, and post commander Col. Charles Blair ordered construction of a new two-story structure, eighty feet long, in the summer of 1863. The building could confine about one hundred men. The Union Army assigned

¹⁵ Curtis to Halleck, January 17, 1863, *O.R.*, 1:32/2, 50; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 21, 1862, May 17, 1862, June 7, 1862, Sept. 27, 1862.

many of them to work projects around the area, under the supervision of the post's officer of the guard. The post also used Fort Lincoln as a prison, assigning many women suspected of Confederate sympathies to that enclosure, where they could be separated from the men. A smaller blockhouse in Humboldt was also used to hold prisoners.¹⁶

Fort Scott offered several advantages as a site for carrying out the demands of the military justice system, including having many officers available to sit on court martial boards and other commissions. The Army's legal system had to deal with several issues at the post, including typical matters of military discipline, new legal issues brought on by the rebellion, and civilian issues brought into the military system by the war. Court-martial boards often had to levy the extreme punishment of death, but executions were the exception in Kansas, with only four men put to death in the state during the war.

In October 1862, Fort Scott's officers tried Private John Summers, of Company E, Second Kansas Cavalry, for desertion from two Union units. The board sentenced him to death and a firing squad executed him May 13, 1863, on the open prairie east of Fort Scott. The full garrison of the post was assembled in dress uniform to witness the proceedings. The same month that Summers was executed, the Army assembled a court-martial board to try Claudius Columbus Frizell, accused of robbing and murdering Augustus Baker of Vernon County, Missouri, the previous May. The board convicted Frizell of both charges. An Army squad hanged Frizell in a public execution south of Fort Scott, where the present Bourbon County Courthouse is located.¹⁷



The U.S. Army's presence in Fort Scott. From Erwin N. Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Site Identification and Evaluation*

¹⁶ Col. Charles Blair, March 26, 1864, RG 393, Part II, Vol. 395, Entry 3348, p. 24-5, National Archives

¹⁷ William F. Fox, *Regimental Losses in The American Civil War, 1861-1865* (Albany, N.Y.: Albany Publishing Company, 1889), 531; Orders No. 1, Col. Charles Blair, May 9, 1863, RG 94, 12th Kansas, Regimental Letter & Order Book, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Post Returns, May 1863, Fort Scott, Roll 10, Fort Scott Post Returns, January 1861 to

Other instances of military justice were not as formal as courts martial. Officers on patrol in bushwhacker country surrounding the post were often under orders to execute captured guerrillas, a sentence carried out by a Third Wisconsin patrol in April 1863. After a quick trial in the field, an officer assigned to execute the sentence took two men from the companies making up the patrol, led the three condemned prisoners to the road in front of his detail, and read the sentence. "The doomed men made no reply," he recorded in his diary, "but started to run when the boys fired upon them with their carbines killing them instantly." The Army was not the only dispenser of justice. Two soldiers accused of raping a Fort Scott woman in front of her daughter were in the town jail awaiting trial when a civilian mob broke in, seized the pair, and lynched them.¹⁸

Law enforcement concerns were not just a matter for provost marshals. Fort Scott's officers were often forced to act as guardians of the rights of the civilian population against crimes committed by soldiers. When a military board convicted a soldier from the Fifth Kansas Regiment of stealing a widow's watch in Carthage, Missouri, it sentenced him to have half of his head shaved. It also ordered him sent to solitary confinement, and finally drummed him out of the service. After seven Third Wisconsin Cavalry troopers acting as escort to the acting clerk of the District Court at Carthage, Mo., stole a gold watch valued at \$100 and other items from the clerk, Col. Charles Blair, Fort Scott's commander, issued a strong rebuke to the company commander. He warned the soldiers must immediately return the stolen articles, or "the men will be turned over to the tender mercies of the State militia for trial or execution." In a follow-up letter to the company, Blair ordered the officer to provide a messenger to return the stolen objects, cautioning him to assign "some messenger who will take them and the Stolen property through to Capt. Sutherland and return without stealing anything also."¹⁹

The government also called upon the military to handle civilians suspected of treasonous activities. An officer serving in one of the outposts surrounding Fort Scott captured a Confederate sympathizer in mid-August 1863 and, concluding that allowing him to remain free was too dangerous, sent him into the main post for trial. Two days later a patrol captured two suspected bushwhackers. They joined the first suspected sympathizer on the road to Fort Scott for a military trial.²⁰

With the influence of peacetime law agents diminished by the war, arguments between civilians sometimes pulled in Army officers. One man, John Reynolds, on September 2, 1864, swore out an affidavit stating he had a contract to deliver fifty tons of hay to the U.S. government on land for which he was the agent, complaining that three men entered the field and took the grass he had cut. Lt. James B. Pond of the Third Wisconsin investigated and determined Southern sympathizers owned the land and Reynolds had no legal claim to the hay. Forging his

October 1865, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

¹⁸ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, April 4, 1863; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 31, 1862.

¹⁹ Col. Charles Blair to Lt. Pond, Sept. 16, 1864, and Blair to Pond, Sept. 17, 1864, Record Group 393 Army Continental Commands, Third Wisconsin Cavalry Letter Book and Order Book and Company Order Book and Morning Reports, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm Roll 2, pg. 107; *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, March 31, 1862.

²⁰ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Aug. 17, 1863.

own compromise solution, Pond reported that he divided the contested field of grass in half and ordered the two sides to only cut grass on their side of the line.²¹

The hospital buildings were among the more important facilities housed at Fort Scott, as the post offered the most advanced medical department between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Gibson. The Army was slow to develop a system for caring for its wounded during the early years of the war, and soldiers serving in southeast Kansas were fortunate to have a functioning hospital at the post. The main hospital building was a two-story frame structure, with dimensions of 32 by 48 feet. Its most notable feature was a 10-foot wide porch that ran around the main floor, above the ground-level basement. A hall and stairway divided the main floor into two wards. The basement held six rooms. After the Army left Fort Scott in 1855, the townspeople bought the hospital, and used the building for public events, including a school and as a meeting hall for religious preachers. Town residents, including a lawyer, members of a militia group, and a newspaper owner, rented rooms in the building.²²

As sectional violence erupted in the years known as "Bleeding Kansas," federal troops returned to the town of Fort Scott to help maintain order, and the units brought their own doctors with them. Charles Brewer, an assistant surgeon in the Army's Medical Department, accompanied Capt. Nathaniel Lyon when the government assigned Army units to the town of Fort Scott in January 1861. Franklin Irish, a surgeon working under contract to the Sixth Kansas Cavalry, served at the Camp Scott hospital for \$100 per month.²³

After the Civil War broke out, the Army rented back the building and began using the former Fort Scott hospital for its original purpose. By June 1862, the military had assumed control of the hospital, designating it as a post hospital. It was responsible for treating injured and wounded soldiers from the immediate vicinity. Union armies on the march had an equivalent facility run by each individual regiment known as a field hospital. Medical personnel typically sent patients from the field hospitals after they stabilized their wounds or illnesses for additional treatment in the Army's general hospitals, a classification that signified their admission of patients whatever their particular regiment or post. As fighting spread across the region surrounding Fort Scott during the final months of 1862, the Army changed Fort Scott's designation to a general hospital, the only one south of Fort Leavenworth. To increase the bed capacity, the government rented nearby buildings, including the post's former guardhouse and infantry barracks, from their civilian owners. The general hospital's sick list frequently exceeded five hundred. Displaying the hometown boosterism often called up in peacetime to attract settlers, the Fort Scott newspaper boasted in April that the hospital wards were kept clean and well ventilated, "and we venture to say that few hospitals in the country are better conducted."²⁴

²¹ Affidavit of John Reynolds sworn to William Margrave, Justice of the Peace, Sept. 2, 1864; Report of Lt. Pond, Fort McKean, Sept. 9, 1864, Third Wisconsin, 108-109.

²² Erwin Thompson, *Fort Scott Historic Structure Report, Park II: Historical Data Section* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, 1968), 43-48.

²³ Special Order 176, dated December 27, 1860, Roll 19, Records of Adjutant General, Post Returns, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives microfilm, frame 410; *ibid.*, Post return, August 1861.

²⁴ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 7, 1862; *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, April 5, 1862.



Fort Scott's medical staff sometimes had to house patients in tents erected on the post's parade ground. Circa 1865.

Despite the horrendous casualties inflicted by artillery and rifles on the battlefield, illnesses were much more likely to kill or disable the average soldier. About 300,000 Union soldiers died in the Civil War, with only a third dying in combat. Federal doctors treated 400,000 men for wounds or injuries, and another six million for illness. Fort Scott followed this general pattern. Throughout the hospital's use by the Army, ill soldiers usually outnumbered wounded patients by a factor of at least two to one. Even during October and November 1864, when the largest Civil War battle fought on Kansas soil took place about thirty miles north of the post, there were consistently about twice as many sick patients in the hospital than wounded ones.²⁵

The Fort Scott hospital represented the best available medical facility in southeast Kansas, but that was only in comparison to the primitive levels of care offered in the area. In May 1862, the two wards on the hospital's main floor contained twenty-seven iron bed stands, the same number of fabric mattress coverings, twenty-five linen sheets, eight cotton sheets, five linen and seventeen cotton pillow slips, twenty feather pillows, eleven straw pillows, seventeen quilts, ten blankets, four chairs, one clock, two tables, and ten spit boxes. In the hallway separating the wards were ten chamber pots, two more bed stands, and a pair of urine jugs. Among the equipment in the surgeon's room was one old amputation case, identified as "in very

²⁵ George Worthington Adams, *Doctors in Blue: The Medical History of the Union Army in the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 3-5.

bad order," and one set of tooth tools, recorded as "not complete."²⁶

Caring for the stricken patients was extremely labor-intensive, and hospital supervisors continually bemoaned the lack of trained nurses, ward orderlies, and support personnel. Most of the men came from the regiments assigned to the post, the overwhelming majority untrained in medical affairs, and all too often the unit's misfits considered expendable for combat duties by commanders. A further complication was the consistent turnover in men assigned hospital duty, with many soldiers switching assignments just as they were becoming proficient in medical duties. An April 1862 note to Col. Charles Doubleday reported the hospital's inability to feed the twenty-three men in the guard house breakfast, owing to the regular cook's illness and the regimental assignees' inadequacies in the kitchen. By September 1862, the Army staffed the hospital with forty-nine nurses, six bakers, thirteen cooks, one ward worker, and one matron by the name of Peggy Ross. Supplementing the government workers were civilians living in Fort Scott, who often came forward to assist the patients directly, as when the townspeople undertook a fund drive to raise money for window blinds to help alleviate the summer heat. The Ladies Hospital Aid Society was a regular source of comfort to patients, meeting in the afternoons to make up articles that they distributed during their daily hospital visits. The men of the town met in the evenings in their own fund-raising effort, and more than four weeks later in 1862 contributed about \$100 to the society.²⁷

The original post hospital's two wards, big enough to handle the small number of regular Army soldiers in the prewar garrison, proved inadequate to handle the flood of patients brought in by the Civil War. In warmer weather, medical staff housed some patients on the porch that encircled the hospital. When the hospital was full of patients, the Army created additional bed space by establishing wards of tents immediately adjacent to the hospital on Carroll Plaza. Many physicians, obsessed with "effluvias" and other gases believed to cause sicknesses, saw the tents as aiding the patient's recovery.²⁸

The canvas structures often surrounded the hospital building, and the parade ground offered a convenient location for the temporary structures. A series of tents standing at Fort Scott in December 1862 gave doctors room to house two hundred and forty patients, one of the highest numbers of sick and wounded recorded at the hospital. The number of patients peaked at three hundred on March 1, 1863, after the Indian regiments sent a train of twenty-five ambulances and wagons north for treatment. The hospital's normal capacity was between one hundred and one hundred and fifty men.²⁹

²⁶ January 1861 to September 1865, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Inventory performed May 13, 1862. Roll 8, Records of Adjutant General, Fort Scott Post Returns June 1842 to April 1853.

²⁷ Davis to Doubleday, April 16, 1862, Roll 19, Records of Adjutant General, Hospital Records for Fort Scott, Kansas, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives microfilm, frame 1690; Roll 8, Records of Adjutant General, Fort Scott Post Returns June 1842 to Apl. 1853; June 1858; January 1861 to September 1865, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 14, 1862.

²⁸ Adams, *Doctors in Blue*, 214.

²⁹ Col. William Phillips to Maj. Gen. Samuel Curtis, Feb. 6, 1863, *O.R.*, I:22/2, 114-5; Morning Report of Sick and Wounded in General Hospital, Fort Scott, Kansas, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

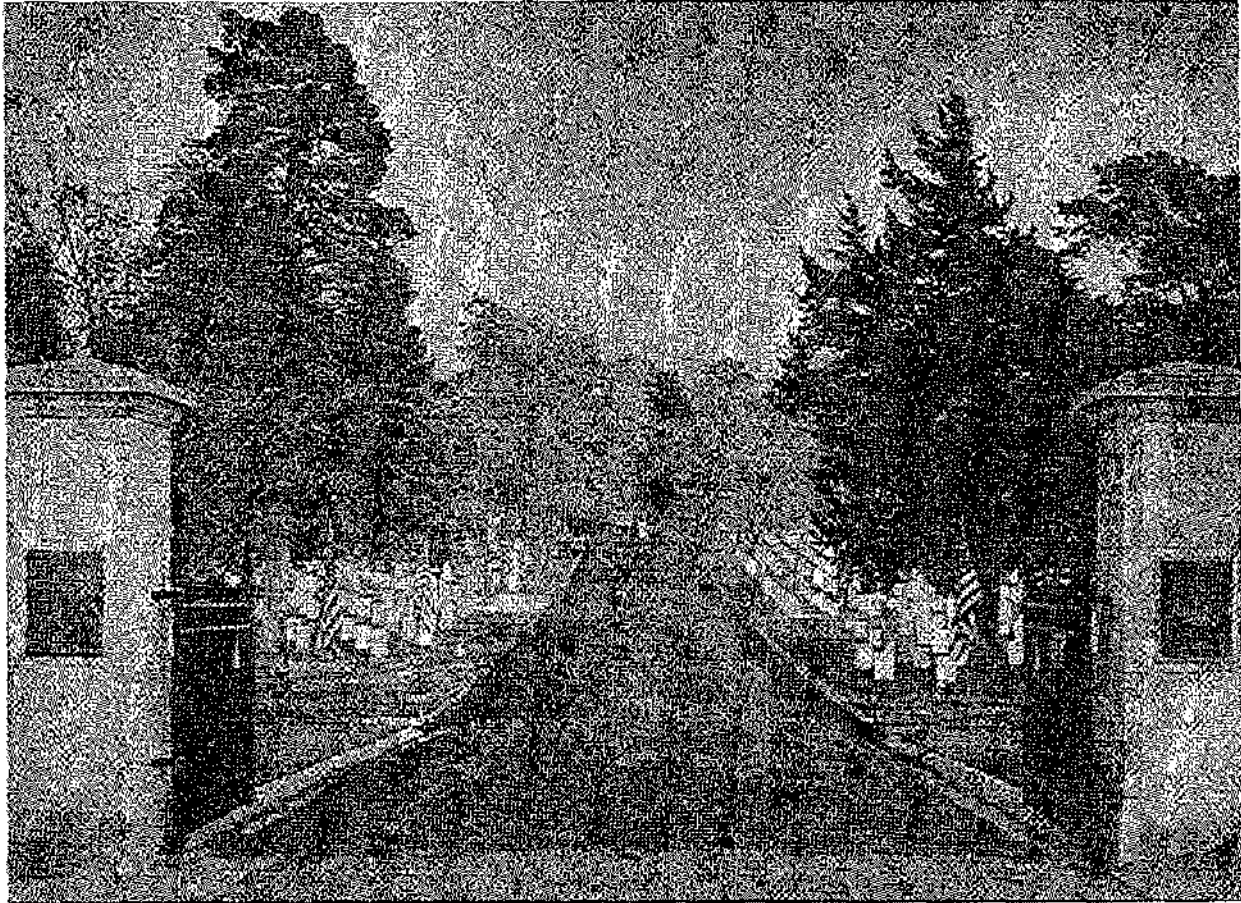
The military supported the medical facilities in ways other than building tents on the fort's parade grounds. In January 1863 the quartermaster department ordered construction of a large icehouse in Fort Scott to store away ice for the hospital's summer use. Three months later District of Kansas authorized the quartermasters at Fort Leavenworth to provide ten ambulances with teams and drivers for Fort Scott. Labor continued to be the hospital's biggest problem and regiments stationed near the post continued to provide the bulk of the labor force. In August 1863, their regiments assigned one soldier from the Second Colorado Infantry and another from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry to act as nurses. One man from the Second Indian Home Guards and two from Third Wisconsin served as cooks, a Third Wisconsin soldier acted as ward master, and the Tenth Kansas Infantry supplied the hospital steward. In that month the hospital reported holding one hundred and four beds, with eighty of them in tents. Eighty-four men were sick, and another ten wounded. Seeking to provide additional stability and competence to the work force, in October the War Department ordered all men detailed for hospital duty sent back to their regiments, to be replaced as nurses and cooks by convalescent patients.³⁰

The ultimate test of Fort Scott's hospital department came late in 1864, as surgeons and medical staff were called upon to treat the wounded from Gen. Sterling Price's raid through western Missouri. On October 23, when Price was approaching Kansas City before fighting at Westport, Fort Scott held one hundred and seven patients, with all but fourteen sick. Those numbers remained fairly constant until October 26, one day after Union and Confederate forces met in Kansas' largest military engagement, Mine Creek, when thirty-four soldiers were admitted, with twenty-seven having gunshot wounds. They joined the ninety-four sick patients already in the wards. Twenty-six more Union and Confederate soldiers were admitted the following day, with fourteen reporting gunshot wounds. The Fort Scott medical staff added more tents and beds on October 28 to bring capacity to two hundred. Reflecting the cavalry nature of Mine Creek, three men were admitted on October 30 with saber cuts, along with eight listed with gunshot wounds. By November 26, the hospital stretched its capacity to two hundred and fifty beds, holding one hundred and twenty-three ill patients and eighty-three wounded men. Healed Union patients were quickly released and returned to their regiments, and on December 1, the hospital held just ninety-eight sick men and forty wounded soldiers. Nine Confederate prisoners had recovered enough on that date to be sent to the military prison in Fort Scott. Two days later the hospital's capacity was reduced by fifty beds.³¹

For far too many soldiers, the post hospital was just the final step before their death and interment in the nearest plot. Most of the dead were laid to rest at Fort Scott National Cemetery, a new area developed in direct response to changes in American attitudes. The early nineteenth century saw a revolution in the way that Americans viewed death and attended to their lost ones. The frontier grave sites and small private plots in colonial homesteads gave way to graveyards

³⁰ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, January 16, 1863; Capt. H.G. Loring to Maj. L.C. Easton, April 11, 1864, National Archive RG 94 Entry 393 Vol. 138, Page 604, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Morning Report of Sick and Wounded in General Hospital, Fort Scott, Kansas, Roll 8, Records of Adjutant General, Fort Scott Post Returns June 1842 to Apl. 1853; June 1858; January 1861 to September 1865, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

³¹ *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, Nov. 3, 1864; Morning Report of Sick and Wounded in General Hospital, Fort Scott, Kansas, Roll 8, Records of Adjutant General, Fort Scott Post Returns June 1842 to Apl. 1853; June 1858; January 1861 to September 1865, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.



The main entrance into Fort Scott National Cemetery

run by community churches. Municipal governments became involved later with establishment of potter's fields and later the town or city cemetery, located within the city limits.³²

Following the Revolution, American society was ready to accept new ideas about almost anything, and dealing with death was one of the things suitable for change. A fast-growing nation could not protect its dead from being unearthed and relocated as their original graveyard became valuable property for development. The science of the age also convinced many that graveyards emitted toxic fumes dangerous to the city dweller's health. An acceptable solution was the cemetery, a garden-like area removed from the city, that could serve as a palliative for many urban ills. A continuation of change in public attitude that moved the final resting place from the church graveyard and town commons to the city graveyard to a larger, more isolated setting, increasingly known as the cemetery, the Greek word for "sleeping chamber." The use of the word cemetery reflected this new ideal that embraced the suggestion of death as sleep, as another step from life to eternal life. It also reflected the nation's new optimistic sentiments about religion and nationalism. The rural cemetery was introduced with the establishment of Mount Auburn

³² David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 1-43.

Cemetery, located outside Cambridge, Mass., and serving the greater Boston area. Established in 1831, it was one of the first privately owned businesses set up to handle interment.³³

Many of those societal influences about death and dying were transferred to the West. Fort Scott's original garrison cemetery, constructed when it was a frontier outpost, was located approximately three blocks west of National on Wall Street in today's city. After the Army abandoned the post in 1853, the Fort Scott Town Company was organized two years later and the former post cemetery became the town cemetery. City growth in the war years encroached upon the cemetery, and by May 1862, the town newspaper proclaimed a new cemetery project under way, saying the present cemetery was in poor shape as well as too close to the town. The exact location was not yet set, but the newspaper reported private lots would be available to all.³⁴

When the Civil War erupted, the Army was unprepared to deal with the thousands of fatalities to come, and it slowly began to draft new regulations and procedures. In the fall of 1861, the Secretary of War ordered the Army's Quartermaster General to provide forms for preserving burial records at Army hospitals and materials for manufacturing headboards for soldiers' graves. On July 17, 1862, Congress took the next step and passed a bill authorizing the president to purchase land to be used as national cemeteries for soldiers who died while on active duty. During the war, the Army established two basic types of cemeteries, general cemeteries set up around areas of troop concentration, including hospitals, and battlefield cemeteries set up in the immediate area of combat.³⁵

Fort Scott's citizens and a small group of Army officers decided upon the location of a new cemetery in August 1862, acting in response to new national attitudes concerning interments. It was located well outside the current city limits, about a mile southeast of town on ten acres of land which was owned by and adjacent to the cemetery of the Fort Scott Presbyterian Church. Plans for the new cemetery called for its division into private lots, with the sale money allotted to beautifying the grounds. A portion of the grounds was set aside for interment of soldiers. The land was partially donated by the Fort Scott Presbyterian congregation and partly by the city; the federal government purchased the remainder of available land for seventy-five dollars. Family members of the deceased had the option to remove the bodies from the Army's section if they desired. When the Army began formal organization of its interment system, Fort Scott's plot became one of the fourteen original national cemeteries. By September 1864, preparations for a stone fence to surround the grounds had begun, with the Army quartermaster quarrying and delivering the stone, and members of the local Presbyterian congregation undertaking its construction. By the end of the war, this national cemetery contained the graves of white, African American and American Indian Union soldiers and Confederate soldiers. The government began to beautify the grounds in 1870, laying out the grounds and adding trees and adding a small house for the superintendent. In 1873 the Army bought an adjoining piece of

³³Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*, 44-98.

³⁴*Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 10, 1862.

³⁵Risch, *Quartermaster Support*, 431; Monro MacCloskey, *Hallowed Ground: Our National Cemeteries* (New York: R. Rosen Press, 1968); Edward Steere, "Early Growth of the National Cemetery System," *Quartermaster Review* (March-April 1953).

property and added it to the cemetery.³⁶

One of the more popular officers in the Union Army was the paymaster, responsible for paying off the Regular Army and state troops serving in federal service, as well as the scouts, spies and detectives employed by the Army. It was uncommon for the troops to be paid on a regular basis, mainly due to the distances between posts. The paymaster's arrival was cause for celebration both for the soldier being paid and the merchant all too ready to relieve him of that money. When a paymaster arrived at Fort Scott in June 1862 with a quantity of "Green Backs" for the troops, the town newspaper proclaimed him to be "a welcome visitor." The usual routine of Army pay days involved receiving the money and spending the money as quickly as possible. A Third Wisconsin officer on outpost duty reported being ordered into Fort Scott to meet the paymaster. With money in hand, he recorded, "Many of the boys soon became intoxicated as usual on Payday and of course could not return to camp. I remained in the Fort to night to bring the inebriates to camp on the morrow."³⁷

After recovering from the excesses of paydays, the troops returned to the normal duties of military life, including maintaining the animals that their lives often depended upon. The horses that carried the troopers and pulled their wagons were always in short supply, and Fort Scott continually purchased new animals while soldiers were restoring the health of veteran mounts in the prairie grass surrounding the post. The large complex of corrals, blacksmith shops, and feed troughs to the southeast of the post's parade grounds helped maintain the horses used by cavalry and artillery units, scouts and couriers, and officers. Many men developed close bonds to their mounts and were reluctant to exchange them for new horses. One Wisconsin officer recorded in his diary the sad duty of turning in the horse he drew when he entered service, noting that "I was sorry to part company with him who had carried me on many long marches enduring hunger, thirst, heat and cold, besides wounds from rebel bullets. Yet he was ever ready to go. I thought the dictates of humanity demanded that I should give him rest." It was common for deserted soldiers to use their government animals for escape, and the Army was eager to get both the deserter and his horse back. The First Kansas Cavalry put out a \$150 reward for the apprehension of a trooper who deserted in March 1862, adding another \$50 for the return of the horse, "a stallion with one star, a Canadian look, fair size."³⁸

Another staple of prewar Army life, the laundress system of cleaning and maintaining uniforms, proved a continual irritant to Fort Scott's commanders. The laundresses of Fort Scott were part of a long military tradition. George Washington's army restricted camp followers to those with connection to a serving soldier. Many of the women in camp supplemented their family income by washing soldiers' clothes. The United States Army formalized the position of laundress in 1802. Army regulations issued in 1841 allowed four women per company to work as washerwomen, and they were to receive one ration per day, with their prices for washing clothes

³⁶ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, August 16, 1862; Sept. 9, 1864; "Bivouac of the Dead," newspaper article, undated, no publication information. Bourbon County Clippings, Vol. 2 (1905-1950), Kansas State Historical Society; "Fort Scott Presbyterians Celebrate 50th Anniversary," *Fort Scott Tribune Monitor*, October 6, 1909.

³⁷ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, June 7, 1862; Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Sept. 29, 1863.

³⁸ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Nov. 25, 1863; National Archives, Record Group 94, Bound Regt Records, Seventh Kansas Cavalry, Order Book, March 6, 1862.

set by a board of officers. Each group of four laundresses was issued a tent, hatchet, a camp kettle, and a pair of mess pans. The longstanding tradition ran well until 1864, when a series of problems with the women erupted at Fort Scott. The commander of the Fifteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, Company D, canceled rations for his unit's laundresses and warned that future disturbances would lead to the women's removal from camp with their husbands required to request a pass to visit them. The Sixteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment encountered a series of problems with laundresses and their husbands that same summer. Company D appointed Mrs. Bridget Delaney a laundress on June 1, but in August, ten days after her husband, Sgt. James Delaney, was reduced in rank for fighting, her appointment was revoked. In October, Mrs. F.P. McKer's appointment was revoked by the same company, the same day her husband was reduced in rank. In September the Company D commander ordered all women out of camp, ordering them to find their own living quarters, away from the Sixteenth Kansas regiment.³⁹

In addition to personnel problems, the tribulations of the Fort Scott officers during the Civil War parallels with their modern-day counterparts, especially in the world of military paperwork. The post adjutant wrote to the assistant adjutant general at Fort Leavenworth in July 1863, reporting that Fort Scott was badly in need of blank forms of all descriptions. Three months later the problem still existed, with the post commander requesting from Fort Leavenworth "a sufficient number of blanks necessary for the use of this post. As my adjutant is away, I cannot describe them, only that [we] are entirely out." In a similar vein, the commander wrote to the department headquarters in St. Louis for a copy of all orders issued, confessing that "For some reason the orders have never been received, and I find it very embarrassing at times, to get along without them."⁴⁰

Union soldiers, like their counterparts in any army ever formed, worked hard to adjust to their circumstances. The troop population around Fort Scott could soar to more than six thousand, in preparation for a major event such as the expedition into Indian territory in June 1862. The norm was two or three companies of cavalry living close to the town, and a garrison contingent of quartermaster, commissary, and staff personnel. Some of the troops found accommodations within the town. A storeroom owned by a merchant named Drake served as a barracks for troops right after the late 1861 evacuation until April 1862, when he regained the use of his rooms. Most of the soldiers lived in tents in the surrounding prairies to the south and west of town. In April 1862, the Second Ohio Cavalry and Rabb's artillery battery set up camp on the west bank of Mill Creek, while the Tenth Kansas regiment camped about five miles west of town. When the Second Kansas marched into Fort Scott in May 1862, the companies marched up the Marmaton River two miles before setting up camp. The Seventh Kansas was two miles above the fort, while the First Kansas, and the Twelfth and Thirteenth Wisconsin were camped

³⁹ Elizabeth D. Leonard, *All the Daring of the Soldier: Women of the Civil War Armies* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999); Marilyn Mayer Culpepper, *Trials and Triumphs: The Women of the American Civil War* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1991); Special Orders, No. 1, July 23, 1864, Co. D Order Book Fifteenth K.V.I.; August 12, 1864, and Sept. 29, 1864, Co. D Order Book, Sixteenth K.V.I., Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

⁴⁰ "Old Book 981-982, 988-992. Bound as 394 Dept. Mo. "Roll 25, Department of Missouri Telegraphs, Orders, Etc.," Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

immediately above the town. Three brigades were stationed on the prairie surrounding Fort Scott in August 1862, with the troop commanders ordered to locate their camps east and south of the town, "where a full supply of forage grass, fuel and good healthy water can be obtained."⁴¹

Military necessities usually required the breakup of the regiment into companies and their distribution where needed. When the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment arrived at Fort Scott in mid-June 1862, it went into camp and conducted small expeditions into Cedar and Vernon counties in Missouri in pursuit of bushwhackers. One officer assigned provost duty was able to enjoy dinner at the Fort Scott Hotel, but was soon back inside his tent, arranging its interior for maximum comfort. Within a week heavy rains hit the area, leaving the camp "an unenviable abode." Soldiers used the next sunny day to dry out their blankets and clothing, but another heavy shower and high winds the following week again threw the tents into a scattered mess.⁴²

The small garrisons surrounding Fort Scott acted as observation posts and camps for the countless small patrols fighting the guerrillas across southwestern Missouri and Indian Territory. They depended upon Fort Scott for additional troops for reinforcement, food, horses, and other supplies, as well as a command center. One of the key duties of officers assigned to Fort Scott was riding the circuit of outposts to check their watchfulness, receive updates on local conditions and issue any orders and passwords. The duty usually proved hard and onerous. A Wisconsin officer related how his assignment as Officer of the Picket called for him to visit each of the outposts, in a circular journey of more than forty miles, that brought him back to Fort Scott by 9 p.m., "my horse and self tired and hungry."⁴³

The men protecting southeast Kansas had one advantage over their counterparts in the Union's field armies – stationed in a stable environment, they could visit Fort Scott for purposes on a regular basis. In addition to satisfying the residents' patriotic impulses to aid the Army, the soldiers' visits provided another important economic component of Fort Scott's growth. A soldier could attend a ball sponsored by his regiment with assurances that all social decorum would be observed, with invitations eagerly accepted by the young women of the area, or one of the many dances staged by town residents.⁴⁴

Other popular locations for entertainment were Fort Scott's saloons and beer halls, which grew in number as the war went on. Most of these social events lacked the decorum of the invitation-only balls, and many nights a visitor to Fort Scott would find "seven or eight hundred men in federal uniforms and under the influence of Evil Spirits," in possession of the town. "And the night was one hell or pandemonium, as some of the oldest inhabitants said this morning, the like was never experienced here before and it seemed that hell had established Head Quarters at Fort Scott." Recognizing the financial impact of the liquor industry, the town newspaper glowingly described the situation, noting in May 1862 that the Union Saloon was flourishing, and "Lager flows as plentifully as water, and scores of thirsty soldiers may be constantly seen

⁴¹ *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, April 5, 1862, May 3, 1862; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 17, 1862, Aug. 30, 1862.

⁴² Porter, *A Journal of Events*, June 18 through 28, 1862.

⁴³ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Oct. 9, 1863.

⁴⁴ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, July 13, July 16, 1863.

winding their way to Caukin's old stand on Bigler Street, now kept by Harman & Marble." Two months later, another large saloon was being constructed on Bigler Street, with "the handsomest room of the kind in Southern Kansas."⁴⁵

To supplement their Army rations, soldiers had access to sutler stores, run by private merchants under contract to the government. Typical advertisement for sutler stores boasted of the wide array of goods available, including military blouses, dress coats, bridles, and other goods designed to make the trooper's life a little easier. Many of Fort Scott's businessmen sought out these lucrative contracts. James Thorington, who operated the town business of Thorington, Morley & Co., before the war returned to Fort Scott in September 1863 to operate the post sutler's store. The following month longtime Fort Scott resident Alexander McDonald left Fort Scott after receiving the appointment of post sutler at Fort Smith.⁴⁶

Soldiers also looked to the civilian market for other needs, and Fort Scott merchants quickly moved to satisfy those demands. The town had a studio photographer in business by May 1862, boasting of a new installed skylight, "which enables him to take even finer pictures than he has been in the habit of doing." A local printing office advertised that it had on hand certificates of disability, final statements, and discharge and descriptive list certificates, all correctly printed and available for a reasonable price. By July 1862, one of Fort Scott's blacksmith shops had doubled in size due to increased business, and the local shoe and boot shop also reported an increased work load. By August, the town paper would proudly boast of the town's expansion, reporting Scott Avenue, one of the main thoroughfares, was filling up rapidly with new businesses. Three buildings were then under construction on the street, to house a meat market, carriage and blacksmith shop, and a shoe shop. Increased economic development carried over to the newspaper that relied on local businesses for advertisement revenues, and by September the *Bulletin* had also expanded in size.⁴⁷

The military presence also provided numerous entertainment possibilities for the civilians in town. Daily Army events, including the arrival of couriers, massive expeditions saddling up, patrols mounted and returning with tales of combat, huge wagon trains forming along combined with the occasional escaping team of mules. Official reviews of the troops were a continual spectacle, allowing the town to show its best side to visiting dignitaries. When Gen. Blunt inspected his command, a large number of spectators watched as he reviewed the post's garrison of two regiments of infantry, two batteries of artillery, and about fifteen hundred cavalry. The townspeople were also often entertained by regimental band concerts and special military displays, including a wagon review on the prairie south of town. About three hundred wagons performed a series of maneuvers, including drawing up all of the vehicles into a massive corral in practice for repelling attackers.⁴⁸

Fort Scott's roving patrols offered protection to the Union cause across a large part of

⁴⁵ *Fort Scott Western Volunteer*, March 31, 1862; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, July 26, 1862.

⁴⁶ *Fort Scott Union Monitor*, Sept. 24, 1863; Oct. 1, 1863.

⁴⁷ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 24, 1862, May 31, 1862; *Wyandot Gazette*, Sept. 13, 1862.

⁴⁸ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, Aug. 16, 1862, June 28, 1862.

eastern Kansas and western Missouri, but for many people that security was more immediate. Thousands of whites, Indians, and African Americans escaped from Confederate oppression by flocking to southeast Kansas, with many living squalid lives for months in the refugee camps that sprung up surrounding Fort Scott. The refugees were provided with subsistence, shelter, clothing, and blankets by the U.S. Army District Quartermaster stationed at Fort Scott, with official military policy limiting the amount of charity donations.

As border tensions rose, hundreds of west Missouri Unionists fled into Kansas in the summer of 1861, driven out by secessionists. A number of Fort Scott troops stationed in Missouri were ordered back to the post in May 1862, accompanied by a large train of white civilians who thought it unsafe to continue living among Confederate sympathizers. Joining the refugee train headed west were droves of stock owned by the fleeing refugees. After the Union army moved into northwest Arkansas in the fall of 1862, about two supply trains a month were sent from Fort Scott. As a rule, most of the returning wagons carried refugee white families. There gradually came to Fort Scott a large number of refugees, some of whom were supported by the federal government until they could find employment. In the winter of 1863, typhoid broke out among the refugees, killing many of those who lacked winter clothing.⁴⁹

One soldier stationed at Fort Scott described the pitiful state that some of the white refugees fleeing Confederate sympathizers were in, noting how many of the women from the southern states were forced by economic circumstances to rely "mostly on their personal charms for a living." This was a common occurrence along the border, he told his family, predicting that terrible conditions would exist for a long time when the war was over. "Their property and home destroyed, their niggers free, thousands upon thousands of their people killed and worse than all the terrible prostitution among their wives and daughters," he wrote. "Well they deserve it all and more too for getting up this rebellion."⁵⁰

Thousands of refugees from the Indian Territory also struggled for life in camps surrounding Fort Scott, with many of the women in the same condition of seeing their husbands and sons off fighting in the war. A flood of Indian refugees arrived in Kansas late in 1861, many members of the Creek faction that remained loyal to the Union. Early in 1862, federal officials estimated the refugee population in southern Kansas at about five thousand people, a number they expected to double in size. Most were concentrated on Indian land laying in the Verdigris and Neosho River valleys, about seventy miles west of Fort Scott, and were in desperate need of clothing, shelter, medical attention and food. An Army doctor who visited the camp stated that "Common humanity demands that more should be done and done at once to save them from total destruction." In less than a week, the Bureau of Indian Affairs appointed a special agent to the refugees. His options for efficiently feeding and clothing the Indians was limited from the start by the government's belief that the refugees would be returning to their homes by the following spring, and as a result the agent was instructed to maintain less than a thirty-day supply of food

⁴⁹ Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 45-6; *Fort Scott Bulletin*, May 17, 1862; Britton, *The Union Indian Brigade in the Civil War* (Kansas Heritage Press, 1995), 170.

⁵⁰ Charles Felkner, April 30, 1865, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Transcript of letter in Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

and necessities.⁵¹

The military situation in the Indian Territory prevented any early return of the refugees, and by March 1862 there were between six thousand and seven thousand camped west of Fort Scott, existing on a minimal amount of supplies. Many of the men were soon away, serving in the Indian regiments recruited by the federal government in May and June of 1862. The following month, an inspector found the Indians still mostly without shelter, except for "pieces of cloth, old quilts, handkerchiefs, aprons, &c., stretched upon sticks." Dr. George A. Cutler, agent of the Creeks, reported that two hundred and forty of his charges had died in the past two months. A common problem among all the Indians was frostbite, with a doctor working in the refugee camp estimating that one hundred amputations had taken place. The inspector reported that among the amputation patients, "I saw a little Creek boy, about eight years old, with both feet taken off near the ankle." If the Indians were to remain dependent upon the government, he estimated it would take at least \$292,000 just to feed eight thousand at ten cents a day. A minimum of another \$100,000 would be needed for clothing. The huge potential spending figures forced the Bureau of Indian Affairs to pressure the Army for a speedy recapture of the Indian Territory, but more pressing military needs delayed that action for years.⁵²

In the absence of any positive Union victory in the Indian Territory during the year, the refugee Indians remained camped across southeast Kansas. The commander of Fort Scott kept a large number of Cherokees encamped on the Drywood, about twelve miles south of the post, supplied with provisions. The town newspaper led a drive in November 1862 for a civilian relief effort, calling upon its readers for tents, blankets, shoes, and clothing, warning that without action about two-thirds of the women and children were likely to perish before spring. Hampered by lack of official action, Brig. Gen. James Blunt, commander of the Army of the Frontier, had to ask civilians through the *Leavenworth Daily News* for clothes and bedding items which were to be forwarded to Fort Scott. The continued squalid living condition of the refugees was direct evidence that not all of the federal money allotted to the Indians reached the camps. In September 1863, the Fort Scott newspaper demanded to know how the appropriations had been spent, and who had personally profited.⁵³

Conditions for the refugees were unchanged for two years, and in February 1864, Maj. Gen. Samuel Curtis' report to Lincoln indicated that Indians were still encamped around Fort Scott, Fort Gibson and on the Sac and Fox reservation, about forty miles south of Topeka. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was supplying the Indians with food items, but most were still without shelter, living in old tents or hide-covered huts. The Army was still insisting to Lincoln that it lacked the manpower to protect the Indians if they were allowed to return to their homes in Indian Territory, and as a consequence the majority remained encamped in Kansas and

⁵¹ Jason Turner to William P. Dole, Feb. 5, 1862, Report of A.B. Campbell, Feb. 5, 1865, Dole to Dr. Kile, Feb. 10, 1862, *O.R.*, Series II, 4, 7-10.

⁵² Daniel Webster Wilder, *The Annals of Kansas* (T. D. Thacher, Topeka, Kans.; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1975).

⁵³ *Fort Scott Bulletin*, Nov. 2, 1862; *Leavenworth Daily Times*, Dec. 25, 1862; *Fort Scott Union Monitor*, Sept. 16, 1863.

Missouri.⁵⁴

The third element of the refugee problem was hundreds of African Americans, many of whom had escaped from owners in Missouri and Arkansas. Others were freed during jayhawking raids. By 1863, a number of contrabands lived in a ravine called Buck Run which held a small stream bordered with a thick growth of timber. Many of the African Americans found employment with Army officers, and some developed close relationships. James B. Pond, a lieutenant serving in the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment, hired a former contraband named Ike as his servant, praising his qualities as a cook as well as a well-trained servant. At the Fort Scott refugee camp, Ike met a woman from the plantation where he was raised and wanted to marry her, if Pond would allow her to become one of the camp laundresses. Pond approved, but before the nuptials another former slave wooed and won the woman. Pond's advice to Ike was to kill the new suitor, which Ike did. After he was identified, imprisoned, and sentenced to death for the murder, Pond raced to Topeka and obtained a pardon from his friend, Gov. Thomas Carney. Ike stayed in Pond's service for several years after the war, enjoying one of the more comfortable routes out of the refugee camps. Many of the men joined the Union Army and served in the Indian Home Guard Regiments or the First and Second Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiments. Most of the others would only leave the camps with the conclusion of hostilities in 1865.⁵⁵

The men and officers serving in the outposts surrounding southeast Kansas had a significant material advantage over their uniformed and civilian foes. Confederate military forces were continually hampered by an inadequate supply system, and the bushwhackers who fought for the Southern cause were dependent upon area civilians for food and war supplies, a dependence crippled after Order Number 11 depopulated many border counties. In contrast, Union troops could rely upon a steady stream of supplies pouring out of Fort Scott. Wounded soldiers had a large medical center to attend them. Their animals were replaced or administered to while they could find comfort in the civilian facilities that sprang up around the military activities. Amid all the instability of the border area, the federal forces benefitted from Fort Scott's abundant facilities, resources developed in response to federal dollars and early Army needs.

⁵⁴ Curtis to Lincoln, Feb. 24, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I, 34/2, 460-61.

⁵⁵ C.M Chase file, Kansas State Historical Society archives; Entry for Aug. 19, 1863, Lela Barnes, ed. "An Editor Looks at Early-day Kansas, the Letters of Charles Monroe Chase," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 26 (Summer 1960), 113-151; James B. Pond, "Memoirs of Co. C - 3rd Wis Cav."

Chapter Ten:

Fort Scott and the War, 1864

As the rebellion of the southern states entered its third year, the officers leading the garrisons charged with protecting southeastern Kansas successfully applied the lessons learned in combat. Fort Scott had developed into an efficient supply depot, but a continued lack of troops limited its ability to control the region decisively. The shortage did not prevent the fort from being an important source of materials, but its few soldiers could not adequately protect the wagon trains that supplied the surrounding subposts and Forts Gibson and Smith. Those smaller garrisons acted as part of an efficient intelligence gathering and patrol network for Kansas, also maintaining watch on western Missouri, northern Arkansas, and the Indian Territory. The southeast Kansas post faced the most serious threat to its existence in September and October 1864. Fort Scott's warehouses and depots became a potential target of a large Confederate incursion through Missouri and eastern Kansas led by Maj. Gen. Sterling Price. The post's garrison and supplies played a crucial role in defeating the October invasion of eastern Kansas. Even the civilian community of Fort Scott directly supported the military action, supplying militia units to protect their Kansas homes.

Continuing a three-year trend, political maneuvering continued to exert a major influence on military decisions affecting Fort Scott and Trans-Mississippi Theater of Operations. The desire to reelect President Abraham Lincoln fueled pressure for major Union victories that would convince increasingly skeptical Northern voters that the federal government could crush the rebellion. Eastern combat intensified under a newly appointed commander, Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, whose strategy of close combat actively engaged Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Union commanders continually called upon western armies to supply more men for the war in East, draining western reserves and diminishing morale. As Union forces successfully pushed Confederates deep into Arkansas and Indian Territory, guerrillas were the main military problem Kansas faced. Extra military raiders became a psychological as well as physical threat after Quantrill's raid on Lawrence in 1863.

The political machinations also existed on a state level. James Lane, the former Jayhawker and in 1864 one of Kansas' U.S. senators, suffered a series of political blows in 1863, including the removal from command of his protegee, Gen. James Blunt, and the loss of influence in assigning quartermaster contracts. In 1864 Lane used his close personal relationship with Lincoln to restore his political and economic position and regain control of the lucrative contracts. Bowing to political pressure orchestrated by Lane, on Jan. 1, 1864, the U.S. Army reestablished the Department of Kansas. The department included Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, and Indian Territory, and was again separate from the Department of Missouri. Unable to salvage Blunt's military reputation, Lane threw his support behind Major General Samuel R. Curtis, an 1831 West Point graduate from Ohio who had been serving as an Iowa congressman when the war started. Vaulting to command of the Department of Missouri after his victory at Pea Ridge in March 1862, Curtis shared some of Lane's views. Both supported Radical Republican policies in

Missouri and Kansas, and Curtis paid a price for his stance. Conservative opposition from Missourians persuaded Lincoln to remove him from department command in May 1863. His new relationship with Lane returned him to presidential favor. Convinced that one commander could not address the military problems of both states simultaneously, the president directed Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to correct the situation, ordering him to "Please fix up the department to which Curtis is to go."¹

Fort Scott the town finally became a fortified military complex in 1864. Lacking large cannons or fortifications early in the war, Fort Scott's leaders worried about holding off serious Confederate attacks. By the third year of fighting, post commander Lt. Col. Charles W. Blair and his garrison were well-armed. A line of rifle pits proved close-in protection for the town of Fort Scott, while four small fortified structures (blockhouses) held large siege guns for long-distance protection. Troops constructed the four lunettes, named after the half-moon shape of the embankments surrounding them, of fascines, wooden bundles filled with soil. Lunette Henning, southwest of the town and guarding the military road to Cato, held two 24-pounder siege guns and also a subterranean magazine for ammunition. Lunette Blair, south of the post, boasted two 24-pounders overlooking the former military road to Fort Gibson. Another fortification, Lunette Insley, unfinished through the first half of the year, lay northeast of the post. The Army located a fourth lunette (unnamed) on the bluff overlooking the Marmaton River to protect the Neosho Road and the western approach to Fort Scott.²

One of the posts anchoring the District of the Border, Fort Scott in January 1864 was home to the Second Kansas Battery (right section); Company L of the Ninth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment; and Companies H and K of the Tenth Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Smaller garrisons from the Third Wisconsin Cavalry surrounded the post, with Company M at Humboldt, Kansas; Company A, in Balltown, Missouri; Company F at Camp Insley, Missouri; and Companies C and D at Dry Wood, Missouri. Many men were veterans, serving in uniform since 1862. The U.S. Congress would later award Company C's commanding officer, Lt. James B. Pond, the Medal of Honor for his bravery leading the defense of his Baxter Springs post against Quantrill's raiders in October 1863.³

The army's experiment with recruiting and maintaining Indian units continued. Expanding their success of the previous year, the three Indian regiments supported by Fort Scott continued to control the northern half of the Indian Territory, providing a buffer zone of protection for Kansas. Col. William Phillips, leading the Indian Brigade, pushed into north Texas by the middle of February 1864, but inadequate ammunition and a lack of support from white Kansas troops operating out of Fort Smith, Arkansas, curtailed the operation. Despite his setback,

¹ United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as *O.R.*), I:22/2, 758; *O.R.* I:22/2, 768; Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 109-110.

² Blair to Lt. J.M. Hadley, District of the Border, Jan. 15, 1864, *O.R.* Series I:34/2, 90; *O.R.* Series I:22/2; Troops in the Department of Kansas, January 31, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 207.

³ The Union army also manned posts along the Kansas-Missouri border at Olathe, Paola, Sarcoxieville, Trading Post, Barnesville, Coldwater Grove, Iola, Lawrence, Osage Mission, Camp Plumb, Topeka, and Pleasant Grove.

Phillips claimed circumstances had disheartened and discouraged the Confederate-supporting Indians. A week later, Phillips amplified his earlier prediction, saying "So far as the rebel Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw Nations are concerned the war is over. They have been destroyed or driven from their country." Hoping to split the Indian enemy, Phillips sent letters to leaders of the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Seminole nations, asserting that Union domination doomed the Confederate cause and the Indians' best hope was their quick return to federal authority.⁴

Fort Scott's garrisons faced ongoing calls for men to guard individuals or supply trains that traveled through the area. One typical operation in February involved Company F of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, based at Fort Curtis, near Balltown, Missouri, about twelve miles from Fort Scott. The post ordered forty Wisconsin troopers and a sergeant to accompany Major General Curtis to Fort Smith, about one hundred and eighty miles southeast of Fort Scott. After preparing their mounts and securing the necessary ammunition, food, and forage, the small column marched off to Fort Scott and met the general. Their departure left the post in crisis, a frequent circumstance. As men were designated for escort duty, Fort Scott and its subposts were often left with only a skeletal staff.

Sometimes the enemy did not wear Confederate gray. The Wisconsin men returned to camp two weeks later complaining that the commissary sergeant had sold most of the Army rations drawn for them for his personal profit. The men vowed to run down the scheming sergeant, but he fled the camp to the safety of the civilian population in the town of Fort Scott. The regiment's officers investigated the case and substantiated the allegations, but despite the ruling, the Army discharged the sergeant in March, and the troopers never caught up with him.⁵

Fortunately for the troopers on escort duty and in camp, there were usually some civilians around eager to supplement the Army rations. The Third Wisconsin soldiers, assigned to Fort Scott since 1862, were familiar with the area and their continuous patrols allowed them to meet residents on a regular basis. Missourians often came into the Army camps seeking to sell butter, eggs, produce, and other food. Many troopers saved sugar and coffee from their rations for trading purposes. Army payday also provided breaks in the dull daily routine of garrison life. One lieutenant reported on his company's activities in the town with money in their pockets, calling it "a bacchanalian feast began, which grew larger as Companies was paid. This evening Fort Scott was turned into a pandemonium, and every gateway to hell was jammed to its utmost capacity."⁶

In the absence of serious Confederate threats, Fort Scott's garrisons turned to squelching the small bands of irregulars that continued to mount pinprick attacks on small convoys and isolated households throughout southwestern Missouri and southeastern Kansas. Civilian spies, scouts and detectives hired by the federal government sometimes aided the soldiers. In the middle of February, one detective employed by the Union Army reported to Curtis' staff that he believed guerrillas planned to attack supply trains on the Santa Fe Trail, hoping to disrupt

⁴ Reports of Col. William A. Phillips, Feb. 16, 1864, *O.R.*, Series 1, 34/1, 106-107, 109.

⁵ Charles W. Porter, *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter, While in the Service of the United States During the Rebellion*, Feb. 2; Feb. 17; Feb. 21; March 2, 1864. Manuscript, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

⁶ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Feb. 7, 1864; Feb. 22, 1864.

American commerce with Santa Fe and the Pacific coast. Applying the hard-learned lessons of the war's early years, when irregular Confederate units often successfully escaped combat by simply crossing from one Union department to the next, Curtis sought to minimize the dangers of guerrilla threats through close communication with neighboring departments. The Department of Kansas commander assured his counterpart in Missouri that he sought to "keep up the most friendly intercourse . . . to avoid surprise and disaster."⁷

During three years of guarding the region, troops supported by Fort Scott developed a routine for dealing with irregular forces. In a typical scenario described by an officer serving in the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, in February residents living around Balltown, Missouri, reported rumors of bushwhackers operating in neighboring woods. A mounted patrol of twenty Union men searched the vicinity, concentrating on the isolated, woody areas that provided easy concealment. The federal troops hoped to surprise the bushwhackers in their camp and prevent them from escaping on horseback. A secondary target was the guerrillas' guns, ammunition, and supplies. If luck were with the Northern soldiers, any bushwhackers who did escape would run into another Union squad and be killed or captured. A number of those men caught on these patrols received quick field trials and executions, but Union soldiers brought many back into the subpost and escorted them to Fort Scott. There they entered the military justice system administered by the area provost marshals.⁸

While the military presence protected the town of Fort Scott, the supply trains operating from the post remained a prime target for Confederate guerrillas. Seeking to reduce reliance on huge, inefficient supply trains sent through Indian Territory, the Department of Kansas ordered Capt. Merritt Insley, Fort Scott's depot quartermaster, to St. Louis in late February to procure steamers for transporting supplies to Fort Gibson up the Arkansas River. Senior military commanders hoped to take advantage of the short wet season, during which time boat traffic could carry supplies far upriver. Recognizing the fact that water transportation would not meet all of the post's needs, Insley continued to send wagon trains to Fort Smith and Fort Gibson with the utmost energy and prudence. During the following month, the southeastern Kansas post supplemented its express horse courier service to Fort Leavenworth with a telegraph line. Engineers assigned to the U.S. Military Telegraph Service reported stringing 120 miles of wire between the two forts.⁹

The winter months of 1863-64 were quiet, as cold weather nearly eliminated the desire and ability for combat. Union military victories the previous year pushed the Confederates away from Kansas and into Arkansas and the southern Indian Territory. The only military actions were small raids by irregular forces, especially the mounted Indian guerrillas led by Cherokee leader Stand Watie. With the onset of warmer weather, the main armies of both sides prepared to renew their struggle. Again the eastern seaboard took precedence, its impact spilling over to the rest of

⁷ S.W. Carpenter, Scout Detective, to Chipman, February 19, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 377; Curtis to Rosecrans, February 20, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 384-85.

⁸ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Feb. 28, 1864, 254; March 7, 1864, 256.

⁹ Curtis to Insley, February 29, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 468; Capt. George H. Smith to Col. Anson Stagger, U.S. Military Telegraph Service, Oct. 25, 1864, *O.R.* III:4, 844-46.

the country. That spring, Grant implemented his strategy of attacking the Confederacy on four coordinated fronts. As part of that campaign, federal forces under Gen. Nathaniel Banks and Admiral David Porter pushed up the Red River to take Shreveport, Louisiana, intending to march into east Texas. The expedition proved a total disaster, in large part a result of the incompetence of Banks, a former congressman and governor of Massachusetts with no previous military experience. The Red River campaign caused most of the regular Confederate forces operating west of the Mississippi River to be moved south, away from Kansas and Fort Scott. In Missouri, most bushwhackers were busy north of the Missouri River and east of Kansas City, leaving the southwestern corner of the state relatively calm.¹⁰

Indian Territory remained a minor theater and senior federal leaders still sought to wage war as cheaply as possible. The major Union offensive force continued to be the three Indian regiments formed early in 1862, which the Army organized as the Indian Brigade and stationed at Fort Gibson. Commanded by Col. William A. Phillips, the all-Indian force exerted federal control over the northern half of Indian Territory, its reach limited by the less-than-adequate supplies it received from Fort Scott. Hampered by small numbers of wagons and animal teams to haul the food and supplies needed by his men, Phillips continually pressed Fort Scott for more supplies. Early in March he sent a small number of his wagons north, hoping to get five or six wagons "loaded with the most needful quartermaster's stores, pantaloons, socks, and shoes," as well as several wagons full of sugar, coffee, molasses, desiccated potatoes and other food stores. He also made several recommendations for reorganization of the brigade, including providing horses for all the soldiers in the Third Indian Regiment, furnishing a paymaster to pay his soldiers, and asking for the fulfillment of promises Union generals and the Secretary of the Interior made to his men. To bolster their combat effectiveness, Phillips also sought a minimum of two white officers for each company, but recommended against dismissing all Indian officers, arguing that they had proved very useful in battle and in preventing desertions.¹¹

Federal commanders recognized the usefulness of the Indian regiments as a buffer, but a combination of military necessity and their sense of the region's lack of importance precluded providing any more than small amounts of support. Curtis promised to send food and supplies south from Fort Scott and up the Arkansas River, but declined to offer protection for all of the Union Indian sympathizers trying to return to their farms. Curtis explained the strategic goal of driving the main Confederate forces south was more important than protecting private agricultural interests from guerrilla attack. He noted that Union forces were committed to fight the rebellion wherever it appeared, and "protection should be and must be given to loyal persons as far as we can." Curtis reported on the situation to the Secretary of the Interior, telling John P. Usher that without more troops he could not protect the population of Indian Territory.¹²

Kansas commanders fully recognized that renewed violence was likely at any moment

¹⁰ Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative, Fredericksburg to Meridian* (New York: Random House, 1963), 389-405.

¹¹ Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 524; Phillips to Curtis, March 7, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 525.

¹² Curtis to Usher, March 10, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 557-58; Curtis to Phillips, March 9, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 538-39.

and they prepared for its outbreak. On March 12, 1864, Curtis warned Brig. Gen. E.B. Brown in Missouri that the bushwhackers probably had not yet gathered for a new campaign, "but, as you say, we may all expect them when the leaves are out." In 1864, Kansans were more terrified of guerrillas than ever before. William Clark Quantrill's devastating raid on Lawrence the previous August continued to resonate in the popular imagination. Seeking to improve his military capabilities across the region, Curtis asked Sen. James Lane to procure at least \$50,000 to repair the old military road from Fort Leavenworth through Fort Scott to Fort Gibson. "A little bridging," he told the senator, "would make this the best road in the world." Curtis also issued a warning to Blunt, in charge of southern Kansas, cautioning him that while the scene was quiet now, "secret organizations in Missouri seem to threaten a coming storm."¹³ Whether hyperbole, prudence, or undo caution, Curtis perceived a threat and deployed his resources to counter it.

Kansans' fears about Quantrill's return seemed to be justified in late March, when Blunt warned Curtis that he had reliable information that placed Quantrill and his men in Grayson County, Texas. "He contemplates a movement north into Kansas and Missouri as soon as there is sufficient grass to subsist his animals," Blunt added. In late March, Fort Scott housed a relatively small garrison that consisted of Companies A, C, D, and F of the Third Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry and the regiment's Company M at Humboldt. Seeking to bolster Kansas' southern defenses, Blunt entered the controversy over the Indian Brigade situation, warning Curtis that the three regiments operating in the Indian Territory desperately needed reorganization. He also recommended commissioning more white officers to replace Indian officers, and urged that the Army purchase Indian horses from Osages and other Kansas Indians for every trooper.¹⁴

In the camps and garrisons surrounding Fort Scott, the quiet weeks gave chaplains and neighborhood priests an opportunity to visit many Union soldiers. One Wisconsin lieutenant reported a mid-March tour by the regimental chaplain, noting that the minister distributed religious books and pamphlets, and sought "to turn the sinful ones from their evil ways." The men welcomed the chaplain for purely religious reasons as well as for a break in the monotony of patrol duties. Several soldiers engaged in spirited debates over some of the passages from the Bible, "but we conducted ourselves with decorum and came out of the combat friendly," the officer remembered. Following a two-day visit the regimental chaplain went on to his next stop, "after giving the boys some good counsel and christian advice."¹⁵

As a result of a departmental reorganization on April 1, 1864, the Army reduced the command at Fort Scott from a subdistrict to a brigade classification. While the administrative change did not reduce the territory under the responsibility of Col. Charles Blair, he lost several perks of a subdistrict commander, including the right to grant leaves and furloughs. As the station of a brigade commander, Fort Scott was no longer the site of courts-martial and military commissions. The reorganization shifted those boards to the District of South Kansas

¹³ Curtis to Brown, March 12, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 580; Curtis to Lane, March 18, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 640; Curtis to Blunt, March 18, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 651-52.

¹⁴ First Lt. Otto Leissring to Brig. Gen. Thomas A. Davies, List of regiments serving in department, March 31, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 764; Blunt to Curtis, March 21, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 685; Blunt to Curtis, March 27, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/2, 755-56.

¹⁵ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Feb. 28, 1864, 254; March 14-16, 1864.



Union Army bands like this one at Fort Scott entertained troops and civilians. Circa 1863.

headquarters at Paola.¹⁶

The first disruption in the calm on the frontier occurred on April 10, when the commander of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry Regiment reported eight hundred Confederates from Texas and Missouri had advanced against Roseville and Clarksville in northwestern Arkansas. Col. William Judson, commanding the District of the Frontier at Fort Smith, told his superiors his troops could hold off the two columns of the enemy without reinforcement. Judson, who experienced the political turmoil of Kansas first hand when the Army organized his regiment at Fort Scott, had little faith in some of his peers back in Kansas. He cautioned against allowing Blunt or his supply officers to become involved in the action, warning "we will be starved out" if needed equipment or food passed through their hands. Instead, Judson had sent one of his own men to Fort Scott to oversee procurement and transportation of supplies.¹⁷

The changing situation forced Union commanders in April to reorganize the military structure south of the Kansas border. On April 17, 1864, Curtis recommended to Blunt that he relinquish his position at Fort Smith, where he had no fort and no troops, and retire to Fort Gibson, where he could effectively guard the southern border of Kansas. That same day, the War

¹⁶ Lt. John Gray to Blair, April 1, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/3, 15-15.

¹⁷ Judson to Brig. General John Sanborn, April 10, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/1, 860-61.

Department transferred the Indian Territory and Fort Smith out of the Department of Kansas and into the Department of Arkansas. Curtis complained to Army headquarters in Washington, D.C., explaining that the decision to transfer Indian Territory to the Department of Arkansas removed his protective buffer zone, and to protect Kansas' southern border required more soldiers. Without reinforcements, Curtis cautioned, "Southern Kansas is liable to raids from Central Texas, such as Quantrill made last year, and which disgraced humanity." In addition to the reorganization, Washington ordered Blunt to Fort Leavenworth for reassignment. Despite the official recall, Blunt remained at Fort Smith. Within a week, Brigadier General Nathan Kimball at Little Rock, Arkansas, complained to Major General Frederick Steele, who commanded the Department of Arkansas, and Major General Henry Halleck, Army chief of staff, that Blunt had caused "so much [trouble] so as to endanger the safety of the troops in the District of the Frontier."¹⁸

The African American troops from Fort Scott remained in the front lines, and as Southern soldiers saw the African Americans as property not men, they continued to fight without the normal protection afforded prisoners. Confederate soldiers afforded African Americans none of the respect or surrender terms they granted white Yankees. On April 12, Confederate cavalrymen commanded by Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest attacked Fort Pillow, Tennessee, garrisoned by a detachment of Tennessee cavalry and the First Regiment Alabama Colored Troops. The Confederates stormed the fort and captured the soldiers, killing many African Americans during the fighting despite their attempts to surrender. Men of the First Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment, organized at Fort Scott in August 1862, suffered a similar fate. The unit saw continued action in Arkansas during the first four months of 1864, fighting at Horse-Head Creek in February, and at Prairie D'Ann, Poison Spring, and Jenkin's Ferry in April. To support Banks' expedition up the Red River, Major General Steele led 8,500 men, including the First Kansas (Colored), south from Little Rock, Arkansas, in the spring. Cut off from their supply trains, Steele's men had to forage across the countryside to support their advance. On April 18, Steele ordered about one thousand men, many from the First Kansas Colored, on a foraging expedition near Poison Spring. A Confederate force of about three thousand soldiers surprised them. During the attack, Confederates killed many African Americans after they surrendered. The First Kansas Colored alone lost 111 men. A week later, Confederate cavalrymen massacred many African American soldiers guarding a supply train assigned to Steele's command outside Marks' Mills, Arkansas. The men of the Second Kansas Colored, sister unit to the First Kansas Colored, partially avenged the massacre on May 4, 1864, when they charged into battle at Jenkin's Ferry shouting "Remember Poison Spring."¹⁹

With the onset of warmer weather, combat operations in the Eastern theater intensified. Lt. Col. John Mosby began a three-month-long cavalry raid through the Shenandoah Valley on May 1, three days before Union commander Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered the Army of the Potomac across the Rapidan River and forward against Gen. Robert E. Lee's flank toward

¹⁸ Curtis to Blunt, April 17, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/3, 199-200; General Orders 164, April 17, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/3, 196; Kimball to Steele, April 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/3, 280-281; Curtis to Col. E. D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant General, April 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/3, 288-290.

¹⁹ Report of Lieut. Col. Francis M. Drake, April 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/1, 712-715.

Richmond, Virginia. Known as the Battle of the Wilderness, the campaign ended six weeks later with Lee's army entrenched around Petersburg. To the south of Grant, Major General William T. Sherman's Grand Army of the West began another phase of Grant's plan of simultaneous attacks on the Confederacy on May 6. He left Chattanooga, Tennessee, beginning his march to Atlanta, Georgia, and the ocean. Further west another one of Grant's designs ended in failure. Maj. Gen Steele returned to Little Rock, Ark., ending his portion of Red River expedition.²⁰

Fully aware of the Indian Territory's importance to the safety of his Kansas Department, Curtis improved his supply lines to Fort Gibson. He advocated using boats on the Arkansas River to transport large amounts of supplies whenever possible and continuing land transportation from Fort Scott, which offered a choice of overland routes. Curtis preferred the old military road that passed through Fort Scott, arguing that the route through southwestern Missouri was more mountainous, lined with timber-filled spaces that easily concealed bushwhackers, and had less available forage for stock. Senior Army leaders rejected Curtis' demand for more troops to protect Kansas, but accepted Curtis' recommendation on continued supply of Fort Gibson through Fort Scott.²¹

Both Union and Confederate leaders gave only slight attention to the Indian Territory. Early in May, the Confederate government promoted Stand Watie to brigadier general as a reward for his continuing efforts to oppose the Union, but declined to assign him more troops. Union efforts were no more effective. Curtis ordered soldiers based at Fort Scott to examine the cattle driven north from Indian Territory to assure that they were not stolen from pro-Union Indians. The state border was too long for him to monitor with the men he had available. At the same time that military men worried that Kansas was vulnerable to Confederate attack, reports assured officials at the Bureau of Indian Affairs that the Army had made the Indian Territory safe enough to move refugee Indians back south to their homes. On May 16, three thousand Indian refugees left the Sauk and Fox Indian reservation in Kansas for the Indian Territory.²²

Fort Scott's commanders could not concentrate on the threat from the Indian Territory and ignore what was happening to the east, where guerrilla attacks continued. A small engagement with Missouri bushwhackers resulted in another Fort Scott soldier receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor that was the second one awarded to the Pond family. Private George Pond, a private in the Third Wisconsin and brother of Lt. James Pond, who earned the medal for his bravery during Quantrill's attack on his Baxter Springs post the previous year, joined Company C in October 1861. He served as scout and courier for the regiment, riding unaccompanied from Fort Scott to Fort Gibson, a distance of more than 175 miles, and fought at Montevallo, Honey Springs, Cain Hill, Lexington, and Baxter Springs.

In mid-May, about sixty guerrillas under the command of Captain Henry Taylor returned to Missouri from Kansas with nineteen Union prisoners. The group stopped to raid the house of

²⁰ Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative, Frederickshurg to Meridian*, 270-280.

²¹ Curtis to Brig. Gen. L.C. Hunt, Inspecting Officer, May 5, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/3, 465-466; Brig. Gen. L.C. Hunt to Lt. Col. C.B. Comstock, Army Assistant Adjutant General, May 6, 1864, *O.R.* Series I:34/3, 487-88.

²² Curtis to Brig. Gen. Samuel Wood, May 14, 1864, *O.R.* Series I:34/3, 598; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 300.

Joe Ury, a former Union scout employed at Fort Scott, about thirty-five miles southeast of the post. Neighbors passed word of the attack to a detachment of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment stationed at Fort McKean near Morris' Mill on the Drywood Creek. Assuming it was a small band of guerrillas, a five-man patrol responded. Reaching the Ury house but greatly outnumbered, Pond and two other troopers successfully attacked Taylor's men while the other two soldiers returned for reinforcements. The unexpected charge freed all the prisoners except Ury's father, killed by the bushwhackers. Units of the Third Wisconsin and the Fifteenth Kansas pursued the fleeing guerrillas for fifty miles, killing five. According to newspaper accounts, an insufficient number of firearms prevented the soldiers from killing more of the bushwhackers. James Pond nominated his brother for the Medal of Honor, which he eventually received.²³

With Northern military and political leaders concentrating on the war in the East, supplies and men went there first, leading to Western grievances about inadequate support. The complaint about inadequate supplies was not unusual among the Kansas garrisons. Posts across the region, including Fort Scott, were chronically short of reliable weapons and horses, two essentials for combat in a theater that featured long-distance marches and short, intense battles. The Eleventh Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, listed in May 1864 as having twenty-one officers and 644 enlisted men ready for action in the field, was short 149 rifles. Another fourteen weapons were unserviceable. The Third Wisconsin Cavalry companies assigned to southeast Kansas, reduced in number to 205 after two full years of service, were missing twenty-two rifles for its troopers and listed another twenty weapons as unserviceable. Fort Scott's supply of horses was almost as poor. The Fifteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, 622 officers and men, had only 483 horses for the regiment, while the Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry Regiment had only ninety-five horses for its 178 officers and men. The shortages continually hampered the North's military effectiveness in the area, and most likely prevented an early solution to the guerrilla and Indian problems.²⁴

The lack of guns and horses reflected the diminished significance of the western theater as the war in the East heated up. Political pressure by Republicans for military victories increased after June 8, when James Lane, the U.S. Senator from Kansas, nominated Abraham Lincoln as the party's candidate for the presidency again. Lee and his men slipped into the safety of the fortifications surrounding Richmond and Petersburg, denying Grant's plans to crush the Army of Northern Virginia. The resulting siege lasted ten months. On June 23, Grant proposed to Halleck that the North concentrate all available Union strength against Confederate armies east of the Mississippi River, recommending that "West of the Mississippi I would not attempt anything until the rebellion east of it is entirely subdued."²⁵

Kansas commanders hoped for a quiet spring, but the situation in Indian Territory grew potentially worse. Hundreds of refugee Indians who left their camps near Fort Scott in May arrived at Fort Gibson in mid-June. They joined thousands of refugees already camped around

²³ William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Nebraska* (The Western Historical Company, A. T. Andreas, Proprietor, Chicago, IL, 1882); Col. Charles Blair to Capt. George S. Hampton, District of Southern Kansas, May 16, 1864, *O.R.* Series I:34/1, 936-37; Porter, *A Journal of Events*, May 16, 1864; *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, May 21 1864.

²⁴ Inspection Report of Brig. Gen. Thomas J. McKean, May 1864, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

²⁵ Grant to Halleck, June 23, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/4, 514-15.

the post. The Union Army hoped to avoid repeating the disaster of 1863, when Confederate raiders drove the refugees off their farms and into the protection of Fort Gibson. With Stand Watie's raiders roaming the countryside and only the weakened and poorly supported Indian Regiments for protection, the refugees were in a precarious position. They could hardly afford further hardships. Their situation became even more desperate. On the same day they arrived at Fort Gibson, Watie's Confederate Indians captured the steamboat *Williams* as it headed up the Arkansas River with tons of supplies for the Indians. The refugees arrived at Fort Gibson too late in the year to plant crops. The prospect of starvation and mass chaos loomed.

Despite its remote location and continued Union battlefield successes, Fort Scott and the rest of eastern Kansas remained vulnerable to Confederate attack from Arkansas and north Texas. Curtis' department relied on warnings from pro-Union farmers and citizens along the borders as well as scouting reports sent from the small outposts surrounding Fort Scott for early warning of Confederate movement. Federal patrols roved across western Missouri, eastern Kansas and the Indian Territory, suppling information on the many bands of guerrillas and bushwhackers operating in the region. A typical scouting report forwarded in July from Fort Scott through Curtis to the Department of Missouri reported about two hundred Confederate recruits gathered at bases along Clear Creek, east of Fort Scott, with another three hundred operating south of the Kansas post. The report warned that Confederate commanders Joseph Shelby and Sidney Jackman were in northern Arkansas and preparing to gather up these recruits, clearly a precursor of some kind of military action.²⁶

Those warnings soon proved true. During September, Confederate Gen. Sterling Price unleashed 12,000 cavalrymen and infantry soldiers on Missouri in one more campaign to capture the state for the Confederacy. The attack became the greatest military threat to Kansas during the war. Price hoped to acquire weapons, supplies and recruits after he marched through eastern Missouri and captured St. Louis. However, Union resistance changed his plans, so he advanced through the center of the state along the Missouri River to Kansas City in hopes of capturing Fort Leavenworth. Further Union resistance forced Price and his army south through eastern Kansas. He again modified his plans, and now hoped to capture Fort Scott, all of the Union supplies and destroying its warehouses. The ultimate political goal was to pull Missouri into the Confederacy by sparking an uprising among secessionist supporters across Missouri, pushing the state out of the Union in time to help defeat Lincoln's reelection bid. Sherman's capture of Atlanta on September 2 devastated Southern morale and made Lincoln's reelection a guarantee that the war would end in a Union victory. Confederates hoped that detaching Missouri from the Union would provide an impetus to slow the northern advance.

Fort Scott played a crucial role before, during, and after the campaign, relaying reconnaissance reports on Price's advance, serving as a muster point for militia units across the southeast corner of the state, and supplying troops with food, ammunition, and forage during their final pursuit of Price as he fled south toward Arkansas.²⁷

Price's army faced severe constraints as the general began his march. Gathering his forces

²⁶ Curtis to Rosecrans, July 8, 1864. *O.R.*, Series I:41/2, 92.

²⁷ Gov. Thomas Reynolds to Gen. Sterling Price and Col. Trusten Polk, June 27, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:34/4, 696.

in Arkansas throughout the late summer, Price accumulated fourteen artillery pieces, eight thousand armed Missourians and Arkansans and another four thousand raw recruits rounded up in northeastern Arkansas. The new recruits were without weapons, and they expected to secure them on a Missouri battlefield. Union observers at Fort Gibson quickly noted the troop movements and sent a message to Fort Scott, estimating that Price had between 10,000 and 15,000 men. On September 19, two days after scouts reached Fort Scott with word of the advancing army, Price's column crossed into Missouri.²⁸

As military commanders watched this latest Confederate threat, word reached Kansas of another defeat in the Indian Territory, the second battle at Cabin Creek on September 18, 1864. Cherokee leader Stand Watie, reinforced by twelve hundred Texans, led his brigade of eight hundred Cherokees, Creeks, and Seminoles against a Union supply train of three hundred wagons traveling from Fort Scott to Fort Gibson. The wagons contained \$1.5 million worth of food, clothing, boots, medicine, ammunition, guns and other supplies for soldiers and Indian refugees at Fort Gibson. Attacking at 3:00 a.m. under a moonlit sky, the Confederates quickly scattered the Union escort. The raiders seized many wagons, along with 740 mules, and retreated south.²⁹

In late summer, the southeast Kansas post moved to improve its military effectiveness. On September 13, Col. Blair, the fort's commander, canceled all dress parades except Sunday evenings, because of the necessity of having his soldiers perform construction work on new stables and barracks. A week later, the state of Kansas experienced another military reorganization. The Sub-District of Fort Scott, implemented in April, was discontinued. Bourbon County and areas to the south were placed in Sub-District One, under command of Colonel Charles R. Jennison, headquartered at Mound City.³⁰ Major General George Sykes, commander of District of Southern Kansas, on September 19 ordered Jennison, the former Jayhawk leader, to inspect Fort Scott and its defenses, calling Fort Scott the most important point in the district. Sykes also ordered Jennison to attack the enemy anywhere in the subdistrict. Offensive actions required the concentration of Union troops, leaving communities such as Mound City and Fort Scott with a smaller number of military defenders. As a result, Sykes warned, "Some dependence must be placed upon the inhabitants of those villages for their self-protection."³¹

Uncertain of Price's intentions, Jennison tried to anticipate the Confederate advance. He ordered Blair to send out scouts to look for the Confederate column on September 20. The former Jayhawker also warned the Fort Scott commander to alert the citizens of his town. "I understand that [Fort Scott] is the point for which they are making," Jennison told Blair. "Much will have to be depended on the citizens if an attack is made on that place." Jennison informed Capt. Hampton, adjutant for District of Southern Kansas, that large numbers of Confederate

²⁸ Alvin M. Josephy, *American Civil War in the West* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1991), 377; Blair to Capt. G.S. Hampton, September 17, 1864, O.R., Series I:41/3, 236.

²⁹ Josephy, *American Civil War in the West*, 377.

³⁰ Special Order No. 29, September 13, 1864, Co. D Order Book, 15th Kansas Volunteer Infantry, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; General Orders No. 30, District of South Kansas, Sept. 19, 1864, O.R., Series I:41/3, 257-58.

³¹ Sykes to Jennison, Sept. 19, 1864, O.R., Series I:41/3, 258; Sykes to Jennison, Sept. 19, 1864, O.R., Series I:41/3, 259.

troops were headed north. Jennison concentrated his command at Fort Scott, inaccurately estimating Price's army had only three thousand men. He was certain that the storehouse of military supplies at Fort Scott was the prize. The following day, an errant report led Jennison and Sykes to believe that the Confederates captured Fort Gibson. Fort Scott was the logical next target. The Union commanders believed that their position had become precarious. Sykes noted that if he sent all his troops south to fight Price, "it will open the gate to the bushwhackers, who will take advantage of the demonstration against Fort Scott to come into Kansas."³²

Fort Scott became critical in the Union defense strategy. Sykes and Jennison agreed to concentrate troops at Fort Scott, although Jennison cautioned that Fort Scott held not more than one hundred effective men and even that small garrison was deficient in drill and discipline. The subdistrict commander ordered all his men to Fort Scott and promised to "hold this place at all hazards." Still not recognizing the extent of the Confederate thrust, Curtis, commanding the Department of Kansas, told Sykes that one thousand men would be sufficient to protect Fort Scott against what his staff believed to be Stand Watie's force of 2,000 to 3,000 irregulars with three pieces of artillery. Curtis also recommended that Paola or Mound City, north of Fort Scott, as a better place to concentrate forces.³³

Initial federal estimates of the military situation were not optimistic. Confederate columns moving unimpeded in Indian Territory endangered the supply trains from Fort Scott to forts Gibson and Smith. Jennison was pleased to discover that Fort Gibson had not fallen, but believed that the two garrisons, facing food shortages, would soon withdraw. Because reports indicated the Confederate forces were already north of the two Indian Territory forts, the garrisons would be forced to withdraw to the east, leaving southern Kansas totally exposed to enemy action. This made Fort Scott even more vulnerable. Jennison ordered all of the employees at Fort Scott's quartermaster and commissary departments enrolled, armed, and placed under competent officers. Citizens in the town formed companies, which were holding military drills. Jennison promised that his men would try to hold the town as long as possible, but he warned that the available force was totally inadequate to repel any determined attack.³⁴

The Confederate advance bogged down far to the east. Price succeeded in getting into Missouri, but determined Union resistance at Pilot Knob in the southeastern corner of the state thwarted his plan to attack St. Louis. By the end of September Price modified his aspirations. He sought to march up the Missouri River and capture as many western Missouri towns as possible. While thousands of terrified citizens in eastern Missouri knew of Price's presence, soldiers in the isolated posts surrounding Fort Scott were still unaware of his location. At the end of September, an officer serving at Fort Insley in southwestern Missouri had only heard rumors of Price's invasion and continued to search for what he thought was a proposed raid from Arkansas. He proved prophetic when he wrote that "we are in expectation of having a lively job on hand

³² Jennison to Blair, Sept. 20, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 279; Jennison to Hampton, Sept. 20, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 280; Sykes to Curtis, Sept. 21, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 292.

³³ Jennison to Hampton, Sept. 21, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 293.

³⁴ Jennison to Hampton, Sept. 22, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 312-13.

soon.³⁵

Giving up on his objectives in eastern Missouri, Price headed north to the Missouri River, and reached Boonville, less than ninety miles east of Kansas City, on October 10. At the river town, about 1,200 Missouri guerrillas led by "Bloody" Bill Anderson joined the Confederates. Eventually, the Army ordered most of the Union forces in southern Kansas north to assist with the defense of Kansas City as Price's army advanced westward from Jefferson City, Missouri. This troop movement left southeastern Kansas open to attacks from Missouri guerrillas and Confederate forces in the Indian Territory. One Kansas officer warned his superiors about the arrangement of federal troops, noting that cavalry units under aggressive commanders like Gen. Joseph Shelby were operating with Price, "and I cannot see what is to prevent him from making a dash at Fort Scott, due west of him but two days' march." Whatever protection that Kansas could muster would have to come from federal forces already there, backed by whatever hastily raised militia units the state could organize. On October 6, Blair informed Curtis that Fort Scott was prepared for action, and that several militia companies were also available. In preparation for Price, Blair sent scouts fifty miles to the east and seventy miles to the south. Jennison, still in Mound City on October 8, also had a circle of scouts out in all directions. He boasted that he "Cannot be surprised. Can hold Fort Scott against any cavalry or guerrilla force."³⁶

Politics and unfounded assumptions delayed defensive preparations in Kansas. Like many Kansans, Governor Thomas Carney did not think that Price would invade the state. He surmised that James Lane arranged for news about the raid and calls to mobilize the militia in an effort to keep voters away from the polls and allow Lane's faction to steal an election. After receiving definite information about Price's drive along the Missouri River, Carney finally recognized the severity of the threat and ordered all militia units in the state to prepare for battle on October 9. On the same day, Jennison sent a pair of messages to Fort Scott. He ordered Blair to prepare the post's mountain howitzers for action and to move out all available companies with full strength, "no shirks are left behind." Jennison also ordered the Fort Scott commander to "Get every able-bodied citizen under arms at Fort Scott." The Army ordered all militia units in Bourbon and Woodson Counties to assemble at Fort Scott on October 10, and Sykes ordered the department quartermaster to send adequate supplies there.³⁷

Carney's political intuitions proved accurate. The threat of an invasion proved as real as Lane's intention to profit from the situation. On October 10, Curtis relieved Sykes from command of the District of South Kansas, replacing him with Major General James Blunt, unceremoniously relieved from command in April. Carney declared martial law throughout the state on the same day, and appointed Lane as a volunteer aide-de-camp. After inspecting his resources, Blunt informed Curtis that Fort Scott had 2,500 weapons, and requested another one thousand. Blunt also suggested different mustering points, recommending that militia units

³⁵ Porter, *A Journal of Events*, Sept. 29, 1864

³⁶ Capt. Thomas Moonlight to Sykes, Oct. 6, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 672-73; Blair to Curtis, Oct. 6, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 674; Jennison to Curtis, Oct. 8, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 715.

³⁷ Jennison to Blair, Oct. 9, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 739; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 187-90; Sykes to Capt. B.F. Simpson, Oct. 10, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 764.

gathered at Mound City and Fort Scott would be more valuable in northeast Kansas. "I do not believe Price will venture north of the Kansas River," Blunt predicted, "but will strike as far up on the south side of the river as he can." Curtis answered frostily: "Of course Price is to be met; when and where will depend on his position and our collection and organization. This latter business should occupy your whole attention now."³⁸

At Fort Scott, preparations for an attack were under way. Residents organized three armed militia companies that were ready for duty and the Army organized another company out of the post's quartermaster employees. In addition, the town waited for another four companies filled with men from the surrounding county. An African-American officer, First Lieut. William D. Mathews, in Fort Scott to recruit soldiers for the Kansas Colored Independent Light Artillery Battery, commanded another militia company of about one hundred African American citizens. Along the Kansas border, nearly 10,000 men served in militia units; another 2,600 guarded interior sites. Poorly armed and with minimal military training, for the great majority their only uniform was a red badge pinned to their hats.³⁹

Kansans were unsure of Price's objectives in the state, but many military leaders believed Fort Scott was one of the key targets. "It is very probable that Price will move in the direction of Fort Scott," Jennison warned Blair on October 11, "for the purpose of getting from that place a sufficient amount of subsistence for his command." The post commander needed to keep scouts out in all directions. All businesses in town were closed and Blair ordered all male citizens between sixteen and sixty to report to their militia companies.⁴⁰

By October 12, Price threatened the federal garrison in Lexington, Missouri, about thirty miles east of Kansas City. Seeking to balance the twin needs to defend Kansas City and southeast Kansas, Army leaders ordered Blunt to leave between eight hundred and one thousand men at Fort Scott and send the rest north. Blunt told Jennison that the post garrison should be infantry, comprising those least acceptable for field duty such as African Americans and quartermaster employees. He also ordered the transfer of one thousand rifles and one hundred rounds of ammunition for each weapon for the defense of Kansas City and the north. The Army instructed Blair and his men to move from Fort Scott to Mound City the following day. After placing Captain Vittum of Third Wisconsin Cavalry, in command at the post, Blair left Fort Scott and headed north with almost one thousand men.⁴¹

Several Kansas leaders still saw hints that Fort Scott remained a primary Confederate target. On October 14, Jennison forwarded a report from scouts that a large Confederate force

³⁸ Special Orders No. 215, Department of Kansas, Oct. 10, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 764; C.S. Charlot to Lane, Oct. 10, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 769; Blunt to Curtis, Oct. 11, 1864, Curtis to Blunt, Oct. 11, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 794.

³⁹ Blair to Curtis, Oct. 11, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 795; Castel, *Civil War Kansas*, 189.

⁴⁰ Jennison to Blair, Oct. 11, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 796.

⁴¹ Curtis to Blunt, Oct. 12, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 823; Blunt to Jennison, Oct. 13, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 847; Lt. Joseph Mackle, First Sub-District of Kansas, to Blair, Oct. 13, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 848; Reports of Col. Charles W. Blair, Nov. 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/1, 596; Accompanying Blair were Companies A, C, D, F, and M, Third Wisconsin Cavalry; Companies D, E, and L, Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry; Company D, Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry; right section Second Kansas Battery; four howitzers and an ordnance train, Company E, Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry; Lieutenant-Colonel Eves' battalion of Bourbon County militia, and Capt. John Wilson's company of independent cavalry scouts.

under Stand Watie was between Fort Gibson and Fort Scott. He recommended stationing a larger defensive force at Fort Scott as soon as possible. "There is a large amount of Government stores," he observed, "at that post that may fall into the hands of the rebels if not properly attended to." The warehouses at Fort Scott were also on the mind of Capt. Merritt Insley, the post quartermaster. On October 20, he wrote to the Department of Kansas, warning them that "It seems to me you are leaving this post an easy conquest for the enemy. There are \$4,000,000 worth of public property to be protected or lost."⁴²

The Confederate column moved westward, and by October 22 it had broken through the main Union position on the Big Blue River, outside Kansas City. Curtis had already prepared for a Union withdrawal. He told his subordinates that when Price began moving to the southwest, "I want the militia and everything moving by the best lines toward Fort Scott, so as to head him off from our border posts – Paola, Mound City, or Fort Scott." On October 22, Union headquarters in Lexington, Missouri, sent two separate couriers south to warn Fort Scott of the potential for attack. Fort Leavenworth's commanding officer issued his own warning to the post, informing Insley that Price had broken through the Union line and the Confederate column was eight miles south of Kansas City. The Fort Leavenworth officer suggested the Fort Scott quartermaster move all the teams and wagons he could away from the post to the north and west. Curtis quickly countermanded those suggestions, ordering Insley to remain. "Stand," his order barked. "The enemy is flying, closely pursued. Your only safety is to remain and keep everything in the forts."⁴³

In addition to the invasion of eastern Kansas by Price's army, another Confederate raid occurred near Fort Scott. On the night of October 22, about sixty bushwhackers attacked the town of Marmaton, west of the post, killing five people and burning several businesses, houses, and churches. Newspaper reports called this engagement the Marmaton Massacre, but it was not part of Price's campaign. Fort Scott sent out soldiers in pursuit but the bushwhackers escaped unharmed. They later attacked a refugee train heading north from Fort Gibson, robbing and burning several wagons.⁴⁴

Price continued to advance but after the daylong battle of Westport on October 23, Union commanders judged him to be more anxious to retreat to Arkansas than to attack Fort Scott. Just before the battle, Price had been ready to detach one of his units under Shelby for the purpose of

⁴² Jennison to Capt. George Hampton, Oct. 14, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/3, 871; Insley to Maj. S.S. Curtis, Oct. 20, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 150.

⁴³ Curtis to Gen. George Dietzler, Oct. 21, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 166; Col. John Du Bois to Commanding Officer, Springfield, Mo., Oct. 22, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 169; Brig. General Thomas Davies to Insley, Curtis to Insley, Oct. 22, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 194. The border battles had always been intensely personal. Most of the fighters and their families lost relatives in the decade-long struggle and much bitterness remained. During the near panic brought on by Price's autumn raid, Curtis informed his wife that "It is certain that among the rebels killed yesterday the notorious Todd, one of the murderers of our son, was one among many who were killed. Their loss was much heavier than mine. They are retreating southwest, but fighting us hard." The Curtis' son was killed the previous October at Baxter Springs during Quantrill's attack on Blunt's escort. Curtis to Mrs. Curtis, Oct. 22, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 190.

⁴⁴ *City Directory and Business Mirror for 1865-66* (Fort Scott: Monitor Book and Job Office [n.d.]); Blunt to Insley, Oct. 23, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 209.



General John S. Marmaduke, above, and General William Cabell, Confederate officers captured at Mine Creek.

attacking and capturing Fort Scott. Following the Union victory at Westport, Price's men headed south in full retreat and federal forces followed closely. Price "will have no time to call at Fort Scott," Blunt observed, "but if he should you must fight him to the last extremity. We will be close upon his heels." Late in the afternoon, Union commanders decided to send the militia units from northern Kansas back home, handing pursuit of Price over to Blunt's District of Southern Kansas and Maj. General Alfred Pleasonton and his mounted cavalrymen who had pursued Price from Jefferson City, Missouri.⁴⁵

The Union pursuit of Price started immediately. Slowed by the wagon train, Price's columns moved south down the former Fort Leavenworth-Fort Scott military road only thirty-three miles, crossing into Kansas at West Point and reaching the village of Trading Post late on October 24, 1864. Curtis was still unsure of Price's intentions at midnight, warning the commander at Paola that the Confederates might try to advance against Fort Scott, but he hoped to pressure them enough to deter any attacks. Pickets from the two forces made contact late that night, and the Union commanders decided to attack in the morning. When the soldiers moved out in the first light of day on October 25,, they saw the bulk of the Confederates already moving south across the Marais des Cygnes River, but the retreating troops left behind their breakfasts and much of their supplies. The opposing forces began the day's long string of combat actions at Trading Post, around daylight. Soon after, troops were also engaged in a skirmish at Mound City, with that action lasting from approximately 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 a.m. The Southern column continued marching south. The Union forces approached the rear guard of Price's army at approximately 11:30 a.m.

as it was crossing a stream named Mine Creek, approximately six miles south of Trading Post. Price ordered two of his divisions to advance to counter the threat, but charging Union cavalry troopers smashed into the Confederates before they could fully form up. This action, with about 2,700 mounted Union soldiers attacking the six thousand troops that made up the rear guard of Price's army as it defended the jammed Confederate supply wagons crossing the stream, was the largest Civil War engagement fought in Kansas. The cavalry charge led to the capture of about six hundred men and two senior officers, brigadier generals John S. Marmaduke and William L. Cabell. Two soldiers from the Third Iowa Cavalry Regiment, Private James Dunlavy, who captured Marmaduke, and Sergeant Calvaly Young, who secured Cabell, received the Medal of

⁴⁵ Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), 329-36; Reports of Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, No. 88, Price's Missouri Expedition, Dec. 28, 1864, *O.R.*, Series 1:41/1, 636-37.

Honor for their actions.⁴⁶

Despite the nearly continuous pressure as he headed south, Price still intended to attack the Union base at Fort Scott. Union Col. Thomas Moonlight, after reaching Mound City and defeating a Confederate reconnaissance in force early in the morning, warned that Price was still a threat. He cautioned Lt. Col. Campbell at Fort Scott that "Price is clearly determined to take Fort Scott, and I cannot see anything to prevent him with our forces divided. I would certainly fight to the end." Seeing the situation in a different light, Col. Drake, commanding the garrison at Paola, reported that Price "is abandoning everything and is so closely pressed I don't think he will be able to molest Fort Scott much." At about 11:30 a.m., Price was encamped on the New Fort Scott Road near the Little Osage River, approximately 16 miles south of Mine Creek and 12 miles north of Fort Scott. There Price received word that in addition to the action at Mine Creek a portion of his column was engaged at Fort Lincoln to his west. Faced with threats from the north and the west, the Confederate commander then made the decision to give up any plans for an attack on Fort Scott that could put Union forces on three of his sides. Price opted to head south. After receiving news of the disaster at Mine Creek, Price ordered General Joe Shelby back from his advance upon Fort Scott to help bolster the scattered Confederate rear guard. Around 2:00 p.m., Shelby's troops engaged and delayed the pursuing Union forces at the Battle of the Little Osage River and continued to protect the rear of Price's column. Leaving the Fort Scott military road to his right, Price led the remainder of his expedition southeast. Most of the Union troops, exhausted from the day-long pursuit, gave up the chase and marched to Fort Scott.⁴⁷

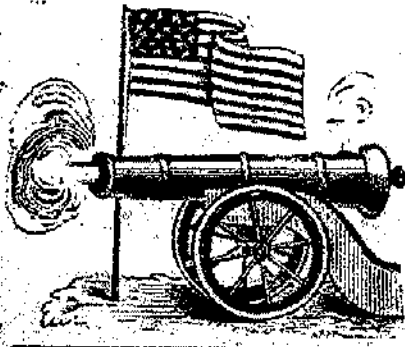
With his shattered army unable to take on Fort Scott, Price turned his attention to saving as much of his force as possible. The Confederate column crossed the Marmaton about sixteen miles east of Fort Scott at Deerfield, Missouri, shielded by another rearguard action by the Confederate forces commanded by Shelby. Getting the wagons across the river allowed the exhausted Union troops time to move up and the two sides squared off again in the late afternoon. Just as the armies lined up for battle at Charlot's Farm, about seven miles away from Fort Scott, General Pleasonton, pleading exhaustion and a severe need for supplies, led his forces into the post. Lining up for battle, Price's force threatened to flank any Union charge and the Northern commanders stopped their advance. Early on the morning of October 26, 1864, just south of Deerfield, Missouri, the Confederates burned all unnecessary wagons and supplies. The burning supplies and exploded ammunition illuminated the eastern sky and part of the pursuing Union force, now camped on the prairie northeast of Fort Scott, watched. The Union decision to pause to regroup and resupply their commands at Fort Scott allowed the Confederates to continue marching south. By nightfall of October 26, the remnants of Price's expedition were in Carthage, Mo., on their way south to Arkansas. The majority of his surviving supply train was destroyed at

⁴⁶ Mark A. Plummer, "Missouri and Kansas and the Capture of General Marmaduke," *Missouri Historical Review* 64, n. 1 (October 1964): 90-104; Scott E. Sallee, "Missouri! One Last Time: Sterling Price's 1864 Missouri Expedition," *Blue & Gray Magazine* 8, n. 5 (June 1991): 10-20+; Albert Castel, "War and Politics: The Price Raid of 1864," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 24, n. 2 (Summer 1958): 129-43.

⁴⁷ Moonlight to Campbell, Oct. 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 243; Lt. Col. Drake to Davies, Oct. 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 244; Plummer, "Missouri and Kansas and the Capture of General Marmaduke," 90-104; Report of Maj. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis, January 1865, *O.R.* Series I:41/4, 464-523.

UNION MONITOR, EXTRA.

Fort Scott, Kansas, October 27, 1864.



A GLORIOUS VICTORY.

"P.P." PRISON AGAIN THREATENED.

South of the Marimaton and Retreating Rapidly!

MARMADUKE, CABELL AND TWO THOUSAND OF THE "SMALLER FRY" CAPTURED.

TEN PIECES OF ARTILLERY AND OTHER TROPHIES!

KANSAS OUT OF DANGER!!!

All hail to Curtis, Pleasanton, Blunt, Sanborn, McNeill, and their officers and soldiers of the army, and to the Kansas militia! Another glorious victory has been gained, and to them are due the eternal gratitude of Kansas, Missouri, and the whole nation. Joy to Kansas and Missouri, for their saviors have come, and their enemies are gone!

We have the pleasure of recording one of the most brilliant series of victories that have ever been won on this continent.

It would be folly to attempt a full description of the affair to-day, for we have neither time, space, nor the particulars. Suffice it to say that the victories won near the Trading Post, and the Marimaton, were complete, resulting in the capture of Gen'l's Marmaduke & Cabell, four Colonels, any amount of other officers and privates,—in all about two thousand, including what were captured yesterday,—together with nine or ten pieces of artillery. The number of Price's troops is estimated at twenty-seven thousand, about 15,000 of whom were engaged, while our forces engaged against them, were not over 5,000. The cavalry charge made when the guns were captured, is represented by officers who were there, as one of the most brilliant that ever took place.

could not get here. Then all hope was gone. Women and children together with a few cowardly men, were flying in all directions, and the little handful of heroes left here, had nerved themselves for a death struggle against seven thousand rebels, who were understood to be just over the hills north, east and west of town.—Fort Scott could then have been bought for a very small consideration. It was perhaps the darkest hour that many of our citizens had ever witnessed. But the old adage that the darkest hour comes just before the break of day, was fully verified. This inference, for at the very moment when the last hope was gone, Col. Moonlight arrived with the news that Price had been defeated, his men flying before our victorious army, and that Col. Blair would be here in twenty minutes. A proper description of the revolution in the feeling of the people would be an impossibility.—One long and loud cheer greeted the reception of the news, by the men, the women and children jumped up and clapped their hands; many of them shedding tears for joy. The quiet that had prevailed, gave place to renewed activity and life, and the undemonstrative but stern expression of our men broke forth in uncontrolable excitement, not only on account of their safety, but of the great victory that had been gained. The ladies who had remained, rushed to their kitchens, and until midnight, and all the next day, toiled over their stoves, preparing edibles for the weary and half-starved soldiers, as they dropped in. It was a day of excitement, of pain and pleasure to our citizens, and one which will be remembered by many of them as the most critical period of their lives.

BRUTAL TREATMENT.

The treatment of prisoners in the hands of Price's men, is represented by those who have escaped, as of the most brutal character.

In three days they were forced to march, on foot, over one hundred miles, and in the retreat on the last day, they travelled over some of the

To-day we are only able to issue an extra. Soldiers, and a few that we should be obliged to "set up" by working under price, come very near buying us up in business, leaving our office in such a condition that it has taken nearly all day to get matters arranged again. In other words we had become somewhat "demoralized." That, taken with a rash of other business, has left us no alternative but an extra issue. We shall resume publication tomorrow.

ESCAPED PRISONERS.

We are indebted to W. M. H. for the following list of men belonging to the Shawnee County regiment, who are known to have escaped from Price's hands. John Brown, H. C. Young, G. G. Gage, Polly, Anderson, G. W. N. Young and Fletcher.

Capt. Ba-h, Lieut. Deon and Harry Thompson are known to have been killed, and others are believed to have been killed, but they have no positive knowledge of it. The above were from Auburn. The following from Poplarville among the killed—Lieut. Col. Green, M. Martin, Dan. Handy, H. G. Young, Dick Brown, H. C. Coville, Lonsark, and John Armstrong.

Mr. Gage says that before he escaped he heard the officer in charge of the prisoners, order his men to shoot any that fell behind while marching, and saw them shoot one man.

Since the above was written, three more of the Shawnee county boys—U. G. Crowe, L. Palmer, and M. T. Cook—have arrived, having escaped from Price yesterday morning.

We find that with other classes, the craft is represented in the army here. Several from Pleasanton's command have called on us. Among the rest Lieut. Thom-on, the General's Adjutant, came up, took a stick in his hand, and heaped "set up" a general order. He learned to handle the "shooting stick" before he went into the army, and so far the Johnny Rebs have failed to knock his "form" into "p" He is a "gay and festive cuss" and we wish to offer him our best and welcome him to the S.

Deerfield, Missouri, between midnight and 2:00 a.m. in the morning of October 26, 1864.⁴⁸

The civilian residents of Fort Scott waited anxiously for news of Price's proximity to the town. The newspaper reported that women and children "and a few cowardly men" were fleeing in all directions in the face of the Confederate expedition, "and the little handful of heroes left here, had nerved themselves for a death struggle against seven thousand rebels, who were understood to be just over the hills north, east and west of town. Fort Scott could then have been bought for a very small consideration." The Union success in destroying the offensive strength of Price's force sparked celebrations in Fort Scott. The small number of women who had remained "rushed to their kitchens, and until midnight, and all the next day, toiled over their stoves, preparing edibles for the ... soldiers."⁴⁹

With the direct threat of an invasion over, the Army transformed Fort Scott from an endangered outpost to the headquarters of a pursuing force. Many units chasing Price's expedition stopped at Fort Scott to pick up food, forage, and supplies. Curtis moved his command post to Fort Scott by October 26, and resolved to continue the pursuit until completely destroying Price's command or it moved beyond Union reach. On October 28, 1864, the last battle of Price's campaign occurred at the Battle of Newtonia in southwest Missouri, near the present town of Neosho. On the same day, Major General Pleasanton, the cavalry officer who led the pursuit across Missouri before smashing Price's forces at Mine Creek, led two brigades and an unknown number of prisoners out of Fort Scott. Left behind were many wounded from both sides, overflowing the post hospital. During the first week of November, medical personnel treated seventy-two Union and Confederate soldiers still at the fort.⁵⁰

Federal troops made a determined effort to pursue Price and eliminate the threat of border ruffians. The Union army put all its available resources into the chase. On October 30, Blair, by then back at Fort Scott after leading the chase, reported to Gen. William S. Rosecrans, commanding the Department of Missouri, that he sent supplies to two Union forces pursuing Price as fast as he could gather wagons. Rosecrans supported Union plans for full pursuit of the Confederates, telling Blair that if escorts for the supply trains were needed stragglers from the departments of Kansas and Arkansas should be collected. Curtis took overall command of the federal forces. Aside from chasing Price away from Kansas, he also planned to drive away many of the bushwhackers then in the region. "I hope to get them so far away," he announced, that "they will trouble us no more forever."⁵¹

Fort Scott maintained its importance well after Price's forces were forced from Kansas and Missouri to Arkansas. Curtis kept his headquarters at the post throughout the first half of November, coordinating the closeout of the pursuit. The final two months of 1864 ignited

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Fort Scott *Monitor*, quoted in the *Missouri Republican*, November 11, 1864.

⁵⁰ Curtis to Thayer, Oct. 26, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 249; Maj. Gen. W.S. Rosecrans to Maj. Gen. A.J. Smith, Oct. 27, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 277; Lt. Col. J.J. Sears to Maj. C.S. Charlott, October 27, 1864, *O.R.* Series I:41/4, 288; *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, Nov. 3, 1864.

⁵¹ Blair to Rosecrans, Oct. 30, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 335; Maj. C.S. Charlott, aide de camp, to Blair, Oct. 30, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 335-6; Curtis to Davies, Oct. 30, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 336.

memories of "Bleeding Kansas." The jayhawking past of Charles Jennison, assigned to lead a column hounding the Confederates through Missouri and into Arkansas, resurfaced, as several dozen officers serving in his brigade signed a formal complaint protesting the "indiscriminate pilfering and robbing of private citizens, and especially of defenseless women and children, that has marked the line of march of this division." A week later, Blunt ordered Jennison's troops back to where they were before Price's raid, citing the "difficulty among the troops at Fort Scott." Although their efforts had defeated the Confederate invasion, Union leaders prepared for another enemy drive. On November 25, Curtis recommended that in the future the Army divide the border force protecting southeast Kansas between Paola and Fort Scott.⁵²

Winter brought an end to fighting in the field and the bureaucratic infighting resumed. The Army reorganized Kansas again in December, reconstituting the District of South Kansas on December 6. One subunit, comprising the counties of Bourbon, Allen, Woodson, Greenwood, and Butler, and all territory south to the southern boundary of Kansas and the military outposts of Fort Scott, was designated District No. 2, headquartered at Fort Scott and commanded by Colonel Charles W. Blair, Fourteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. Two days later, Blunt initiated an investigation of reports of outrages and vandalism committed by Jennison's forces in northwest Arkansas during their return to Fort Scott. By way of a response, Jennison complained to Blunt about the small number of men in his new command, saying he deserved to lead more than two hundred and fifty men. He blamed his new subordinate position on his refusal to follow James Lane's lead in military contracts and demanded the Army allow him to resign. Blunt answered that Jennison should accept his orders, whatever they might be, and observed that the conduct of his command as it returned from the Arkansas River was a disgrace to Kansas. The next day Blunt relieved Jennison from command of the subdistrict and placed him under arrest.⁵³

The most dangerous period in Fort Scott's history passed quickly. The Confederates had finally seen Fort Scott, but only as prisoners brought in after the battle of Mine Creek. Decisive Union action all along the Kansas-Missouri border, aided by supplies provided by Fort Scott, defeated Price's plans to level the town and its warehouses. Retreating south, Price's column lost even more men and supplies to the pursuing federal forces, kept well supplied by regular wagon trains sent out from Fort Scott. The post had survived its most serious test.

⁵² Blunt to Hampton, Nov. 23, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 660; Curtis to Lt. Robinson, Nov. 25, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 683.

⁵³ General Orders n. 32, District of South Kansas, Dec. 6, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 783; Blunt to Brig. Gen. J.M. Thayer, Dec. 8, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 798-99; Jennison to Capt. George S. Hampton, Dec. 10, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 843; Blunt to Jennison, Dec. 11, 1864, *O.R.*, Series I:41/4, 844-46.

Chapter Eleven:

Fort Scott and the Union Effort, 1865

President Abraham Lincoln's reelection in November 1864 signaled the North's resolve to continue fighting until the rebellion of the Southern states was crushed. The signs of imminent victory were everywhere. The Democratic Party's peace effort, which offered Southern leaders a hope of a negotiated settlement, crumbled in the face of a string of federal victories that included Gen. Sterling Price's failed campaign in Missouri late in 1864. The South's economic situation received another and nearly final serious blow on Jan. 15, 1865, when Confederate ships running the Union blockade lost their last seaport. The capture of Fort Fisher, guarding Wilmington, N.C., ended all European imports into the South, and helped diminish the south's military threat. As 1865 began, Lincoln and his strategists recognized that their focus would soon shift to rebuilding the nation and reintegrating the South into the new Union. The question that remained was only when the South would capitulate.

The military forces that once had threatened the North across half a continent now were surrounded. The Confederacy's remaining hopes for independence rested with the Army of Northern Virginia. Battlefield defeats pushed General Robert E. Lee's army of 55,000 soldiers into the miles of fortifications surrounding Petersburg, severely limiting offensive operations. After General William Sherman's devastating march across Georgia and Phil Sheridan's equally crippling drive across the Shenandoah Valley, the Carolinas were the only source of food available to Confederate armies. In light of the increasing gloomy war news, desertion became a serious problem to Lee's army, especially among units raised in North Carolina as the men fled to protect their homes and families.¹

The Confederate campaigns that had periodically threatened Missouri and Kansas and other Midwest states faded away as the South focused its energy on protecting Virginia and the Carolinas. As they came to understand that the war was coming to an end, Kansans sought to resume their lives even as the fighting continued. When Price and his scattered command were driven south of the Arkansas River into Arkansas, the Kansas militia ordered to the border counties returned home. The state's Republican Party followed the national lead when it posted overwhelming victories in the November elections, electing Chase County resident Samuel J. Crawford governor and returning most of James Lane's supporters to the state senate, ensuring his reelection to the U.S. Senate. Before leaving for Topeka, Crawford had to resign as commander of the Second Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment.²

Impending victory led to a broadening of Fort Scott's obligations. As the Union's battlefield successes continued, the combat-hardened veterans camped along the Marmaton River turned their attention to the renewed threat of bands of guerrillas and the ongoing problem of

¹ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 845-6.

² Albert Castel, *Civil War Kansas: Reaping the Whirlwind* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 197-200.

stealing cattle, both of which threatened the safety and well-being of former Indian refugees who had returned to Indian Territory. Colonel Williams Phillips estimated about 20,000 loyal Indians were scattered around the region, with half clustered near Fort Gibson, and all of them dependent upon federal troops for protection. Throughout January, the Union Army kept a highly mobile force assembled around Fort Scott. Six companies of the Fifteenth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry Regiment and five companies of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment were stationed there, backed by the field artillery of one section of the Second Kansas Battery. Price's raid the previous autumn illustrated the exposed nature of Fort Scott's warehouses, and the Union Army took steps to increase the post's defensive capabilities.

The most significant threat to southeast Kansas since the Price raid of 1864 came in January, with word that Fort Smith, Arkansas, was soon to be evacuated. Fort Scott's newspaper proclaimed that the decision would prove fatal to Kansas and Missouri, removing a key outpost overlooking Indian Territory and opening the door to Confederate raids and worse. The editor warned that if a Confederate army headed north from Texas, Fort Scott was the first line of defense "and the force that could be concentrated here would be chaff before the whirlwind, in the presence of a rebel army of such appointment and force as that taken into Missouri by Price." Kansas' defensive posture received a boost on January 12, when Kansas legislators reelected Lane to the U.S. Senate, guaranteeing Kansans an adamant voice close to Lincoln's ear.³

Federal offensives in the Trans-Mississippi region pushed the regular Confederate Army far away from Kansas, leaving guerrillas and bushwhackers as the principal military threat in Missouri and the Indian Territory. In some ways, their presence was worse than the regular army. Even the mere rumor of a guerrilla band operating in an area was enough to spark panic among the civilian population. Early in January, Fort Scott's assistant provost marshal passed along a warning to his superior, reporting that six bushwhackers were near Hickman Mills, Missouri, threatening the nearby town of Aubrey. While Fort Scott had a subpost nearby, it was two miles from Aubrey, and worried residents wanted a detachment stationed in their town. By the end of the month, concern over the bushwhacker threat led Col. Charles Blair, commanding the Fort Scott garrison, to request permission to buy another eight hundred horses for the fifteen companies stationed at the post, warning his superior, Maj. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis at Fort Leavenworth that "the spring will soon open, and we will need a well-mounted command to attend to the bushwhackers, who will come with the first leaves."⁴

The guerrillas posed a danger to individuals, but the primary Confederate threat to the state remained in Indian Territory. Despite the overall successes of the Union military campaign, the balance of power in "The Nations" remained uncertain. Confederate success in the region never drew the attention of senior federal commanders, as it was accurately judged a situation that had little consequence in the outcome of the war. To Kansas residents, such a viewpoint was

³ *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, Jan. 6, 1865.

⁴ Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. *The Civil War in the American West* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 384-5; Lt. W.F. Goble to Maj. H.H. Heath, Jan. 7, 1865, United States War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Published Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901) (cited as *O.R.*), I:48/1, 452-3; Blair to Curtis, Jan. 30, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/1, 698.

an affront. Their families, homes, and businesses were at risk, threatened by raids from the south. They pressured the military to do more for them. In January, Col. Phillips, commander of the Indian Brigade, bypassed the military chain of command to present his picture of the Indian Territory situation to Edwin M. Stanton, Lincoln's Secretary of War. Phillips reported that the Confederates held numerical superiority in Indian soldiers and artillery, backed by a brigade of Arkansas and Texas troops. Military requirements elsewhere had already forced the transfer of two regiments, he stated, and the planned evacuation of Fort Smith would further weaken his command. Phillips declined to offer his recommendation about the Indian Territory, but he predicted he could continue to hold it, if an infantry regiment, artillery battery, and enough mounts for half his men were sent to his brigade. If the Union declined to maintain a foothold in the northern half of Indian Territory, he warned, the Confederates would have a free hand to turn the whole region against the North.⁵

Despite Northern military successes, Fort Scott's perceived vulnerabilities continued to worry Union leaders. On February 1, concern over Fort Scott's vulnerability to attack led military leaders to prepare for the construction of new fortifications overlooking the town. Army engineers designed the new breastworks to surround twelve acres containing barracks, quartermasters' office and warehouses, stables, and headquarters and mechanics buildings. Army engineers selected a hill to the southeast of the town as the best location. The new fort was to use lumber shipped south from Fort Leavenworth, since the available amounts of timber were predicted to be inadequate for the huge amounts required.⁶

Not all of Phillips' perceived enemies were to the south. The longtime commander of the Indian Brigade officially condemned two Fort Scott officers. Capt. David S. Vittum of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry served as provost marshal for southern Kansas. Phillips bitterly wrote to Maj. Gen. Francis Herron, one of the region's senior officers, "Only think of one of the most noted cattle thieves being police officer on the border." Blair also drew criticism from Phillips, who warned that "I have plenty in my hands, but think I ought to prefer charges and push the matter against both of them and others." Some of those others were government contractors working out of Fort Gibson, including former Fort Scott merchant A. McDonald. Phillips claimed to have evidence showing McDonald and Indian Superintendent William G. Coffin were involved in a huge swindle of Indians, taking corn shipped south from Fort Scott on one contract and selling it on another. Corn seized from Confederate sources and furnished to the Cherokees in the spring of 1864 had been planted and successfully harvested, Phillips wrote, but Coffin convinced federal officials to allocate another \$200,000 to feed the supposedly starving Indians. The Indian superintendent then authorized McDonald & Company to furnish corn at \$7 a bushel, while the contractor's agents bought up local supplies for the contract at \$2 to \$2.50 a bushel. Phillips also accused the two men of prohibiting Indians from killing contraband cattle, instead forcing them to purchase beef from McDonald, who was relying upon those very same contraband animals for his contract to supply beef to the Bureau of Indian Affairs.⁷

⁵ Phillips to Secretary of War, Jan. 8, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/1, 456-7.

⁶ McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 807-830; *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, Feb. 1, 1865.

⁷ Phillips to Herron, Jan. 16, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/1, 542.

Public and military outcries over increasing cases of cattle theft from the Indian Territory finally convinced military officials in early February to react firmly. Blair ordered the commander of troops in the three counties immediately to the west of Bourbon County to arrest anyone heading into Indian Territory. His order noted that no Kansas citizen or soldier had any business in Indian Territory, so anyone found going south from Kansas could only be engaged in stealing cattle.⁸

Not all of the larceny in southeast Kansas involved cattle. After four years of combat, Fort Scott's merchants had perfected the routine of separating troops from their pay. The town newspaper, reporting the arrival of the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry band for one of the regiment's irregular payday, whimsically hoped "the boys will go back with more green backs in their weasels than when they came." A few days later, while mentioning the arrival of Lt. G.T. Robinson of the Engineer Corps and his crew for work on the new fort and barracks, the *Daily Monitor* again mentioned the paymaster's activities, describing the officer "distributing greenbacks to the deserving ones." A cause of some concern to the town's economy was the newspaper's observation that while many of the soldiers had been paid off and had the money to drink, very few were observed "the worse for liquor."⁹

Still seeking more military support for his troops in the Indian Territory, early in February Phillips wrote a lengthy report detailing his status to Maj. Gen. Joseph Jones Reynolds, commanding the Department of Arkansas, focusing on the lack of horses for his command. His Indian Brigade had a paper strength of about 1,600 mounted men, Phillips complained, but as a result of a lack of animals he could not even mount his pickets or scouts. The refugee Indians recently returned to the territory from camps in Kansas and Missouri, principally the Creeks, sought to leave the camps surrounding Fort Gibson and return to their homes south of the Arkansas River. Phillips claimed that was impossible without mounted troopers to protect the separated homesteads. If he did get enough animals for one thousand men, horses promised in 1864 by Grant, along with a small number of artillery pieces, Phillips planned to lead his command against Southern forces still operating in Indian Territory. Successful attacks would push the Confederates south of the Red River, allowing the Indians to return to their farms and begin spring planting, Phillips said, relieving Kansas from fears of an attack from the south.¹⁰

Five weeks into the new year, Fort Scott had a new department commander. As the nation's newspapers poured praise upon William Sherman for his march across Georgia, Curtis grew upset with the lack of a similar outpouring for his work in pursuing Price the previous fall. Curtis, who turned sixty in 1865, submitted his resignation, and on February 7, Gen. Grenville Dodge's Missouri department was expanded west to include Kansas, Nebraska, and Utah. Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt, still in charge of the District of Southern Kansas, wasted little time in raising a fresh set of alarms to his new superior, warning the department commander that as

⁸ Blair to Maj. H. C. Haas, Commanding Troops in Allen, Woodson, and Greenwood Counties, Feb. 2, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/1, 725.

⁹ *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, Feb. 3, 1865, Feb. 5, 1865.

¹⁰ Phillips to Maj. Gen. J.J. Reynolds, Feb. 9, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/1, 789-90.

many as seven thousand Indians under Stand Watie were moving north to attack settlements across Kansas' Neosho Valley. Downplaying the effectiveness of the Union garrisons at Fort Smith and Fort Gibson, Blunt requested more troops to guard the state's southern border, a recommendation that was promptly rejected.¹¹

Dodge soon found himself embroiled in the turmoil of the Indian Territory. Phillips sought help from the commander of the Department of Missouri to stop what he saw as the "evils that have assumed fearful proportions," namely the continued driving of stolen cattle north into Kansas. In addition to criticizing Coffin, the local Indian agent, for his involvement in the cattle stealing, Phillips cited two instances involving Capt. Vittum of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry. In April, Phillips wrote, Vittum allegedly entered Indian Territory escorting a supply train and on his return north drove a herd of five hundred to six hundred animals. In late May, he reportedly was accompanying two officers to Fort Smith and, again on his return, took back a large number of cattle. Restating the concerns expressed earlier to Stanton, Phillips noted to Dodge that Vittum was now the provost marshal assigned to Fort Scott, "which will give you an idea of the police regulations on the northern border of the nation, on which I have to lean." Previous complaints to Curtis about cattle theft had been rejected on the grounds that rustling was a civil matter. Although most Kansas-based soldiers regarded the Indian Territory as enemy country, Phillips said he could stop the degradations, if he could get the senior commanders to derail "the nefarious system which appears to have a thorough organization in the State of Kansas."¹²

Although the real threat of a Confederate attack on Fort Scott was minimal in the months following Price's invasion of 1864, the perception that the post remained vulnerable lingered on, and the Army continued efforts to improve regional security. It assigned Lt. Robinson of the Engineer Corps to Fort Scott to supervise construction of the new fortification southeast of the city. Even without the influx of more federal dollars for construction, the Army base at Fort Scott exerted a strong influence on the local economy. The post quartermaster stored about 70,000 bushels of corn in the forage yard, most of which the town newspaper proudly reported, had been grown in the county.¹³

At the end of February, Fort Scott remained in Sub-District 2 of the District of South Kansas. Col. Charles Blair, former post commander, was in charge of the subdistrict, leaving Capt. Robert Carpenter in charge of Fort Scott. The principal offensive arm at the post came from the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry, with companies B, D, E, F, I, and K in the garrison. A section of the Second Battery of the Kansas Light Artillery furnished heavy firepower. Surrounding Fort Scott to the south and east were small detachments from the Fifteenth Kansas and the Third Wisconsin Cavalry encamped in Missouri at Fort Curtis, Fort Hamer, Fort Insley, and in Kansas sub-posts at Humboldt, Fort McKean, Marmaton, Mound City, Pawnee Station, and Trading

¹¹ Blunt to Dodge, Feb. 14, 1865. *O.R.*, 1:48/1, 51-52.

¹² Phillips to Maj. Gen. Edward R.S. Canby, commander of the Military Division of West Mississippi, Feb. 16, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/1, 870-72.

¹³ *Fort Scott Daily Monitor*, Feb. 18, Feb. 22, 1865.



Fort Scott's post hospital in 1865. In the background, from left, are the well canopy, one of the former officer's quarters, and powder magazine.

Post.¹⁴

The Union Army's string of military success continued in March. Gen. Edward R.S. Canby led an expedition into southern Alabama and Gen. James H. Wilson marched into Selma and Montgomery, Ala., further damaging the Confederate war effort. Despite the diminishing Confederate threat, federal military leaders continued planning for the worse possible scenarios. In the Midwest, the most significant menace was a repeat of Price's raid. In preparing for the eventuality, Gen. Grenville Dodge estimated the Department of Missouri could call on about 5,500 Federal troops, including five hundred men of the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry, based at Fort Scott. Aside from Confederate raiders, other more minor matters also concerned Dodge, including Phillips' complaints about cattle stealing. He ordered Blair at Fort Scott to stop the illegal trafficking. Blair responded that he was carrying out the orders "to the very letter," establishing two new posts to the west of Fort Scott and sending out one hundred enlisted men to sweep the area, arresting all persons attempting to go south into the Indian Territory. Two days later Blair reported that his patrols already had seized 550 head of cattle, producing "quite a consternation among the cattle thieves." He promised Dodge that he would end the practice, even if he had to move his entire command. If he had to relocate, Blair would be leaving what was planned to be one of the largest posts west of the Mississippi River. Work began March 9 on the new fort south of Fort Scott, designed with emplacements for sixteen artillery pieces and

¹⁴ Organization of troops in the Military Division of the Missouri, Feb. 28, 1865, *O.R.*, I.48/1, 1039.

barracks to hold 1,200 troops.

While commanders worried about grand military strategy, the lower ranks suffered through the everyday miseries of field duty. One Third Wisconsin Cavalry lieutenant garrisoned at Fort Insley in Missouri hoped for the end of the spring rains, allowing "the season of a soldiers bliss" to return, "with the dense thicket serving as the lair for the bush-whacking gentry to occupy our attention and the escorting of Major Genls, trains and Pay masters to Forts Gibson and Smith." Life was equally unidyllic at Fort Scott, with Blair complaining again to the district command about his post's lack of horses. On March 25 he reported that he could not dispatch mounted patrols because of the shortages. Responding to an order from Blunt to send two companies to Missouri, Blair stated he was still waiting for the eight hundred horses he had requested earlier, and that he could not even mount half a company. Blunt directed him to combine squadrons from all his companies to make up the required patrol, promising to send him the horses as soon as possible. In addition to the mounts, Blunt also pledged six companies of infantry to Fort Scott, leading Blair to respond that such reinforcements would make him "the happiest man alive, for then I can do post duty as it ought to be done," and send his cavalry on border patrols and to stop cattle trafficking.¹⁵

As warmer weather approached, military action revived after the inactivity of winter. In the region surrounding Fort Scott that signaled bushwhacking season and the attendant panic it invariably caused. By the end of March, Blunt was passing along the year's first intelligence reports of guerrillas passing through southwest Missouri. The Department of Missouri asked Blunt how much spare cavalry he had for border work, and directed him to coordinate with his counterpart to the east to maximize the federal troops' effectiveness. As part of the periodic army reorganization, Fort Leavenworth ordered one section of the Ninth Wisconsin Battery to Fort Scott, to replace the section of the Second Kansas Battery stationed there since December 1862.¹⁶

Despite the impending success in the east as Grant pursued Lee, southern Kansas commanders remained conscious of the dangers surrounding them. Under heavy pressure from Dodge, on April 1, Blunt led his command against the bushwhackers invading southwestern Missouri. To the south of Fort Scott, Col. Phillips sought to reduce Indian dependence on Army supplies, and had the idle men of his command assisting Indian refugees in planting crops. Kansas cattle thieves had removed most of the available animals from the northern half of the Indian Territory, Phillips reported, forcing the Indian Brigade to drive replacement herds up from the south. Hoping to eventually end the continued reliance, Phillips also requested another year's supply of seeds for the Indians.¹⁷

Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia finally ran out of options on April 9, and the South's foremost military commander surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox Court House,

¹⁵ March 26, 1865, Charles W. Porter, *A Journal of Events in the Life of Charles W. Porter, While in the Service of the United States During the Rebellion*. Manuscript, Fort Scott National Historic Site; Blair to Blunt, March 25, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/1, 1258.

¹⁶ Blunt to Dodge, March 30, 1865, Special Orders No. 66, District of North Kansas, March 30, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/1, 1299.

¹⁷ Blunt to Dodge, April 1, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 1; Phillips to Maj. Gen. J. J. Reynolds, April 4, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 27-8.

effectively ending the Civil War. Obeying official calls for celebration, the Department of the Missouri ordered all its posts and arsenals to fire two hundred cannons at noon on April 10. Fort Scott complied, using its small arsenal of siege guns to honor the event. Although the main Confederate force had put down its arms, other armies continued to threaten the Northern states. On the same day that Lee met Grant to sign the surrender, Union forces at Humboldt asked Fort Scott for 5,000 rounds of Sharps cartridges, 2,000 rounds of army and 1,000 rounds of navy revolver cartridges. They anticipated a raid on southwestern Kansas by Stand Watie and his six hundred mounted men. Over the next two days, the Union commanders prepared to counter the threatened raid from Indian Territory, with Fort Scott ordered to send all available troops westward. To reinforce the small number of available federal troopers in the event of a Confederate raid, Blunt authorized Blair to call out state militia units from across southern Kansas.¹⁸

Despite the celebration prompted by Lee's surrender, the realities of potential dangers still dictated events in southeast Kansas. Pressured by Maj. Gen. John Pope, the new commander of the Division of the Missouri, Blunt and Blair put every available trooper at Fort Scott in the field against Stand Watie. Union leaders did not know if the six hundred men reported serving under Watie were the total Confederate force or merely the advance guard of a much larger expedition heading north. Maj. Gen. Grenville Dodge amplified concerns on April 12, when he relayed reports to Blunt that reliable information indicated Watie had united all of the Indians in Indian Territory, except for the loyal "pin Cherokees," as well as possibly the Comanches and Arapahos, and was leading them north toward Kansas. Later that day, Blair was able to report from the field that the Confederate force was no more than four hundred men, and he assured his superiors that his command would easily handle the attackers. Before couriers could relay the information, troop movements at Fort Scott continued as the department reacted to the perceived threat. With all of the post's available troopers out with Blair, a small detachment of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry serving as an outpost in Hickman, Missouri, was ordered back to Fort Scott to help defend the denuded post. The subdistrict headquarters promised to send seven companies of the Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry Regiment as reinforcements. Officers at forts Zarah and Larned, to the west of Fort Scott, prepared to support Blair by leading their commands south against Watie.¹⁹

A scout from the Second Colorado Cavalry finally eased the Army's fears. Patrolling through Council Grove in central Kansas, he found no excitement among the residents. Two men from the town had recently returned north from Walnut Creek. Watie's supposedly Confederate column was in fact a small party of Delawares and Shawnees, friendly to the federal government, who had gotten into a fight with a rancher over some cattle, and one white man was shot. The Indians fled the scene, trying to mask the crime by notifying the rancher's neighbors that Stand Watie's band of hostile Indians was right behind them. Another band of Kaw Indians found near Walnut Creek reported seeing no other Indians, and reported that it was well too early in the

¹⁸ J.W. Barnes to Gov. Thomas Fletcher, April 10, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 65; Porter, *A Journal of Events*, April 10, 1865; Maj. H.C. Haas to Lt. W.H. Hewett, April 9, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 58; Blunt to Blair, April 10, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 68.

¹⁹ Dodge to Pope, Pope to Blunt, Blair to Dodge, April 11, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 101-2.

season to expect Indian raiders from the south.²⁰

By the time that the senior commanders learned that the threat from the south had been greatly exaggerated, they heard news that was worse and fully true. During the evening of April 14, President Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth at Ford's Theater, in Washington, D.C. At 7:22 a.m. the next day, Lincoln died of the single bullet wound to the head. The day the president died, the Army offered condolences in its own way. Aside from the usual measures such as lowering all flags to half staff, draping all regimental and camp colors in mourning, and all officers wearing mourning badges for sixty days, all government businesses were ordered closed for three full days and every post was to fire one gun every half hour from sunrise to sunset. Despite feelings of rage over the assassination, labeled a "barbarous act of the abettors of this cursed and non-crushed rebellion," all officers and men were ordered to refrain from individual acts of retaliation. An officer visiting Fort Scott observed a large crowd listening to a memorial oration honoring Lincoln on Carroll Plaza, the former post parade grounds, while the post cannons fired at the department's required thirty-minute intervals. All of the government buildings in town were draped in mourning, as were most of the businesses and private buildings.²¹

Blair returned with his men from the phantom Watie raid to Fort Scott on April 16. He reported to the subdistrict commander that there was no rebel and Indian force, explaining that "the big stories all grew out of the killing of one or two cattle thieves by the Indians." He warned that an Indian uprising was possible, but not by Stand Watie. The Kiowas and Comanches, upset with continual encroachment on their territories, seemed likely to raid Kansas in the next few months. To block the threat, Blair requested that five or six cavalry companies be stationed in southwestern Kansas. A week later, the Department of Missouri ordered Blair to send most of his cavalry force, the Fifteenth Kansas, to Little Rock to aid in the final drive across Arkansas. The Fort Scott commander respectfully demurred, stating that while he had received some Wisconsin infantry companies to bolster his garrison, a transfer of his mounted troops would cripple Union defense of Kansas' southern and eastern borders. Senior commanders agreed to delay the move until the Third Wisconsin Cavalry could be moved up from Little Rock to Fort Scott.²²

Fort Scott made an impression on the newly arriving Wisconsin infantrymen. One of them, Charles Felkner, saw Fort Scott, by April 1865 a town of about two thousand residents, as of "no particular importance except as a military post." He and the rest of Company A of the Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry were encamped about one-half mile from town. The men lived in tents with food cooked over campfires, and "have plenty of dirt, smoke, mud and fresh air." Continuing the military tradition of improvising and improving his camp life, Felkner invented a small stove for his tent, digging a hole inside and connecting it via a small trench to an outside chimney. He covered the hole with a small piece of sheet iron with a hole cut in one end, the

²⁰ Lt. William Wise to Lt. J.E. Tappan, April 12, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 84.

²¹ General Orders No. 26, April 15, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 103; Porter, *A Journal of Events*, April 16, 1865.

²² Blair to Dodge, Dodge to Bell, April 18, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 140.

contraption allowing him to cook breakfast at the same time that he warmed up his tent.²³

Fort Scott regained a degree of military importance lost the previous year in an Army reorganization on April 20, when the Army established the First Subdistrict of Kansas that consisted of everything south of the Kansas River, with headquarters at Fort Scott. Blair retained command. Two days later, Blunt ordered Blair to call into Fort Scott all the detachments of the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry serving in outlying posts to prepare for the regiment's move to Arkansas. At the same time, new threats mixed with optimistic news surfaced. Union garrisons in southwest Missouri reported a band of about fifty guerrillas heading north, and new reports of a planned raid by Stand Watie into the Neosho Valley west of Fort Scott reached Kansas. Providing evidence that the Confederacy was collapsing, information from Fort Gibson indicated that many of the Southern soldiers in Texas were fleeing south into Mexico, with "a great ferment and many deserters" among those serving in the southeast corner of the state. The message also noted that all of the white Southern troops had pulled out of Indian Territory. Stand Watie was reported to still be leading a few hundred men in the region, but spring floods kept the Arkansas River high, blocking his way north, and no other Confederate forces had been able to cross.²⁴

By the first week of May, Fort Scott definitely took on a distinctive Wisconsin air as the Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry Regiment arrived to replace the mounted soldiers of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, ending the cavalry regiment's stay that began in June 1862. The post was also home to one section of the Wisconsin Light Artillery as well as the temporary base for five cavalry companies from the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry. Another company of the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry was stationed about thirty-five miles north of Fort Scott at Trading Post. Col. Charles Blair, still commanding the post, reported posting two companies of the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry at Humboldt and another at Marmaton, with another five companies massed at Fort Scott in preparation for their move to Little Rock. He had four Third Wisconsin Cavalry companies still on outpost duty in Missouri with the rest on detached duty near Kansas City. Six companies of the Forty-eighth Wisconsin Infantry were garrisoned at Fort Scott, with another detachment stationed at Mound City. Blair also had one section of the Ninth Wisconsin Battery at the post. The newly arrived Wisconsin soldiers were quickly put to use, building the new fortifications southeast of town early in the day, and drilling in the afternoon. One soldier noted that the town of Fort Scott had a few citizens pursuing legitimate business and a few Army officers permanently stationed there, adding that "the balance of the population is made up of soldiers, speculators, gamblers, thieves, prostitutes and rebel refugees all trying to rob the government and each other." Many of the civilians engaged in separating soldiers from their pay lived in tents on the outskirts of the town.²⁵

Despite the surrender of Lee's army, irregular forces still roamed the Kansas-Missouri

²³ April 18, 1865, Charles Felkner Collection, SC2026, State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Transcript in Fort Scott National Historical Site archives.

²⁴ General Orders No. 5, District of South Kansas, April 20, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 147; Blunt to Blair, April 22, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 161; Dodge to Blair, April 21, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 153; Brig. Gen. Cyrus Bussey to Pope, April 23, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 163-4.

²⁵ May 2, 1865, Felkner Collection, SC2026, Wisconsin Historical Society.

border region. Most of them conducted war for personal profit. Fort Scott issued a warning to posts around Kansas City on May 5 that a band of guerrillas estimated at one hundred and fifty strong had passed east of the post heading north. Soldiers at Olathe issued their own alarm, believing twenty-seven armed men were loose near Aubrey, close to Kansas City, on the state line approximately 75 miles north of Fort Scott. They also relayed the rumor that the most feared name in Kansas, William Quantrill, was heading toward the state, adding that reports indicated "we may look for a second edition of the Lawrence raid at an early day." The following day, Blair warned his superiors that three hundred guerrillas had banded together and were heading north in Missouri. Fort Scott was put on alert and ordered to send out large patrols to track down the gang. By May 9, Blair reported the guerrillas, who claimed to be Confederate soldiers operating under Jo Shelby trying to get to their homes, had split up into small groups and scattered quietly across western Missouri. Watie and his Confederate Indian force still endangered southern Kansas. Blunt warned his superiors in Arkansas that captured Confederates revealed the Cherokee leader's plans to lead a raid of two thousand men through Kansas' Arkansas River Valley. In addition, another separate band of about forty guerrillas, who scouts reported planned to attack western Missouri, also came to the attention of the Army.²⁶

The clearest indication that the end of the war was imminent reached Fort Scott on May 16, when the department's medical director's officer ordered the surgeon in charge of the hospital, A.C. Vientiane, to discontinue its operation as a general hospital, responsible for all military patients from the region, and return it to a post hospital with much more limited obligations. All patients who could not be discharged immediately were to be admitted into the post hospital, sick records were to be sent to Army headquarters at St. Louis, appropriate supplies were to be transferred over to the post hospital, and the contract of Acting Assistant Surgeon John Page was to be terminated, if his services were no longer needed. After the reorganization was complete, Vientiane himself was ordered to report to St. Louis for reassignment.²⁷

The federal government spent most of the second half of May trying to finish up the messy ends of a long and costly war. On May 19, Henry Taylor, one of the border's most notorious guerrillas and the leader of all Confederate irregulars in southwest Missouri, asked under what terms he and his men could surrender. Dodge offered to accept their surrender if they gave up the arms, equipment, and horses and took an amnesty oath as required by the federal government. In a separate note, Dodge specified that this surrender did not relieve the guerrillas of any civil action arising from their actions during the war, noting that his officers "deal with them only from a military point of view." Taylor accepted the terms a day later, and Union officers believed that many of the bushwhackers operating in the area would soon follow Taylor's example.²⁸

Other combatants soon laid down their arms. A week after Taylor's submission, the detachment of Fort Scott soldiers based at the Osage Mission reported that Indians to the west of

²⁶ Blair to Capt. John Willans, May 5, 1865; Capt. O.F. Waller to Blair, May 5, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 325; Blair to Gen. R.B. Mitchell, May 9, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 373.

²⁷ J.F. Randolph to VanDuyn, May 16, 1865, File 16MAY65.APC, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

²⁸ Brig. Gen. R.B. Mitchell to Dodge and Dodge to Mitchell, May 19, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 513.

the subpost were also seeking surrender terms. Capt. Curtis Johnson, commanding the unit, offered terms similar to those granted Lee's men at Appomattox. The border counties finally received even better news by the end of the month, when Kansans learned that Lt. Gen. Kirby Smith, commanding the Confederate Military Division of the Southwest, had surrendered all of the troops under his command on May 26. Three days later, they heard that three companies of the Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry had been assigned to replace the Wisconsin infantrymen at Fort Scott. News soon reached Kansas that William Clarke Quantrill had been mortally wounded by federal troops in Spencer County, Kentucky, on May 29. The instigator of the 1863 Lawrence massacre died of his injuries within two weeks.²⁹

As the Confederate danger eased, stopping the theft of cattle became a high priority for Union forces in Kansas. The Creek Indian agency operating in Fort Gibson called for an end to illegal cattle drives from Indian Territory. Blunt again ordered Blair and his entire First Sub-District command to seize all cattle taken from Indian Territory and hold all involved parties for trial and punishment. Blair lost most of his military support in the Indian Territory on May 31, when all three Indian regiments were mustered out of service. That same day, Fort Scott's General Hospital was officially downsized to a post hospital, transferring forty-three patients in the paperwork transaction.³⁰

Fort Scott's hospital quickly completed the downsizing adjustment. By June 6, L.G. Armstrong, the regimental surgeon from the Forty-eighth Wisconsin Infantry in charge of the facility, could report that the post hospital was responsible for a total of 762 soldiers from his own regiment, the Ninth Wisconsin Battery, and the Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry. The three regiments had surgeon's call every day, each with its own designated time. Capacity of the hospital was sixty beds, with enough bedding still on hand for another hundred beds if needed. Most of the forty-five patients admitted were from Forts Gibson and Smith, and the surgeon estimated that the daily count stood to remain between thirty and sixty, depending upon the number left by troops marching through Fort Scott.³¹

The slow transition to a society at peace continued over the next several years. Across the South the reconstruction efforts began, as federal military rule supplanted the Confederate government. The West had its own set of problems to settle. As the Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry Regiment detachment operating out of Fort Scott settled into their new outposts after their arrival in July 1865, senior commanders issued directives on how to handle problems in the still-volatile border counties, where memories of a decade of strife over the slavery issue still lingered. No one was to be arrested for opposing local leaders or political efforts, but people could be charged with disloyalty to the national government. Unit commanders were ordered to aid civil authorities when necessary, and encourage Missouri citizens "to begin to do something toward taking care of

²⁹ Johnson to Blair, May 25, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 596; Blunt to Maj. Gen. J.J. Reynolds, May 16, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 468-9 Special Orders No. 106, District of North Kansas, May 29, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 669.

³⁰ George Cutler, Creek agent, to Blunt, May 27, 1865, *O.R.*, I:48/2, 637-7; Roll 8, Records of Adjutant General, Fort Scott Post Returns June 1842 to Apl. 1853; June 1858; Jan. 1861 to Sept. 1865, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives..

³¹ Armstrong to Surgeon A.M. Wilder, June 6, 1865, Fort Scott National Historic Site Archives, FOSC 12500 Page 9 & 10, No. 7.

themselves," since federal troops were to be withdrawn from the area in the near future.³²

With the end of hostilities, Fort Scott, once a place to enlist, became a demobilization center. On June 16, Capt. L.F. Wyman of the Second U.S. Volunteers was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Musters for the District of South Kansas, with headquarters at the post, to help efficiently dismantle the huge army of the past four years. A week after the Army began its initial demobilization, Cherokee leader Stand Watie surrendered his Confederate forces, comprising Cherokee, Creek, and Osage Indians, to Union officers at Doaksville, near Fort Towson, Indian Territory, becoming the last organized Confederate force to officially surrender in the Civil War.³³

Aside from shedding the majority of its troops, the peacetime Army undertook a number of changes. On June 26, one of the most familiar figures involved in the war effort in southeast Kansas, Capt. Theodore Bowles replaced Capt. Merritt N. Insley, as depot quartermaster at Fort Scott. The Army began a complete reorganization the next day, ending the Department of the Missouri's independent status and shifting it under the Military Division of the Mississippi, commanded by Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman. The District of Kansas, formed by merging the former separate districts of North and South Kansas, was organized the following day, with Brig. Gen. Robert B. Mitchell in command.

The town of Fort Scott had to undergo its own reorganization with the end of hostilities. The Army had taken control of many privately owned lots throughout the town, some of them occupied since June 1862. With the war over, the town now had to address these properties and the structures built on them. No formal mechanism for compensating the property owners existed, but Insley urged that the Army provide reasonable compensation. Hiero T. Wilson, the former post sutler and now one of the town's leading citizens, owned most of the lots, which were used for forage and coal yards, corrals and stables, blacksmith shops, and camping grounds for the many regiments based at Fort Scott during the war years. The owners had to wait several months for a resolution.³⁴

Over the next several months, reports of financial irregularities surfaced at Fort Scott that affected two organizations. On July 9, the Secretary of War ordered the mustering out of the First Kansas Independent Colored Light Artillery Battery, sparked by rumors that the regiment's officers owed money to the enlisted men of their command, a violation of Army regulations. The War Department instructed the Department of Missouri to ensure that the debt amounts were entered upon the final muster report of the officers, and that no final government payouts be made until the debts were paid off. In September, Col. J.A. Potter submitted a report to Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs, detailing several instances of concern involving quartermaster accounts, including transportation contracts, the sale of federal lands surrounding Fort Leavenworth, and contracts handled at Fort Scott. Potter expressed confusion over the

³² Orders to companies C, D, E, and G, Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry, from Fort Scott, June 3, 1865, *O.R.*, 1:48/2, 785-8.

³³ Maj. William Gould to Office of Assistant Commissioner of Musters, Fort Leavenworth, June 16, 1865, File 16JUN65A.apc. Fort Scott National Historic Site archives, FOSSC 12500 Page 27, No. 20.

³⁴ Insley to Maj. Gen. M.C. Meigs, June 30, 1865, File Insley.apc, National Archives microfilm No. 3, Frame 365, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives

method in which Insley, the department's chief quartermaster and the post's depot quartermaster, handled his payments at the post. Insley assigned bills supposed to be paid by him in his role as department quartermaster to Capt. Hodges, the depot quartermaster. "Stories of immense frauds were rife," Potter reported, although he also noted that his investigation found most of the irregularities did not seem to be of a criminal nature, since "Many of these vouchers were informal and issued by officers temporarily placed on duty as acting assistant quartermasters." To settle the irregularities, Potter paid a percentage of the claimed amounts to all claimants, and with additional help from Washington, D.C., most of the indebtedness eventually was settled.³⁵

Peace with a different adversary came to the region over the summer, as negotiators signed a treaty with several Indian tribes. Hoping to create a railroad corridor between the Platte and Arkansas Rivers, federal commissioners met at the mouth of the Arkansas River with representatives of the Apache, Arapaho, Comanche, and Kiowa tribes on August 14. By this *Little Arkansas Treaty*, the tribes ceded to the United States their claims to any lands north of the Arkansas River, and agree to settle on reservations to the south. A month later, Fort Smith was the site of another treaty signing, with tribal leaders from the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Seminoles, Senecas, Shawnees, and Quapaws accepting federal terms.³⁶

On October 10, ten days after the First Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry Regiment, originally organized at the post, mustered out of federal service, Fort Scott ceased to be a military post. During August and September, only companies I and M of the Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry remained at the post as the garrison force. Most of the soldiers left the tent camps and extensive quartermaster facilities behind, but the medical department remained in the post hospital until Nov. 18, when the Army abandoned that building.³⁷

The Army's plans to repeat its 1855 sale of government buildings built during the war years hit a significant roadblock at the end of November 1865. Wilson and other members of the Fort Scott Town Company protested the contemplated sale, arguing that no rent had been paid for any of the lots and that many of the pieces of property taken over by the Army could have been sold for a considerable profit during the war but for their occupation by the government. The Fort Scott citizens threatened a lawsuit if they were not given either payments for rent or possession of the buildings built on their land. In his response of Dec. 5, Bowles recited Quartermaster Corps regulations that prohibited rent payments for vacant lots. He also noted that when he took over quartermaster duties at the post in July 1865, he modified the bookkeeping practices of his predecessor Insley. Believing it improper to deny the land owners any compensation, Bowles maintained a separate inventory of vacant properties used by the government. No rental prices were entered in the books, but the mere existence of such a category, Bowles believed, gave property owners a good basis for eventual payments. Bowles invoked the "common law of fixtures" in his argument, claiming that legal practices held that any structure attached by the

³⁵ L.E.W. Foster to Dodge, July 9, 1865, Record Group 94 Descriptive Book and Clothing Accounts, Adjutant General's Office, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives; Potter to Meigs, Sept. 15, 1865, *O.R.*, 3/5, 465.

³⁶ The Little Arkansas treaties would eventually fail to win ratification by the U.S. Senate, and federal officials would refuse to honor the tribal territorial rights guaranteed by the pact.

³⁷ Roll 8, Records of Adjutant General, Fort Scott Post Returns June 1842 to Apl. 1853; June 1858; Jan. 1861 to Sept. 1865, Record Group 94, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

tenant becomes property of the land owner. On Dec. 14, Army quartermasters again prepared for the sale of buildings. The buildings were eventually sold, but for very low prices. Twenty-five buildings and structures went under the auctioneer's hammer, ranging from the post stable and two-story military prison to the lunettes that protected the city.³⁸

The Confederacy's collapse in April 1865 brought dramatic changes to the nation's military establishment. Even as the North celebrated victory with a two-day triumphant march of its armies through Washington, D.C., military leaders prepared the shift to a smaller, peacetime force. The demobilization efforts that quickly followed reduced the Army's strength from more than one million men to just more than 54,000, and the reductions continued. By 1870, the Army consisted of 2,488 officers and 34,870 enlisted men stationed at 203 posts. In the immediate postwar period, when the continental United States was still divided into Army areas of responsibility, Kansas was part of the Department of the Missouri.³⁹ The centrality of the war years became a memory, opening the way for all kinds of extralegal activity, including organized violence against railroad construction in southeast Kansas.

During the Civil War, Fort Scott successfully made the transition from isolated frontier outpost to a key part of the Trans-Mississippi defensive network, due to its location and the nature of war in the West. The strong federal presence in southeast Kansas minimized Southern influence in the Indian Territory and helped ensure that Missouri remained outside the Confederacy. The vast distances between Western communities forced Southern military leaders to resort to a strategy of raids, large expeditions designed to avoid pitched battles. Columns northbound from Arkansas left their supply lines vulnerable to attack from federal units at Fort Scott. On a smaller scale, the post's mounted patrols helped control bushwhackers and guerrillas operating in the region, denying the South a consistent base of supplies. A small, significant but very temporary piece of the North's military system, the officers and men who served at the Fort Scott that was reborn in 1862 were worthy successors to the first garrison sent west twenty years earlier to guard the Permanent Indian Frontier.

³⁸ Roll 11, Records of the Quartermaster General, Consolidated Correspondence File, Fort Scott, Record Group 92, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives. A list of the buildings and structures sold at auction is contained in the appendix.

³⁹ Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 248-80.

Chapter Twelve:

Fort Scott and the Railroads

Fort Scott's final military role came in the years following the Civil War, when the United States Army entered into a period of protecting the business and commercial interests of the nation in a time of increasing labor unrest. One example of its new duties was its mission to protect the construction of railroads in southeastern Kansas, not from hostile Indians, but from white settlers. The Civil War was a triumph of technology as well as ideology. The physical plant of the North, its factories, ports, and railroads, were instrumental in providing the material that allowed the Union army to subdue the South. The war consolidated economic power and fostered great fortunes. In its aftermath that model translated onto the plains, as the completion of the transcontinental railroad promoted the building of hundreds of other steel roads, all of which served to create the physical links that the concept of union promised. The Kansas-Missouri border area participated in the national boom that followed the end of the war. The great transcontinental railroad lines proposed to link the country's two coasts never passed near Fort Scott, but regional businessmen had dreams of capitalizing on tracks laid north to south, connecting the Midwest with the Gulf Coast. While national attention in 1865 focused on the Union Pacific's transcontinental construction, Kansas City investors looked to capitalize on north-south business.

In western Missouri and eastern Kansas, railroad development was linked with the idea of expanding the regional market. The booming town of Kansas City, astride the Kansas-Missouri border, looked to Texas as a new railroad destination, and plans for north-south rail construction were developed. Traversing the 800,000-acre Cherokee Neutral Lands south of Fort Scott proved an obstacle until the land was ceded back to the United States in 1866. Railroad construction began on the Kansas and Neosho Valley line, called the Border Tier line after 1868 since it ran along the Kansas-Missouri border. Reflecting the ambition of its directors, the line was then renamed the Missouri River, Fort Scott, and Gulf Railroad. Such objectives faced steely-eyed locals, who in the best American tradition, claimed the lands through which the rails passed as their own. The Cherokee Neutral Land League, the collective name for several militant organizations representing settlers who lived between Fort Scott and Baxter Springs, offered a squatter's rationale for their ownership: they lived on the land, they improved it, and their presence made it theirs. Their ultimate aim was to force the railroad company to compensate them for their homes at the rate of \$1.25 an acre. The settlers who formed the Land League stood willing to fight to defend their claims. They threatened any railroad worker whom they caught trespassing with bodily harm. Settlers disrupted line construction by burning railroad ties, harassing workers, and refusing to sell supplies such as lumber or rock.¹

¹ Craig Miner, "Border Frontier: The Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad in the Cherokee Neutral Lands, 1868-1870." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 35, n. 2 (Summer 1969): 105-130; Donald D. Banwart, *Rails, Rivalry and Romance: A Review of Bourbon County, Kansas and Her Railroad Nostalgia in Words and Pictures, 1864-1980* (Fort Scott: Historic Preservation Association of Bourbon County, 1982); Edward Keuchel, *The Railway System of Fort Scott: A Study of the Impact*

To help quell the threat of violence, U.S. troops commanded by Maj. James P. Roy began arriving at Fort Scott in the summer of 1869. Eventually, infantry, artillery and cavalry units served in southeast Kansas, once more imposing the federal government's will over local interests. The soldiers were housed along the rail line in barracks built by the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad, and Fort Scott was used as the headquarters and supply depot for this new Post of Southeast Kansas. The troops remained along the rail lines until 1873, and their removal finally ended the military presence in southeast Kansas.

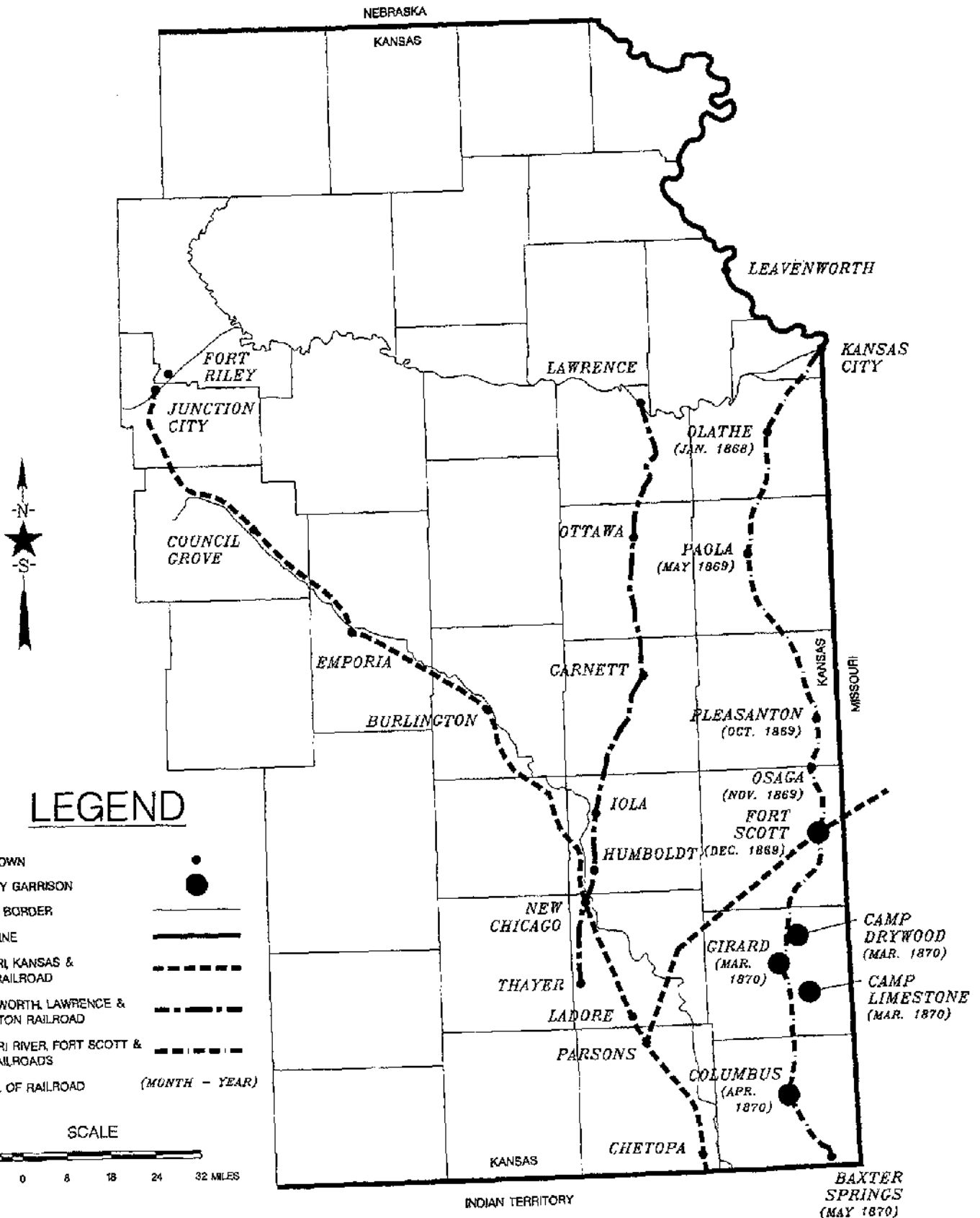
Built as a means of establishing a permanent line across an evolving frontier, the Army's military posts failed to halt American expansion and so could never have successfully protected the emigrant Indians nations that surrounded them. Post such as Fort Scott actually hastened the settlement process, developing market economies for construction materials, foods and animals throughout the surrounding regions and drawing in civilian workers, farmers and ranchers. The frontier eventually passed around these forts, and the buildings abandoned by the Army remained as a monument to a generation's attempts to control its future. Aside from the economic advantages offered while in operation, the post provided southeastern Kansas with a federal presence that was to become important during the territory's domestic violence of the 1850s. Changing circumstances across the nation arose to make many of the structures relevant and important again, and Fort Scott assumed a key role during the Civil War and in the postwar transition period. The fort and town on the Marmaton River and the soldiers, officers and civilians who lived and worked there offered permanency and consistency during national phases of transition, characteristics the United States was quick to capitalize upon when threatened and just as quick to discard when peace was at hand.

Despite the human tragedy of the Civil War in southeast Kansas, the war also became a tremendous engine of economic development for Fort Scott and the surrounding region, launching the town and setting the stage for it to dominate the region. Hundreds of thousands of federal dollars poured into the local economy between 1861 and 1865, and the city greatly increased in size. Federal money paid for the construction of new buildings, hotels, houses, and warehouses, and attracted merchants and speculators. As the regional center, Fort Scott also attracted the refugees of the conflict, those who needed either military protection or federal support to stay safe and alive. By 1860, prewar Fort Scott had grown into a town of almost fourteen hundred residents. Five years later, 4,174 called the town home. The commercial development fueled by Army spending dominated the regional economy, and Fort Scott became the preeminent business center for southeast Kansas. The Wilder House, a three-story hotel built in 1862, proved profitable from the day of its opening, in large part as a result of the federal presence. Dry goods and other merchants' stores lined the city's streets. Total valuation of property in Bourbon County in 1864 was \$978,249; a year later, it was \$1,437,022. By 1870, the valuation soared to \$4,236,061.²

of Railroad Development upon a Southeastern Kansas Community, 1867-1883 (M.A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1961).

² James H. Brown, "History of Bourbon County, Kansas," in John P. Edwards, comp., *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Bourbon County, Kansas* (Philadelphia: Edwards Brothers, 1878); Kansas 1865 MS. Census, Vol. 10, Compendium of Statistics Reported to the Legislature, Archives Department, Kansas State Historical Society.

POST-CIVIL WAR KANSAS 1869-1873



LEGEND

- CITY / TOWN ●
- U.S. ARMY GARRISON ●
- COUNTY BORDER —
- STATE LINE ———
- MISSOURI, KANSAS & TEXAS RAILROAD - - - - -
- LEAVENWORTH, LAWRENCE & GALVESTON RAILROAD - · - · -
- MISSOURI RIVER, FORT SCOTT & GULF RAILROADS · · · · ·
- ARRIVAL OF RAILROAD (MONTH - YEAR)

SCALE



The commercial successes of the war era fueled dreams of future glory for the town, but by the end of the Civil War only cities with ties to transportation could make their wartime growth continue. In a rapidly industrializing society, connections to the growing railroad systems that defined the economic future were crucial. Fort Scott long suffered from typical problems in the history of American communities. Geographic isolation led its list of dilemmas; no navigable waterway came near it and all merchandise had to be transported by wagon. The cost of shipping from Leavenworth, Kansas City and other places were astronomical. Charges of as much as \$3 per hundred pounds of goods were common. Nor were roads dependable arteries. In bad weather, the fastest stage ride from Kansas City could take more than a week. Railroads promised to end a community's dependency upon weather and geography to maintain a consistent supply of the goods that drove the regional economy.

The need for a railroad set off a chain of events that brought the military back to southeastern Kansas. By 1866, the Army – and the money it brought – was gone, but securing a railroad into Fort Scott offered a way to continue its fabulous wartime growth. Money, political ingenuity, and sheer forcefulness were prerequisites if the railroad was to come. Finding land for the railroad to cross posed another major obstacle. A rail connection to the north faced few political obstacles to construction, but to the south of Fort Scott was the huge barrier of the Cherokee Neutral Lands, a reserve of 800,000 acres denied to white settlers. The law prevented settlers from patenting the neutral lands, but countless squatters moved onto Indian land, sure that sooner or later, the government would confirm their activities. After all, the American government was in the business of encouraging settlement. This proprietary sense about Indian land became the central issue in a complicated question. When construction of lines to the Gulf Coast began, squatters on the Indian tract turned to violence to protect their homes and financial commitments. In response, the railroads sought federal help and the establishment of the Post of Southeast Kansas brought the Army back to Fort Scott once again.³

Military leaders watched the commercial development of railroads with great interest throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, seeing in the expansion of the steel rails the perfect method to tame the vast spaces of the West. The Army, federal government, and the nation's railroad builders found themselves allies. The military supplied civil engineers trained at West Point to lay out the tracks, troops to provide labor and guard survey and work parties, and also provided a consistent source of freight that translated into business for the railroads. In addition, rail companies received federal lands across the West to help defray construction costs. Railroad owners in turn provided the Army and the federal government with the lowest freight and passenger rates, and made possible the rapid movement of the troops needed to quell Indian or civil disturbances.⁴

In the 1850s, questions concerning ownership of southeast Kansas lands delayed the initial Anglo-American settlement south of Fort Scott and property rights became a significant factor in developing the region's rail system during the following decade. The original occupants of the area south of Fort Scott were the Osages. In an 1825 treaty, the Osage Indians traded all

³ Miner, "Border Frontier: The Missouri River, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad in the Cherokee Neutral Lands," 105-129.

⁴ Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 137-8.

their land in Missouri for a tract of land in what would eventually become southern Kansas. As part of this treaty, an 800,000-acre buffer zone was created between the eastern end of the Osage Reserve and the state of Missouri. This buffer zone was created at the request of the Osage Indians to ensure the separation of their culture and the Euro-American settlers in Missouri and was called the Osage Neutral Lands. A supplemental treaty authorized in December 1835, which President Andrew Jackson signed to compensate them for removal from Georgia, transferred the ownership of this land to the Cherokee tribe. This reserve, the Cherokee Neutral Lands, was a tract twenty-five miles wide by fifty miles long that offered a buffer between Indian and white settlements. In Kansas, it covered Cherokee and Crawford counties, along with a strip four miles wide in southern Bourbon County. Despite the treaty prohibiting white entry, squatters moved onto these lands as early as 1854, building cabins and making improvements to the lands they staked out. By 1857, the Cherokee were upset by the continued encroachments and they requested a boundary survey to establish exact boundaries and remove white settlers. Lt. Col. Joseph E. Johnston of the First Cavalry led a surveying party to attempt to mark the boundaries.⁵

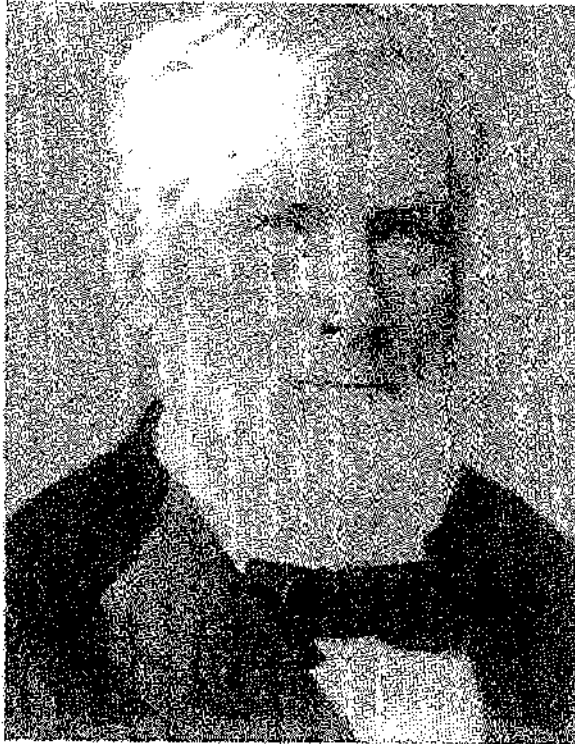
Questions of Indian land claims were muted during the Civil War, and Fort Scott concentrated on the business of making money from the expanded, well-financed Army that re-occupied the post. Postwar politics left the nation's soldiers burdened with two very different missions; only one could be described as a strictly military concern. The Army's principal martial obligations in the West were to regulate Indians on reservations and protect the increasing number of white settlements. An important part of protection meant watching the growing number of railroad surveying and construction crews in the region. The line of frontier forts that once included Fort Scott now ran far west of the Kansas-Missouri border. Garrisons at Dodge, Harker, Hays, Zarah, Larned, and Wallace dotted the state's western edge.

As a first step toward linking the Midwest and the Gulf of Mexico, a group of businessmen from Kansas City and Johnson and Wyandotte counties subscribed to a charter to build a 160-mile railroad from the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers to the Kansas border, where the Neosho River flowed into the Indian Territory. They incorporated the Kansas and Neosho Valley (K&NV) Railroad on March 8, 1865. As was all too common in an era when railroad speculation ran rampant, the project was entirely undercapitalized. At incorporation, the company had only \$800,000 pledged in capital for a project that would cost \$25,000 a mile. Eleven directors, including prominent Fort Scott businessmen Hiero T. Wilson and B.P. McDonald, took their positions on August 28, 1865.⁶ They faced a difficult challenge.

In search of additional financial commitment, the K&NV's owners contacted counties and communities along the proposed track line and approached state and national sources of capital. Quick to join the dreams of a coastal railroad connection, Bourbon County agreed to underwrite part of the system after the K&NV pledged that the line's name would change to

⁵ According to Craig Miner, most of the settlers reportedly staked out claims not for agriculture benefits, but for speculation purposes. Much of the later conflict between the squatters and the railroad, according to Miner, should be viewed not as a struggle between capitalists and farmers but rather as one between real speculators and would-be speculators. Miner, *The Border Tier Line*, 44-5; Nyle H. Miller, ed., "Surveying the Southern Boundary Line of Kansas: From the Private Journal of Col. Joseph E. Johnston," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 1, n. 2 (February 1932): 104-139.

⁶ H. Craig Miner, *The Border Tier Line: A History of the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad, 1865-1870* (M.A. thesis, Wichita State University, 1967): 1-3.



James F. Joy, president of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railroad and a well-known land speculator.

reflect Fort Scott's participation. The first action taken by the commissioners of Bourbon County came in November 1865, when a county election was authorized to vote upon a petition for subscribing \$150,000 in bonds to the Kansas & Neosho Valley Railroad Company and purchasing the same amount in company stock. In a December election, voters favored the proposal 705 to 220, but within a year county commissioners resolved that the railroad name's had not been changed and refused to issue the bonds. Despite the setback in southeast Kansas, work commenced on the road at Kansas City in the spring of 1866, and during that year the grading and bridging were completed to Olathe, twenty-one miles away.

In the face of continued and uncontrolled entry of white settlers, the Cherokee people in mid-1866 voted to sell their Kansas lands. The Cherokees made the Secretary of the Interior their agent for the sale, stipulating that the lands would not be sold for less than \$1.25 an acre, excluding mineral lands, to settlers with claims under preemption laws. Those settlers who made

improvements to the value of fifty dollars on personally occupied agricultural lands were, after appropriate proof, entitled to buy at the appraised value the land that included these improvements. Relying on past experience across the West, settlers in the Neutral Lands expected to obtain title to their holdings under provisions of the Preemption Law of 1841, which permitted the sale of public lands at \$1.25 an acre, and the Homestead Law of 1862, which allowed acquisition of a one-hundred-and-sixty-acre tract of public land on condition of settlement, cultivation, and occupancy. Of the 800,000 acres that made up the Neutral Lands, the settlers claimed a little more than 154,000 acres.⁷

Rather than permit the kind of settlement envisioned by the Preemption Law and the Homestead Act, the situation in the Neutral Lands led to the consolidation of land ownership. Recognizing the difficulty of selling off such a huge tract in 160-acre increments and in an effort to minimize Indian-white problems in the area, the Secretary of the Interior secured the Cherokees' agreement to sell the Neutral Lands in one piece for not less than \$800,000 in cash. That order was modified in July 1866, and the secretary was permitted to sell all unclaimed lands in one block at a minimum price of \$1 an acre if such a contract could be negotiated. On Oct. 19, 1867, Secretary of the Interior Orville Browning sold the neutral lands to James F. Joy of Detroit, Michigan, a nationally known speculator and president of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy

⁷ Lula Lemmon Browa, *Cherokee Neutral Lands Controversy* (M.A. thesis, University of Colorado, 1923): 6-10.

railroad system. Joy agreed to pay \$75,000 cash within ten days of ratification of the sale and remainder in time payments.⁸ Squatters had become an issue for a private landowner, not for government agencies.

On July 25, 1866, the K&NV won federal help through the influence of its lobbyists working in Washington, D.C., and became a serious contender in the competition for constructing tracks to the Gulf. One railroad lobbyist, James Blunt, was the former commander of the military forces in southern Kansas during the war. President Andrew Johnson approved an act of Congress entitled "An act granting lands to the State of Kansas to aid in the construction of the Kansas & Neosho Valley Railroad and its extension to Red River." The legislation authorized the line's continuation through Indian Territory to the northern line of Texas. To finance construction, the federal bill granted ten sections of land per mile through Kansas and the Indian Territory after the Indian titles were extinguished. The K&NV also won permission to negotiate with Indian tribes for the purchase of additional lands. In addition to the federal largess, Kansas granted the company the proceeds from the sale of 125,000 acres of land.⁹

The K&NV still faced difficult financial conditions. Two years later, the board of directors asked Bourbon County if the bonds approved by the voters could be issued to the company but held in trust until the tracks reached Fort Scott. Bourbon County remained adamant. It agreed to support the K&NV if construction reached Fort Scott within two years and the line's name was changed to the Missouri River, Fort Scott & Gulf (MRFS&G) Railroad Company. Strapped, the K&NV had little choice. The rail line opened to Olathe on December 16, 1868. In November 1869, construction of tracks reached Bourbon County. The Fort Scott *Monitor* reported on November 10 that "The pile driving is nearly completed for the railroad bridge across the Marmaton River." On December 7, 1869, the first train arrived at Fort Scott, pulling cars laden with merchandise. One of the first items unloaded was a car of lath board, used for the new three-story Gulf Hotel already under construction in town. The line eventually became one of the great coal-carrying railroads in the nation, supplying Kansas City with coal dug from mines across southeast Kansas. Lines to the state's southern boundary, three miles south of Baxter Springs, were completed May 2, 1870. After working for a competing railroad, B.S. Henning, the former Fort Scott post commander with the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, became general superintendent of the MRFS&G railroad line. Fort Scott's dreams of railroad glory grew even brighter a year later, when the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad reached town.¹⁰

Three years after the end of the Civil War, three railroad companies had organized with the same objective: to control rail traffic to the Gulf of Mexico. Proponents and lobbyists of the three lines introduced bills in Congress to secure right-of-way through Indian territory for their own lines. The location of tribal land in Indian Territory realistically limited the number of railroads that could enter from Kansas to one. Unwilling to politicize the selection process, the federal government instead opted for a race. The first company to reach the southern border of the state within the limits of the Neosho valley would earn the right of way and a conditional land

⁸ Brown, *Cherokee Neutral Lands Controversy*, 6-10.

⁹ Banwart, *Rails, Rivalry and Romance*, 2-3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 7, 13.

grant to finance further construction.

In the new climate, capital became the driving factor. Without it, no railroad could claim the prize of the sole right-of-way through Indian territory. Companies scrambled to link with larger national concerns. In 1868, the K&NV, previously a local operation, became the property of Boston financial leaders, including Nathaniel Thayer, William F. Wells and Sidney Bartlett. They were represented in Kansas by James Joy, who had purchased the remaining neutral Cherokee lands a year earlier. He sold those lands to the MRFS&G Railroad on March 10, 1869, setting off a storm of protest. As news of the sale reached southeast Kansas, squatters who expected to claim what had been Indian lands regarded the transfer of title to Joy as betrayal. Over the course of the previous year, Joy published a series of letters in the Fort Scott newspaper that proposed to allow illegal squatters to acquire title to the lands on which they resided. He insisted that settlers who proved their claim would receive title from the government and not from his company. The settlers protested these terms and demanded the right to acquire lands under Preemption and Homestead laws. In response, Joy offered a counterproposal. Stressing his claim to legal title to the lands, he promised settlers that they would be charged from \$2 to \$5 an acre, with no sale exceeding the latter figure.

After 1869, concerns over the Army's involvement in civilian administration in Reconstruction mixed with worries about its use to support civil law enforcement agencies. The concerns were shared by military leaders. The Army continued to seek definitive legal authorization to act in the civilian sphere. In his 1870 annual report, General of the Army William T. Sherman called Congress' attention to the vague statutes defining what was authorized by the Judiciary Act of 1789. He recommended that soldiers not be expected to make individual arrests or engage in acts that might end in violence against civilians unless under the supervision of the sheriff. If more was required, Sherman asked Congress to enact authorization in clear, definite language.¹¹

The Army needed full congressional support and guidance as it moved to meet the latest wave of violence in Kansas. When the MRFS&G railroad opened a land office in Fort Scott in 1868, the squatter population on the Cherokee Neutral Lands topped 10,000. By fall 1869, that number doubled. About three-fourths of the squatters were former Union soldiers who relied on their military land warrants as authorization for their speculation. Many of the veterans seemed unlikely to hesitate to use organized violence to protect their claims.

Ignoring Joy's promises and compromises, a significant number of settlers refused to accept the terms of the railroad company, and they formed a "land league" consisting of loose groups vaguely united to resist the company's title. The groups were known as "Anti-Joy-Leaguers," "Land-Leaguers," and later the "Neutral Home Protection Corps," but most of the Neutral land residents referred to them as the "Leaguers." They maintained that the sale of the neutral lands to the railroad company was invalid because the Cherokees had sold the lands to the

¹¹ The lack of adequate direction would not be corrected until six years after the Post of Southeast Kansas was closed, when Congress passed Posse Comitatus Act, prohibiting use of Army troops as aids to civilian law enforcement, except where specifically authorized by Congress. Charles Doyle, "Use of the Military to Enforce Civilian Law: Posse Comitatus Act and Other Considerations." Congressional Research Service 88-583b A (July 20, 1988); William T. Sherman, "Report of the General of the Army, Nov. 10, 1879," *Annual Report of the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Department for the Year 1870*. Vol. 1. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870): 5.

Confederate government during the war, and as a result the lands belonged to the government and were subject to settlement the same as any public land. The "Leaguers" bitterly denounced those settlers who accepted the railroad's terms. Squatters threatened the opening of a land office in Crawford County to help those wishing to settle up their claim. The Leaguers were adamant, promising to "abate such nuisance, Peacefully if we can, Forcibly if we must." Once again, the Army was the only effective force available to the state or federal government.¹²

It was not the first time civilian affairs in Kansas had drawn an Army presence. Throughout the 1850s, federal troops attempted to quell pro- and anti-slavery violence. The Army also settled land issues in antebellum Kansas. In the spring of 1860, commissioners of the General Land Office ordered the removal of white settlers on Indian lands south of Fort Scott, and in the following fall, federal soldiers acting under the supervision of the Cherokee Indian agent forcibly removed at least seventy-four families, many of whom had settled on farmsteads near Cow Creek during the previous five years.¹³

In the world of postwar industrial growth, conflict was counterproductive for economic leaders. James Joy made several attempts to peacefully resolve the disputes. In a November 1868 attempt to divide the opposition, Joy opined that there were three classes of property squatters: those in residence prior to the cession treaty of 1866; those who moved in after ratification of the treaty and before the supplemental treaty of 1868 that sold the lands to Joy; and those who settled after the sale was finalized. The earliest purchasers had clear title, and Joy acknowledged that his acquisition of the Neutral Lands had no effect on their property. Since there was some legal doubt as to the exact ownership of the Indian reserve land even before his purchase, Joy expressed a willingness to allow the second group of squatters to "prove up" their claims. The railroad company proposed that upon making proof of their settlement and occupancy prior to June 10, 1868, they should each be permitted to purchase 160 acres at from \$2 to \$5 per acre under lenient terms. These squatters were given four months to prove up; failure to do so would open up the claimed land to general sales. Joy gave those settlers who arrived latest no special rights, stating they could remain on the land only after paying regular price of \$6 to \$12 an acre. A special land office, underwritten by the railroad, opened in Fort Scott in December 1868. The office was kept open until the following June, and despite threats from the hardline Leaguers, many of those entitled accepted the proposition and filed the proofs required.¹⁴

During spring 1869, the land league groups began physical attacks against railroad construction crews and settlers who supported the railroad. The land office of the railroad company was mobbed and Leaguers arrested the chief engineer of the MRFS&G railroad and his surveying team. Wagons, tents, surveying instruments, and commissary stores were burned. The group drove the party away from the work site, threatening them with death if they returned. The chief engineer and another man then were marched several miles, stripped of their coats, and whipped fifteen times each. During the following months, other railroad engineers and contractors were driven off and survey teams were harassed. In several instances, railroad

¹² Brown, *Cherokee Neutral Lands Controversy*, 17; *Fort Scott Press*, March 28, 1869.

¹³ Miner, *The Border Tier Line*, 48; William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883).

¹⁴ Miner, *The Border Tier Line*, 50-1; *Fort Scott Press*, Dec. 4, 1868.

property, most notably wooden track ties, were destroyed. Nearby landowners were pressured not to sell timber or limestone ballast to the railroad, affecting construction of the line. Leaguers also burned down the office of the *Girard Press*, a newspaper that opposed their organization and policy.¹⁵

As the violence mounted, the regional problem became a state concern. On May 3, 1869, Gov. James Harvey beseeched the residents of Cherokee and Crawford counties to obey the law. The sheriffs of the counties told Harvey later that month they were faced with an overwhelming force in the quasi-military organization, and as a result they were unable to uphold the law in their counties. A month later, residents of the two counties petitioned Harvey to station U.S. troops south of Fort Scott. The Leaguers continued to fight, proclaiming in newspapers that Crawford County belonged to the settlers "by justice and possession" and that it was held by "such means as intelligent but determined, people may find necessary to protect their homes." Their newspaper, the *Workingman's Journal*, was printed in Girard and Columbus, two towns where the Army later established camps. The Leaguer slogan that ran on the front page proclaimed "Sell not virtue to purchase wealth, nor liberty to obtain power." The *Journal* expressed the Land League's aims to stop the railroad by opposing any sale of land to "any person under the canopy of heaven except actual sellers."¹⁶

Unable to commit state militia units, Harvey asked the federal government to secure Army troops to stop the violence. The governor also sent a committee to southeast Kansas to investigate the troubles, with witnesses interviewed at Fort Scott, Girard, Columbus, and Baxter Springs. The committee's findings led Harvey to request federal intervention. The Leaguers expressed a position that touched a deep chord in the western psyche; throughout the state, the movement found support. A resolution censuring Gov. Harvey for requesting the presence of troops upon these lands was defeated in the Kansas House of Representatives by only a small majority. Violence also escalated. Another serious raid occurred before the troops arrived. About thirty armed Leaguers attacked a railroad construction camp about 12 miles south of Fort Scott in mid-July, burning tools, tents, and supplies.¹⁷ In the aftermath, an Army presence became essential.

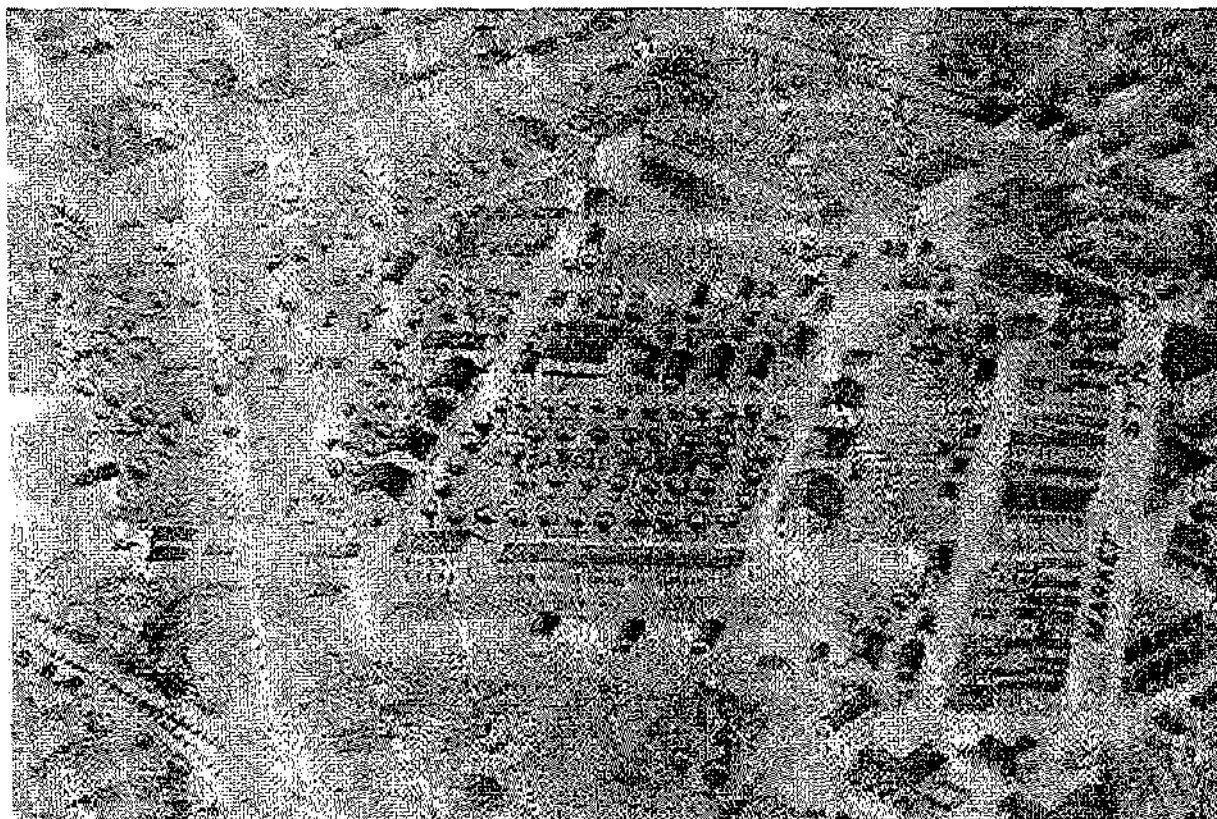
Soldiers returned to Fort Scott on August 19, 1869, as Maj. James R. Roy of the Sixth U.S. Infantry Regiment led four companies into Carroll Plaza. Fort Scott returned to its role as the headquarters and supply base for troops, this time in conflict as political as the Civil War itself. A small number of staff officers and enlisted personnel remained in the city. Most of the troops marched south into the Neutral Lands. On December 9, 1869, the War Department elevated the detachment into an independent command post, creating the Post of Southeast Kansas, with headquarters at Fort Scott.

Major Roy and the commanding officers who followed him recognized the Army's need

¹⁵ *Fort Scott Press*, May 1, 1869; Miner, "Border Frontier."

¹⁶ Ralph Richards, *Headquarters House and the Forts of Fort Scott* (Fort Scott, Kans.: Fort Scott Tribune, 1954): 64; *Fort Scott Press*, June 18, 1869, cited in Brown, *Cherokee Neutral Lands Controversy*, 23; *Workingman's Journal*, Oct. 29, 1869, cited in Miner, *The Border Tier Line*, 54.

¹⁷ *Fort Scott Press*, June 25, 1869, cited in Brown, *Cherokee Neutral Lands Controversy*, 25; *Fort Scott Weekly Press*, July 17, 1869.

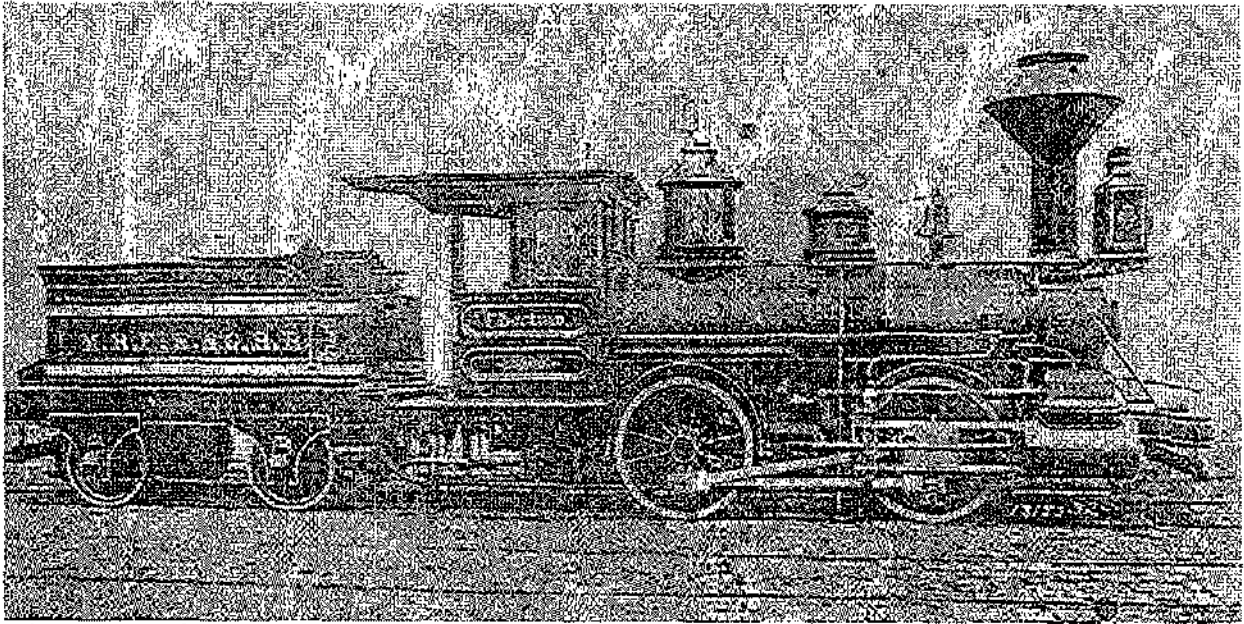


An artist's rendering of Fort Scott in 1871, showing the former officers' quarters to the right of a tree-lined Carroll Plaza. At the bottom, from left, are the former post headquarters building and dragoon barracks and stables, while to the right, from bottom, are an infantry barracks building, post hospital and guardhouse. Above the plaza are outbuildings and the other former infantry building.

for restrained responses in a civilian situation. One of the command's first general orders, issued in September 1869, reminded the officers that the conflict they faced was inherently civilian in nature. At the first sign of conflict, detachments were to peacefully force their way between the Leaguers and the railroad crews, resorting to violence only upon the order of the civilian authority. Officers were subordinate to civil authorities at all times and were to receive written instructions before arresting anyone.¹⁸

The federal troops entered the conflict ostensibly as a neutral force dispatched simply to maintain the peace, but their fealty to Joy and the railroads was unmistakable. MRFS&G workers built four temporary barracks along the railroad line for the soldiers. The railroad paid for the buildings. Troops worked as laborers on the structures under the command of railroad engineers. At first troop shortages affected the situation. The Army sent a company of men from the Second U.S. Artillery Regiment to southeast Kansas without their heavy weapons, instead mounting the men on horses and using them as cavalry troops. By December, the Sixth Infantry troops were reinforced with experienced horsemen as Company A of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry, a few years away from Little Bighorn, replaced the mounted artillerists. Roy stationed one infantry company

¹⁸ General Orders No. 2, Sept. 10, 1869, Roll 21, Post of Southeast Kansas: Orders, Special Orders and Endorsements Sent, 1869 to 1873.



A locomotive of the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad line

at Columbus, about sixty miles south of Fort Scott, another near Girard, a mixed detachment of cavalry and infantry near Monmount, thirty-two miles south of the post, and the final infantry company at Cato, only twelve miles outside of Fort Scott.¹⁹

Unlike Fort Scott's previous experience as a military base, the Post of Southeast Kansas had little effect on the town. No regiments camped around the city and there was no massive buildup of supplies. The original post hospital became a school for Fort Scott's African-American community in September 1869, leaving the town without a dedicated medical facility for the troops. Roy hired three surgeons to take care of his far-flung detachments. During the railroad crisis a small number of officers and men were housed in the city and worked in offices or warehouses or corrals rented by the Army. In 1869 the soldiers worked as teamsters and laborers, rotating in from field duty to work for Lt. John Carland of the Sixth Infantry, who functioned as both the quartermaster and commissary officer. He again turned to the regional economy for many of the troops' needs, buying food and forage, shoes, and office furniture on the open market as needed and paying local blacksmiths for shoeing horses.²⁰

Without military buildings, the post commander was forced to order his Acting Assistant Quartermaster to procure quarters for one major, a lieutenant, and "a suitable room also be hired at an economical rental for a squad room for the enlisted men necessarily employed at Post Headquarters," on November 11, 1870. Later that month the Quartermaster Department received

¹⁹ Miner, *The Border Tier Line*, 91; Circular No. 1, Special Orders Post of Southeast Kansas, Nov. 5, 1869, Roll 21, Post of Southeast Kansas: Orders, Special Orders and Endorsements Sent, 1869 to 1873; Roy to Brig. Gen. Madison Mills, Dec. 12, 1869, Letters Sent, Sept. 30, 1869 to April 16, 1873, Roll 20, Post of Southeast Kansas: Letters Sent and Received, Sept. 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²⁰ Roy to Brig. Gen. Madison Mills, Dec. 12, 1869, Letters Sent, Sept. 30, 1869 to April 16, 1873, Roll 20, Post of Southeast Kansas: Letters Sent and Received, Sept. 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

authorization to "hire at an economical rate stabling for the public animals needed and kept at Ft. Scott." Fort Scott once again served as a convenient site for military justice, with the nearby detachments providing enough officers for the continual stream of garrison courts martial for the units serving in the field. The town used the former post guardhouse for its own purposes and the Army had to rent space in county jails until prisoners could be escorted north to the military prison at Fort Leavenworth.²¹

As railroad lines reached Fort Scott, Bourbon County and the MRFS&G Railroad completed their financial transactions on January 7, 1870. Fulfilling its contract, county commissioners delivered the bonds for \$150,000, sold back the \$150,000 in company stock certificates for \$5, and the name of the rail line was changed to the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad. Construction of tracks to the state's southern border continued.²²

Attacks by members of the Land League immediately decreased as soon as the Army troops arrived in southeast Kansas, but the military continued to prepare for the worst. On January 13, 1870, Roy requested another 340 recruits to fill out the "skeleton companies" of the Sixth Infantry serving under him, recommending that the recruits come from Fort Leavenworth. A month later he told the Department of the Missouri that even though no violence had been reported since the arrival of the troops, he believed soldiers should remain in the area. The peaceful conditions stemmed from "the moral effect" of the Army's presence, he averred, as settlers continued to express hostility toward Joy. Roy recommended reducing the commitment to guarding the railroad camps to two troops, one each of infantry and cavalry, stationed near the workers and close to the trestles built across Drywood and Richland creeks, the most vulnerable targets. By April, the War Department withdrew all but two of the companies. The reduced number of officers resulted in an end to courts martial at Fort Scott in December, and trial cases were assigned to Fort Leavenworth.²³

One duty in existence during the post's frontier and Civil War days carried over to these railroad years. The Army still provided escorts for government officials. On September 26, 1870, the post commander assigned four enlisted men of the Sixth Infantry under command of a lance corporal to escort a special agent of the Interior Department through Indian Territory. After assembling at Baxter Springs, the troops, outfitted with twenty rounds of ammunition and sufficient rations, were detailed to travel to Fort Gibson and return under the direction of the special agent. One year later, one corporal and one private from the Fort Scott detachment accompanied an Army paymaster to Fort Smith, Arkansas.²⁴

²¹ Special Orders No. 129, Nov. 11, 1870, Special Orders No. 8, Oct. 2, 1869, Special Orders No. 134, Nov. 22, 1870, Hd. Qrs. Troops Operating in Southeast Kansas, Roll 21, Special Orders and Endorsements Sent 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²² Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*.

²³ Roy to Mitchell, Feb. 25, 1870, Letters Sent, Sept. 30, 1869 to April 16, 1873, Roll 20, Post of Southeast Kansas: Letters Sent and Received, Sept. 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm; "Troops in Kansas," Serial 1426, Ex. Doc. 270, 41st Cong., 2d sess; Special Orders 149, Dec. 28, 1870, Roll 21, Special Orders and Endorsements Sent 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²⁴ Special Orders No. 110, Sept. 26, 1870, Roll 21, Special Orders and Endorsements Sent 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

In addition to its duties guarding the railroad crews, the Army continued to function as arbiter in regional Indian-white relations. Before transferring to another camp in October 1870, the headquarters in Fort Scott instructed the commander of Company I, Sixth Infantry, to check on the condition of several half-blooded Osage living in the area. He was to ascertain if the surrounding white settlers recognized the Indians' rights to own the property. If this was not the case, a sergeant and six men were to be assigned to the control of the Osage Indian agent to keep the peace. Soldiers were also called upon to protect Indian lands from encroachment by white settlers and to control illegal whiskey traders. When the last members of the Osage people were removed from Kansas to Indian Territory, Fort Scott's soldiers played a role in protecting the newcomers from neighboring tribes.²⁵

As area violence decreased, keeping the soldiers out of trouble became the officers' top priority. A dozen enlisted men were involved in a December brawl in Chetopa at property belonging to Hiram Barnes, and their commanding officer ordered their pay docked to cover damages; the only sergeant involved lost \$58.65 while the other eleven men suffered \$45.85 taken out of their wallets. In response, the commander of the Post of Southeast Kansas ordered all officers to exercise extra vigilance over their men and to keep them busy. To fulfill the latter requirement, the command undertook two forty-five minute periods of military drill every day except Sunday. In inclement weather the detachments were allowed to substitute marching, running, or other exercise programs. Officers were encouraged to vary the exercise routines, with foot races and ball games acceptable substitutes.²⁶

As the Army assigned and detached units to the railroad as guards during 1871, the position of the commanding officer of the Post of Southeast Kansas was occupied by the senior officer assigned to the post. During the year, six officers commanded; the shortest term of duty was less than a month. Lt. Col. Thomas H. Neill, Sixth Cavalry, was in charge for the longest portion of 1870, serving from July through the end of the year. In October he commanded three companies, from the Seventh Cavalry, Fifth U.S. Infantry and Sixth U.S. Infantry, a total of eight officers and 151 enlisted men. In August of the following year, the detachment was reduced to eighty men of Co. E, Sixth Cavalry, and fifty-nine men of Co. B, Fifth Infantry. It was reduced even further by October, with only two companies from the Fifth Infantry assigned, comprising five officers and 115 enlisted men.²⁷

Despite the lack of violent actions by the Land League during the Army's stay in southeast Kansas, military commanders continued to remain on alert. When the Department of the Missouri in September 1872 asked the leader of the detachment to pick one of the two companies for reassignment in the event it was needed elsewhere, Capt. J.J. Upham stiffly recommended against any troop reduction. Such a move provided a huge morale boost for the Land League and could only lead to renewed attacks upon railroad property, "and the moral

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ General Orders No. 21, Dec. 19, 1870, and General Orders No. 22, Dec. 20, 1870, Roll 21, Special Orders and Endorsements Sent 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

²⁷ Appendix C: Position and distribution of troops in the Military Division of the Missouri, 1871. Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I, Serial 1503, Ex. Doc. 1, Part 2, 42d Cong., 2d sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1871); Appendix C, Annual Report 1872, Serial 1558.

effect of the presence of troops, which is believed to have restrained these lawless persons in the past, would be in some degrees lost.²⁸

Order was finally restored in southeast Kansas, by the decision of the United States Supreme Court recognizing the validity of the sale of the lands to the railroad company. James Joy succeeded in getting a test case of his own design placed before the Supreme Court on April 16 and 17, 1872, and the decision was handed down on November 18. In the case, *Peter F. Holden vs. James F. Joy*, Joy's title to the Cherokee Neutral Lands was declared valid. As the case made its way through the courts, Joy sold his land interests to MRFS&G Railroad. The railroad paid \$1 per acre for the 693,000 acres it received.

On April 16, 1873, the Post of Southeast Kansas was abandoned and the U.S. Army departed from the town of Fort Scott for the final time. The garrison was transferred to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. Members of the Land League, crushed by the Supreme Court's unfavorable decision, either paid the railroad's price for the acreage or moved onto the next site of speculative fever. The small number of buildings in Fort Scott leased to the Army for headquarters and support purposes reverted back to business use, and the town returned its focus to commercial development.

Having seen the military depart three times over the past twenty years, the residents of Fort Scott quickly grasped other opportunities. The town continued its economic growth, fueled by the influx of commercial opportunities that traveled into town thru the newly constructed train tracks, and Fort Scott became a regional shopping center, serving customers from western Missouri, and eastern and southern Kansas. The delay caused by the Land League's violence proved to actually help Fort Scott's commercial sector, as the town became a railroad hub for a number of years and was the largest town in southeast Kansas.

²⁸ Capt. J.J. Upham to Col. Robert Williams, AAAG, Department of the Missouri, Sept. 14, 1872. Letters Sent, Sept. 30, 1869 to April 16, 1873, Roll 20, Post of Southeast Kansas: Letters Sent and Received, Sept. 1869 to 1873, Fort Scott National Historic Site microfilm.

Epilogue: After the Army: The Town of Fort Scott

Civilian residents quickly returned many of the buildings constructed or taken over by the Army to commercial or town use. The former post hospital (HS-8) became a school for African Americans in September 1869. After resolution of conflict with settlers south of Fort Scott, the town's economic growth soared as businesses took advantage of the region's building stone, lime, cement, coal, water and natural gas resources. The Fort Scott Gas Works were finished in October 1871. Townspeople organized and incorporated a water company June 5, 1882, with a supply taken from the Marmaton River from a well sunk down beneath the sand and gravel in the bed. The town expanded its rail connections. The St. Louis, Fort Scott & Wichita Railroad completed a line to El Dorado, in Butler County, Kansas, early in 1883. The Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, known as the "KATY," reached Kansas City, Mo., in 1886 on leased trackage rights from Paola over the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Memphis (the name of the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad since 1881) line. The company completed a bridge across the Mississippi at Memphis, Tennessee, in 1887.

Fort Scott's post buildings continued to serve as residences and commercial properties for a number of years. Eventually some were destroyed by fire, while others were torn down to make way for new structures. Others were extensively remodeled as their owners sought to use them for new purposes. The fate of the officers' quarters and enlisted barracks serves as examples for all of the post buildings. Justice of the Peace William Margrave bought the structure known to the Army as Officers Building No. 1 and lived in it until his death in 1904. Noted Fort Scott author Ralph Richards later owned it, and it eventually became the property of the town of Fort Scott. The town leased the building to the Fort Scott Business and Professional Woman's Club, which maintained it as a museum. Former post sutler Hiero Wilson, who bought the adjacent Officers Building No. 2 in the 1855 sale, apparently put half of that building up for sale in 1873, although local tradition held that he lived there until his death in 1892. Soon after Wilson's death, Charles Goodlander acquired the building. In 1901 he established the Goodlander home for children there. That organization eventually bought out the other half of the structure and maintained the institution there until 1955. G.W. Webb opened a boarding house in the third officers' house in 1869, after buying it from former commander of the military post of Fort Scott, Charles Blair. The building was torn down around 1900. The fourth officers' quarters also accommodated a boarding house during the 1870s. Its owners remodeled the building around 1900, dividing it into apartments. A 1945 fire destroyed the eastern half of the structure.

Other buildings around the post underwent similar fates as the officers' quarters, modified to fit whatever purpose their new owners sought. The former Dragoon Barracks (HS-5), served a number of municipal functions for many years, housing the U.S. Land Office and other agencies, as well as commercial establishments including a barber shop. The building was apparently still standing in 1871, but Goodlander identified its site as being occupied by a lumber yard in 1900. The fate of the other enlisted barracks is unknown, while civilian owners converted

the former Infantry Barracks (HS-7) into the Western Hotel after its 1855 sale. The Army rented the barracks during the Civil War and converted the building into wards for the post hospital facility. After the war it reverted back to being a hotel and later a boarding house. By the late 1870s the building was apparently torn down.¹

After formation of the Bourbon County Historical Society, regional organizations took on separate projects. In 1914, the Molley Foster Berry Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution identified local historic structures. The Works Progress Administration of the 1930s undertook several historic restoration projects, while the Business & Professional Women's Club of Fort Scott operated a museum in one of the few remaining post buildings. The remnants of the post, in the northern part of the town, did not bear any resemblance to the polish and shine of the former Army base. Most of the original post buildings had been destroyed and were now just foundations, buried beneath new construction or covered over in vacant city lots. The few that remained were used as residences and storage buildings. This continued use of the remaining buildings was instrumental in their survival. As interest in the town's past revived, townspeople approached U.S. Sen. Andrew Schoepel for federal assistance in recreating the post, but early efforts to establish a national park or monument failed.

In the late 1950s, Fort Scott's residents realized that their town was following the pattern of other Kansas communities. The railroad system, which helped maintain the town's economic development, was an uncertain ally, as their eighty-year hold on transportation was evaporating. Small businesses in the region were closing as increasing numbers of people migrated to larger cities. Fort Scott looked to its namesake as the means to revive its economic fortunes, as it had done so many times in the past. Interest in preserving and maintaining the historical fabric of Fort Scott intensified after 1960.

In 1962, Fort Scott gained a new ally. Joe Skubitz successfully ran for the Fifth Kansas Congressional District seat after working as an administrative assistant in Washington to Schoepel and fellow senator Clyde Reed. Assisted by Pittsburg State University historian Dr. Dudley Cornish, who wrote a report on Fort Scott activities during the Civil War, Skubitz secured the first federal financing for a study of the former Army post, \$25,000, in 1964 and the same amount the next year. Initially the Park Service, identifying the post as not being of national significance, was against any kind of designation for Fort Scott. However, in 1964, the federal government designated the area of the former fort which surrounded Carroll Plaza as a National Historic Landmark. Despite the lack of enthusiasm from Park Service personnel, Skubitz continued to obtain relatively small amounts of federal monies for continued studies and the restoration and reconstruction of the 1840s fort.

In addition to a gradual erosion of historical fabric over the years as private citizens renovated the structures, a pair of new threats arose in 1967. The federal government began planning construction of a major highway, U.S. 69, adjacent to the grounds of the former Army post. At the same time, the town of Fort Scott launched seven years of urban renewal projects that would dramatically change the face of the downtown area. The Kansas State Historical

¹ Sally Johnson Ketcham, *Officers Quarters No. 1, Fort Scott, Kansas: Furnishing Plan, Section C* (Omaha, NE: National Park Service, 1973): 20; Erwin Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Site Identification and Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: Division of History, National Park Service, 1967): 10-41.

Society initiated and completed a series of structural archeological investigations from 1968 to 1972 on the buildings which would become Fort Scott National Historic Site.

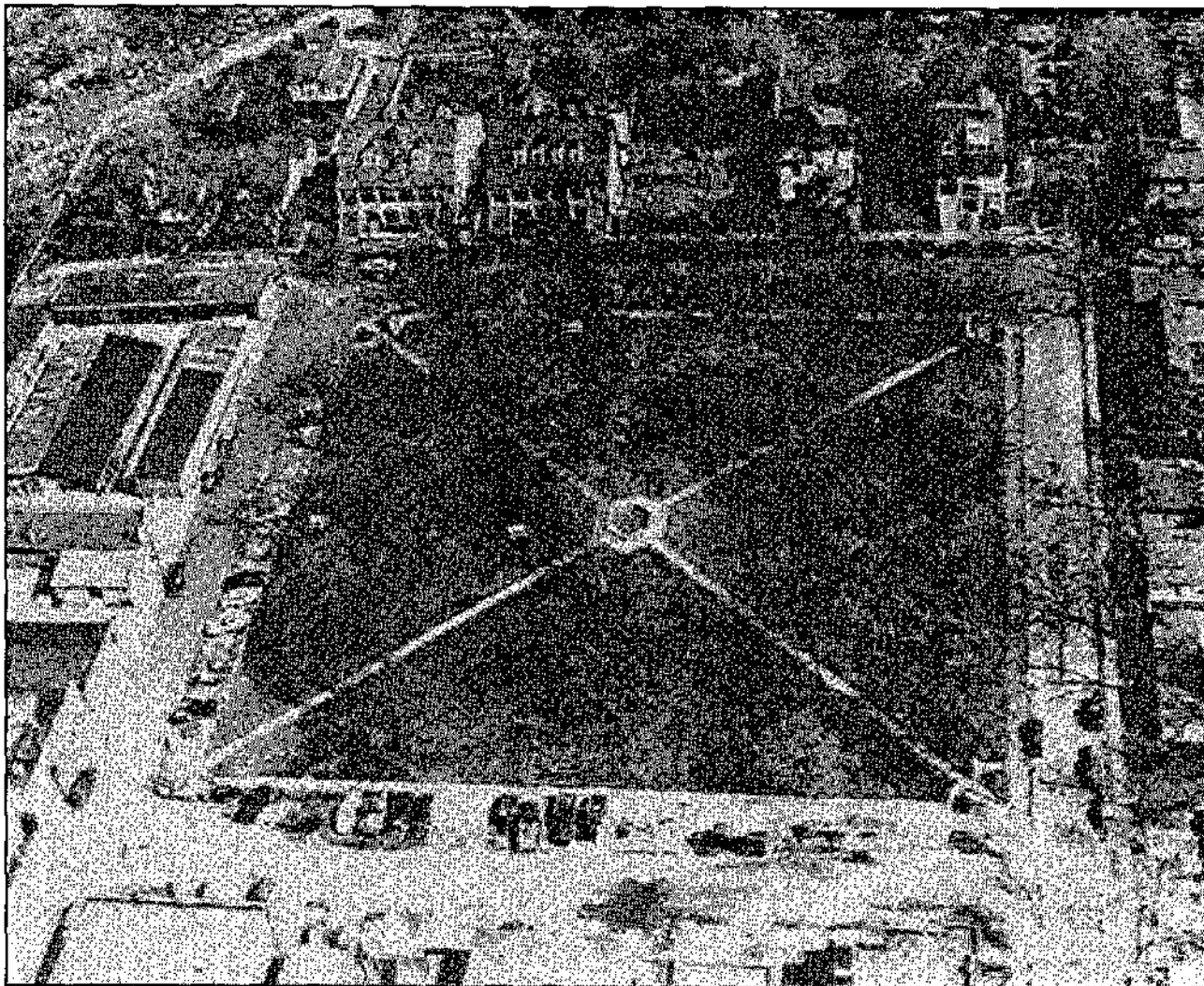
In the face of continual threats and the loss of any remaining historical significance, the National Park Service eventually dropped its opposition to the creation of a national historic site. Before Congress passed legislation establishing Fort Scott National Historic Site in 1978, the timeworn officer's quarters (HS-1, HS-2, and HS-4), Post Hospital (HS-8), Quartermaster Storehouse (HS-12) and the Post Bakery (HS-14) were restored to their 1840s splendor. Between 1976 and 1980, the Park Service reconstructed most of the major missing buildings above their original subsurface foundations, as the National Park Service recreated a historic scene of the 1840s frontier fort. By the time Skubitz retired from Congress in 1978, he had secured more than \$3.5 million for Fort Scott. The area was established as Fort Scott National Historic Site on October 19, 1978, under Public Law 15-484, "in order to commemorate the significant role played by Fort Scott in the opening of the West, as well as the Civil War and the strife in the state of Kansas that preceded it."

The National Park Service administration of the site began on May 18, 1978. The economic opportunities brought into the region by the Army presence that fueled the town's founding and development continues today, with the former military post now a tourist attraction that helps bring in \$8 million annually and keeps alive the historical fabric of the men and events that saw Fort Scott intimately involved in regional, state, and national affairs.²

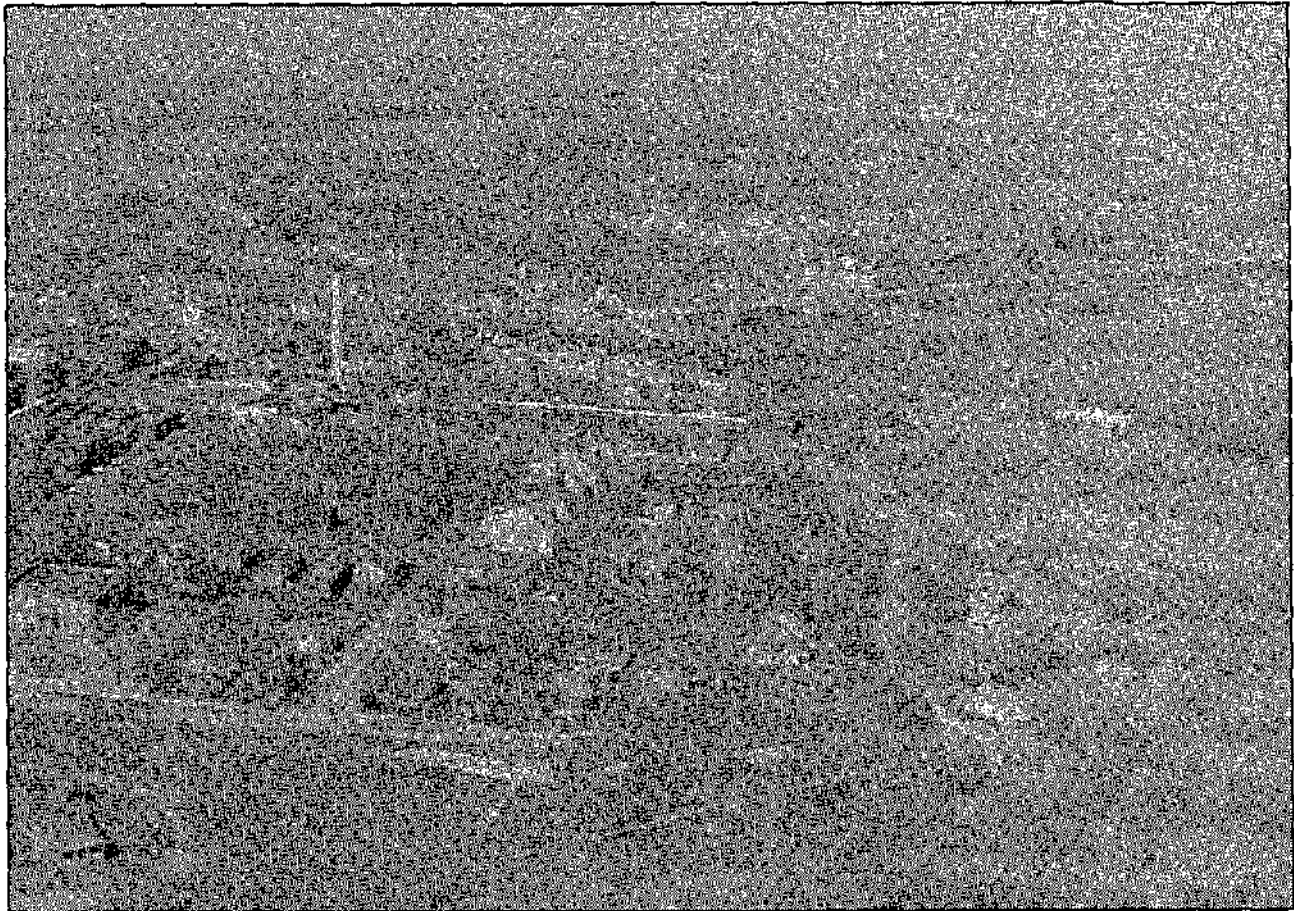
² Jim Fisher, "Fort Built on a Dime Here. Nickel There A Patient Approach to Government Funding Led to Site's Success." *Kansas City Star*, September 21, 1997.



Pre-1960 aerial overview of Fort Scott (West view)



1955 aerial view of Carroll Plaza (North view).



1955 aerial view of north Fort Scott (West view).



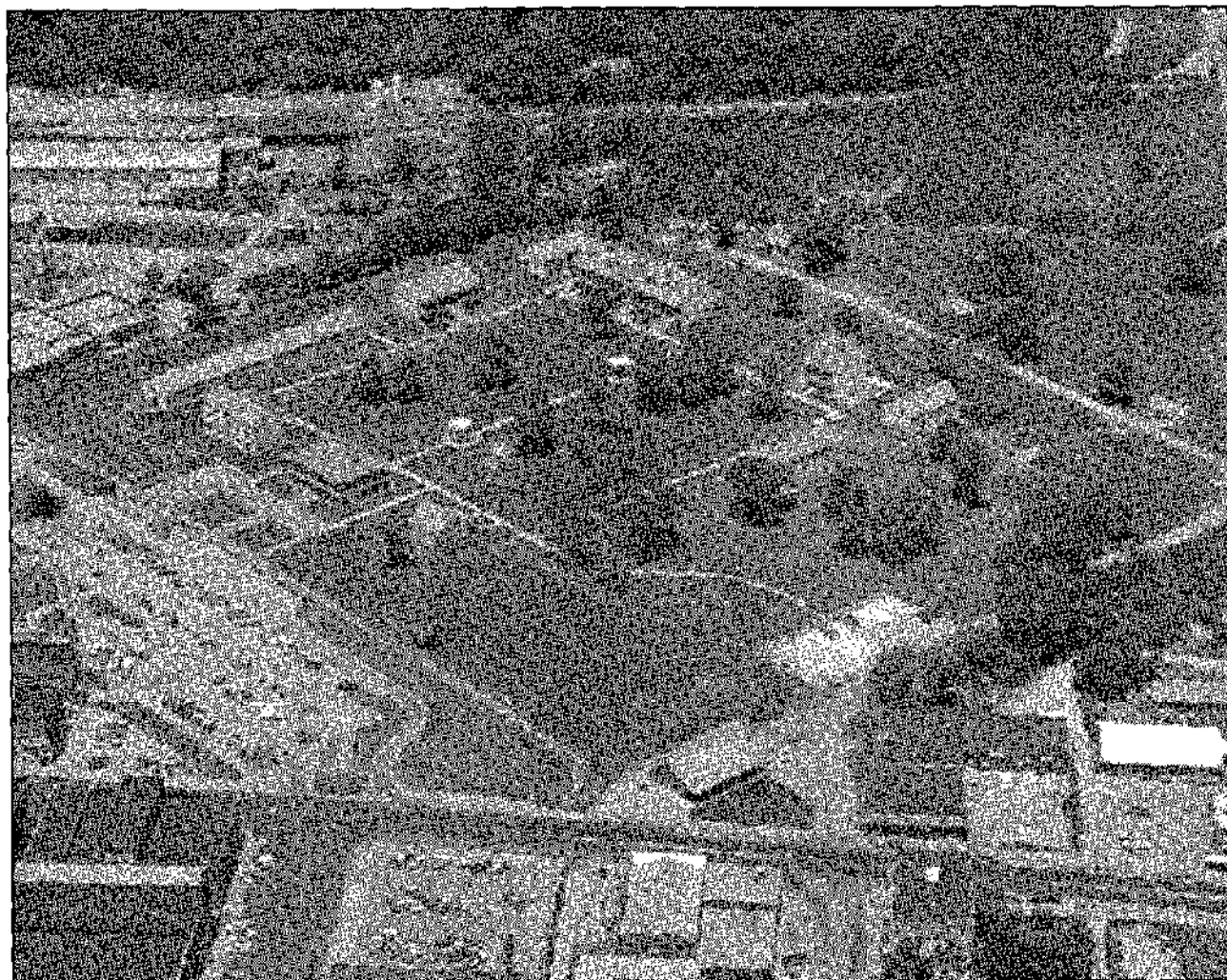
1955 aerial view of north Fort Scott (South view). Above Missouri & Pacific Railroad cut.



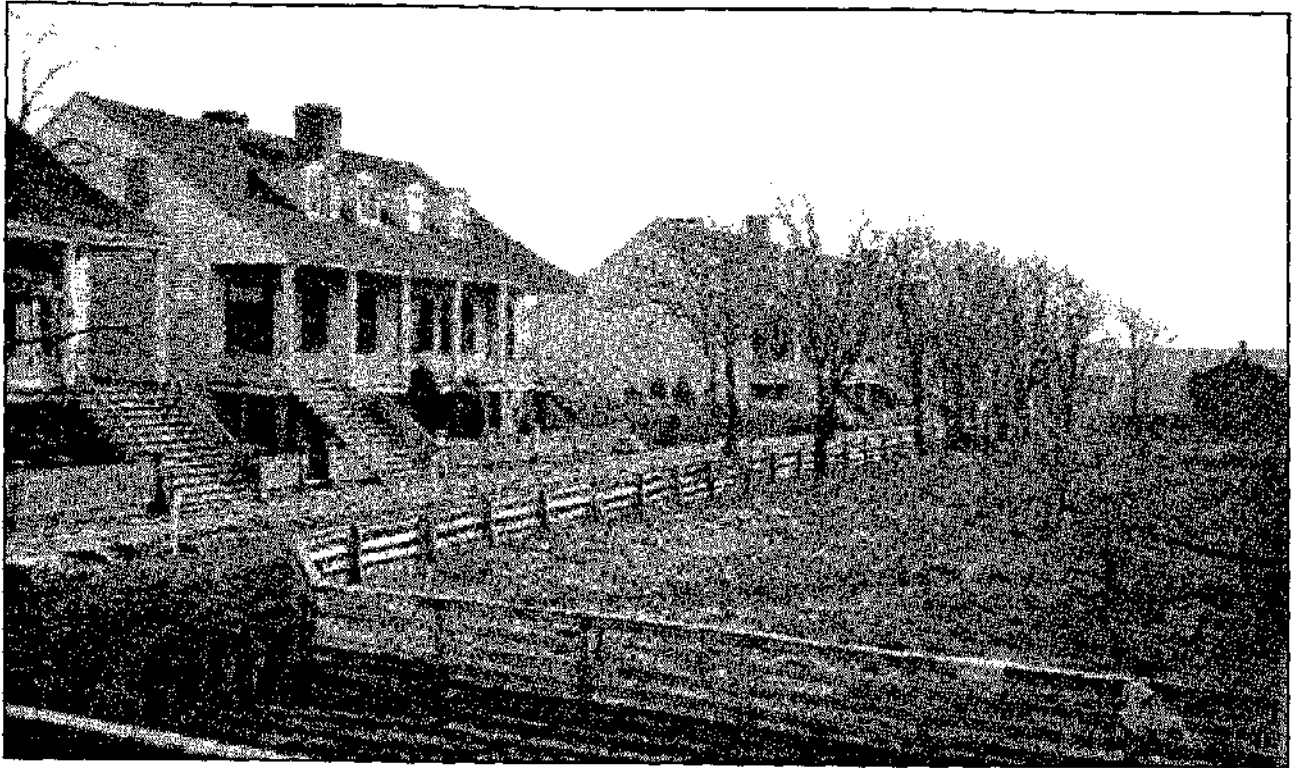
1972 Aerial overview (Northwest view).



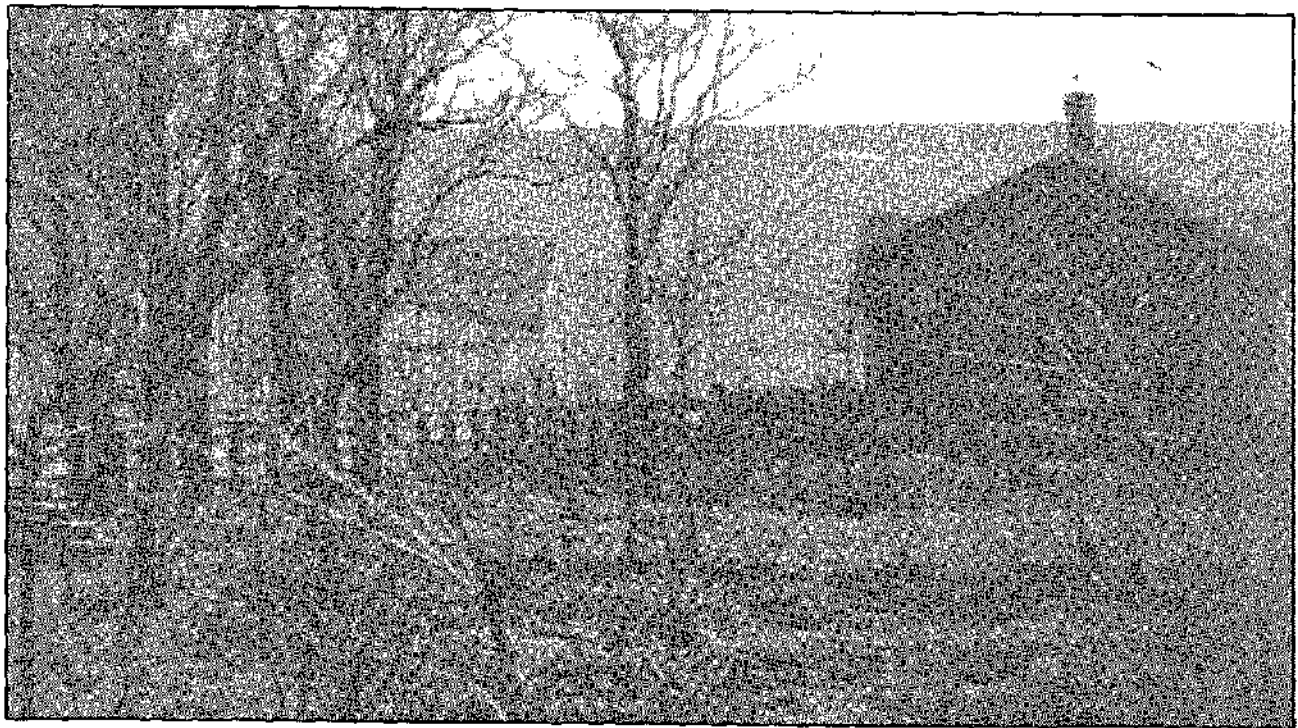
1975 aerial overview (Northeast view).



1980 aerial overview (Northwest view).



Officers Row (Southwest elevation) and northern part of Carroll Plaza. Photographed from the porch of the former Dragoon Barracks. 1873.



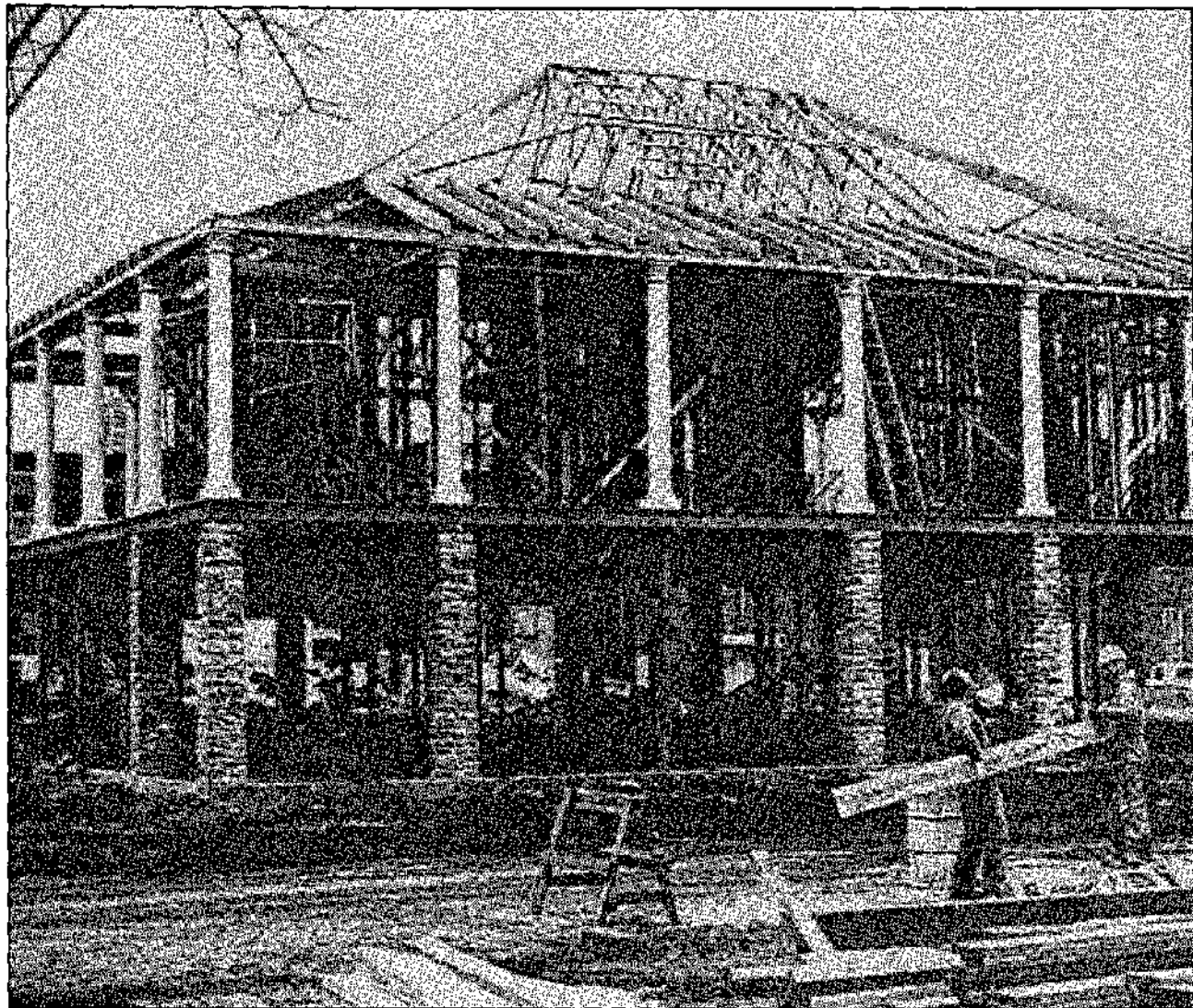
Detail from above photograph, showing former Quartermaster Quadrangle buildings (loafing shed and Stables), left center. 1873.



MK&T Freight Depot and cattle shipping pens (Northwest view). Note: background, Crawford Foundry, Marmaton River Bridge and Bell Town. 1873.



Former Officers Quarters No. 3 (left) and No. 4, photographed from the porch of the former Infantry Barracks (HS-6). Note: intersection shown is Blair and Lincoln avenues and north-east corner of fenced Carroll Plaza. Early 1880s.



Post Hospital (HS-8, North elevation). Reconstruction of building frame, 1973.



Infantry Barracks (HS-6). Archeological excavation (North view). Note: in the background is the porch of the former Quartermaster storehouse when it was used as a private residence. July 1971.



Restored Officers Row (Southwest elevation). Left to right, HS-1, HS-2, HS-4 and HS-12. 1980.

APPENDICES

FORT SCOTT'S COMMANDING OFFICERS

Frontier Years

Capt. Benjamin D. Moore, First Dragoons	May 30, 1842 to Oct. 23, 1842
Capt. William M. Graham, Fourth Infantry	Oct. 23, 1842 to July 21, 1845
Capt. Sidney Burbank, First Infantry	July 21, 1845 to Dec.18, 1845
Capt. Thomas Swords, First Dragoons	Dec.18, 1845 to April 19, 1846
Capt. Sidney Burbank, First Infantry	April 19, 1846 to Sept. 30, 1848
Capt. Albemarle Cady, Sixth Infantry	Sept. 30, 1848 to Feb. 6, 1849
Capt. Alexander Morrow, Sixth Infantry	February 6, 1849 to June 6, 1849
Maj. Philip R. Thompson, First Dragoons	June 6, 1849 to April 7, 1850
Capt. Alexander Morrow, Sixth Infantry	April 7, 1850 to Oct. 13, 1850
Assistant Surgeon Alfred W. Kennedy	Oct. 13 to Nov. 24, 1850
Capt. Albemarle Cady, Sixth Infantry	Nov. 24, 1850 to Oct. 6, 1852
First Lt. Thomas Hendrickson, Sixth Infantry	Oct. 6 to Nov. 2, 1852
Major Winslow F. Sanderson, Mounted Riflemen	Nov. 2, 1852 to Jan. 6, 1853
Capt. Michael Van Buren, Mounted Riflemen	Jan. 6 to April 22, 1853

Bleeding Kansas

Capt. Samuel D. Sturgis, First Cavalry	Dec. 22, 1857 to Jan. 10, 1858
Capt. George Anderson, First Cavalry	Feb. 1858 to May 1858
Lt. John B. Shinn, Third Artillery	May 17, 1858 to June 9, 1858
Capt. Nathaniel Lyon, Second Infantry	June 9, 1858 to Aug. 5, 1858
Gen. William Harney, Department of the West	Dec. 3, 1860 to Dec. 11, 1860
Capt. William Steele, Second Dragoons	Dec. 11, 1860 to Dec. 20, 1860
Capt. Nathaniel Lyon, Second Infantry	Dec. 20, 1860 to Feb. 1, 1861

Civil War

Lt. Col. W.H. Emory, Sixth Cavalry	August 1861
Col. Charles Doubleday, Second Ohio Cavalry	March 1862 to August 1862
Major B.S. Henning, Third Wisconsin Cavalry	August 1862 to April 1863
Major. Charles W. Blair, Second Kansas Volunteers	April 1863 to December 1864
Capt. D.C. Vittum, Third Wisconsin Cavalry	December 1864 to February 1865
Capt. Robert Carpenter, Third Wisconsin Cavalry	February 1865 to March 1865
Col. W.B. Pearsall, Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry	May 1865 to July 1865
Lt. Col. Henry Shears, Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry	July 1865 to August 1865
Capt. Nathaniel Vose, Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry	August 1865 to October 1865

Post of Southeastern Kansas

Major James Roy, Sixth Infantry ¹	December 1869 to April 1870
Capt. Samuel Robbins, Seventh Cavalry	April 1870 to July 1870
Capt. John Poland, Sixth Infantry	July 1870 to August 1870
Capt. John Upham, Sixth Cavalry	August 1870 to November 1870
Major Lewis Merrill, Seventh Cavalry	November 1870 to March 1871
Capt. Edwin Ames, Sixth Infantry	March 1871
Capt. John Poland, Sixth Infantry	March 1871 to June 1871
Capt. Edwin Ames, Sixth Infantry	June 1871 to July 1871
Capt. John Poland, Sixth Infantry	July 1871
Lt. Col. Thomas Neill, Sixth Cavalry	July 1871 to December 1871
Capt. John Upham, Sixth Cavalry	December 1871 to March 1872
Capt. Edmund Butler, Fifth Infantry	March 1872 to June 1872
Capt. John Upham, Sixth Cavalry ²	June 1872 to October 1872
Capt. Andrew Bennett, Fifth Infantry	October 1872 to November 1872
Lt. Col. Thomas Neill, Sixth Cavalry	November 1872 to March 1873
Major John Upham, Sixth Cavalry	March 1873 to April 1873

¹ Roy commanded a detachment of the Sixth Infantry at Fort Scott beginning on August 19, 1869.

² During this period, Upham was promoted to major.

POST SURGEONS AND ASSISTANT SURGEONS

Josiah Simpson, Assistant Surgeon ¹	May 30, 1842 to Dec. 4, 1842
Joseph Walker, Assistant Surgeon	Nov.13, 1842 to Nov. 24, 1842
	Dec. 4, 1842 to July 20, 1847
Richard French Simpson, Assistant Surgeon	May 4, 1844 to June 2, 1844
William Hammond, Assistant Surgeon	July 20, 1847 to Aug. 28, 1848
Alfred W. Kennedy	August 28, 1848 to June 27, 1850
	July 12, 1850 to August 1850
	Oct. 13, 1850 to April 30, 1851
Joseph K. Barnes, Assistant Surgeon	April 26, 1851 to Sept.1, 1852
Levi H. Holden, Assistant Surgeon	Oct. 10, 1852 to April 22, 1853
L.W. Crawford, U.S. Medical Department ²	June 1858
Charles Brewer, U.S. Medical Department	January 1861
H. Warner, Assistant Surgeon, Third Wisconsin Cavalry	August 1862
W.B. Carpenter, Fifth Kansas Cavalry	September 1862
H. Buckmaster, Surgeon, U.S. Volunteers	October 1862 to January 1863 ³
J.B. Woodward, Surgeon, Tenth Kansas Volunteers ⁴	February 1863 to March 1863.
F.T. Wyans, Surgeon, Ninth Kansas	April 1863 thru July 1863
A.E. Van Dwyne, Assistant Surgeon, U.S. Volunteers	August 1863 thru February 1865
L.G. Armstrong, Surgeon, Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry	June 1865 to July 1865
R.E.Sill, Assistant Surgeon, Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry	July 1865 to September 1865

POST CHAPLAINS

David Clarkson (Episcopal Chaplain)	July 26, 1850 to April 22, 1853
S.S. Adair	August 1862 to January 1863
Charles Reynolds, Second Kansas	November 1863 to January 1864
	March 1864 to June 1864 ⁵
T.T. Allen, Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Infantry	June 1865

¹ Doctors at post hospitals such as Fort Scott's were classified as Assistant Surgeons.

² Relieved Dr. J. Capers, citizen surgeon, June 18, 1858

³ In November, Fort Scott post reports listed Buckmaster as "In charge of convalescents en route to Fort Leavenworth)." He was also listed as in charge of general hospital at Fort Scott. After January 1863 he served as District Medical Director.

⁴ From October 1862 to January 1863, Woodward served in Fort Scott's General Hospital under Buckmaster. In January 1863, he was assigned to "Headquarters in the Field, Fort Scott."

⁵ Listed on post reports as Acting Post Chaplain.

OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 1842-1853

Baker, Lt. Laurence Simmons, Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Barnes, Joseph, Surgeon	1851-52
Berry, Lt. Benjamin A., Fourth Infantry	1843-45
Brewerton, Lt. George D., First Infantry*	1848
Buford, Lt. John, First Dragoons	1848-49
Burbank, Capt. Sidney, First Infantry	1845-48
Cady, Capt. Albemarle, Sixth Infantry	1848-52
Caldwell, Lt. James Nelson, First Infantry*	1845-47
Carleton, Lt. James, First Dragoons	1845-46
Carr, Lt. Eugene A., Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Chapman, Lt. Orren, First Dragoons	1848-50
Chilton, Lt. Robert Hall, First Dragoons*	1842
Clark, Lt. Darius D., Sixth Infantry	1851-53
Claiborne, Lt. Thomas, Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Clarkson, David, Chaplin	1850-53
Cochrane, Lt. Richard E., Fourth Infantry	1843-45
Ewell, Lt. Richard Stoddard, First Dragoons	1842-46
Eustis, Capt. William, First Dragoons	1842-46
Gordon, Lt. George Henry, Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Graham, Capt. William Montrose, Fourth Infantry	1842-45
Hammond, Lt. Marcus C.M., Fourth Infantry*	1842
Hammond, William, Surgeon	1847-48
Hendrickson, Lt. Thomas, Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Holden, Levi H., Surgeon	1852-53
Holloway, Lt. Edmunds Balard, Fourth Infantry	1843-45
Hoskins, Lt. Charles, Fourth Infantry	1844-45
Kennedy, Alfred W., Surgeon	1848-51
Kirkham, Capt. Ralph W., Sixth Infantry*	1842-43
Love, Lt. John, First Dragoons	1842-43
McCall, Capt. George Archibald, Fourth Infantry	1843-45
Moore, Capt. Benjamin D., First Dragoons	1842-43
Morris, Lt. Robert M., Mounted Rifles*	1851
Morrow, Lt. Alexander, Sixth Infantry ¹	1848-50
Norton, Lt. Allen Higbee, Fourth Infantry	1843-45
Patterson, Lt. Robert Emmet, Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Russell, Lt. David A., First Infantry	1845-46

* Assigned, but not present for duty at Fort Scott

¹ Died at Fort Scott.

Sackett, Lt. Delos Bennet, First Dragoons	1849
Scott, Lt. Henry Lee, Fourth Infantry*	1843-45
Sanderson, Major Winslow F., Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Simpson, Josiah Surgeon	1842
Simpson, Richard French, Surgeon ¹	1844
Swords, Capt. Thomas, First Dragoons	1842-46
Terrett, Capt. Burdett A., First Dragoons ²	1842-45
Thompson, Capt. Philip Roots, First Dragoons	1848-49
Van Buren, Capt. Michael E., Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Walker, Capt. John George, Mounted Rifles	1852-53
Walker, Joseph, Surgeon	1842-47
Wallace, Lt. George Weed, First Infantry	1845-48
West, Lt. Richard H., First Dragoons*	1842
Whittlesley, Lt. Joseph, First Dragoons	1846

* Assigned but not present for duty at Fort Scott

¹ Served at Fort Scott for one month.

² Died at Fort Scott.

Post-Fort Scott Careers

Many of the men who made up the post's garrisons both before and during the Civil War remained in the military. A number of the officers who served at the southeast Kansas post went on to garner glory and honor in the Mexican War and the Civil War, others served without significant distinction and, like Douglas MacArthur's prototypical soldier, just faded away. Four of the officers who served at Fort Scott between 1842 and 1846 died in the Mexican War. Three of them – William Montrose Graham; Charles Hoskins, and Allen Higbee Norton – served with the Fourth Infantry Regiment while it was stationed at Fort Scott. Benjamin D. Moore, the Navy midshipman turned cavalryman, was a First Dragoons officer during his time at the post. Henry Lee Scott, with the Fourth Infantry in Kansas from 1843 to 1845, acted as aide de camp to Gen. Winfield Scott during the Mexican War before retiring in October 1861. Another former Fort Scott officer, George Brewerton of the First Infantry, saw combat in Mexico and then resigned.¹

Several other officers who had served at Fort Scott died away from the battlefield, including Benjamin A. Berry, Orren Chapman, Darius D. Clark, Winslow F. Sanderson, Alexander Morrow, Richard H. West, and Assistant Surgeons Alfred W. Kennedy and Richard French Simpson. Capt. Burdett A. Terrett of the First Dragoons was killed at Fort Scott by the accidental discharge of his pistol while dismounting on March 17, 1845. Philip Roots Thompson, honored for gallantry at Sacramento on February 1847, was cashiered on September 1855 and died less than two years later. Michael E. Van Buren, who served with the Mounted Rifles at Fort Scott, survived action in Mexico only to die July 20, 1854, of wounds received in battle with Comanche Indians near San Diego, Texas.

When the Civil War erupted in 1861, many of the men who served as officers at Fort Scott during its period of active operation in the 1840s and 1850s were graduates of the military academy at West Point and were still serving in the Army. Most of the officers from Southern states resigned their commissions and joined the Confederacy, but the majority continued to serve the federal government. About 440 West Point graduates remained in federal service when the war began, and they were soon joined by about one hundred and fifteen men who had resigned their commissions before the conflict started. Another 393 former Army officers joined state volunteer regiments. Their formal training and military experience had to be spread among the more than two thousand regiments eventually formed under the Union flag. Many of the West Pointers, including veterans of Fort Scott service, quickly moved into higher commands.²

One of the highest ranking alumni of Fort Scott was Brigadier General David A. Russell. The native New Yorker served at Fort Scott for two years as a second lieutenant in the First Infantry after graduation from West Point in 1845. Appointed colonel of the Seventh Massachusetts

¹ Officer biographies are from George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy*, 2 vols. (New York: J.F. Throw, 1891) and Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army from Its Organization, September 29, 1789 to March 2, 1902*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903). Several officers have their own biographical works.

² Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967), 229.

Volunteers in 1862, Russell won brevet promotion July 1862 for gallantry during the Peninsular Campaign. In August 1862, he was appointed major in the Eighth Infantry, and brigadier general in the U.S. Volunteers three months later. Russell fought at Gettysburg, where he was breveted colonel for his actions, and he was again in combat at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, winning promotion to brevet brigadier general for his actions at the Wilderness. Later he fought at Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Winchester, and the Shenandoah campaign. In his final action on September 19, 1864, Russell won posthumous promotion to major general in both the Regular Army and U.S. Volunteers for bravery at the battle of Opequan, Va. He was 42 when he was killed.

An 1850 West Point graduate, Lt. Eugene A. Carr's first assignment was in the Mounted Rifles. He served at a number of frontier outposts, including Fort Scott in 1852-53. After his transfer to the First Cavalry Regiment in 1855 Carr returned to duty in Kansas the following year. The New York native served with Union forces in Missouri during the first year of the war, and was breveted for his performance at Wilson's Creek. Carr also was involved in fighting at Pea Ridge in 1862, where he remained in combat despite three wounds, an action for which he later received the Congressional Medal of Honor. After combat in Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas, Carr ended the war as a brevet major general in the U.S. Army. Carr remained in the Army for another twenty years, serving on the frontier against the Indians. He retired in 1893 as a full brigadier general.³

Lieutenant James Carleton served at Fort Scott with the First Dragoons from 1845 to 1846, accompanying Stephen Kearny on the Rocky Mountain expedition of 1846. After transferring to the First U.S. Cavalry when the Civil War broke out, Carleton raised the California Column in the spring of 1862, leading it across the Yuma and Gila deserts to Mesilla on the Rio Grande to counter the Confederate threat to Arizona and New Mexico. Promoted to brigadier general, U.S. Volunteers in April of that year, he relieved Edward Canby as commander of the Department of New Mexico, and remained in charge to June 27, 1865. A fellow Dragoon officer who served at Fort Scott from 1842 to 1843, Lt. John Love was among the minority of native Virginians who continued to serve the Union. After resigning from the Army in 1853, Love returned to service as a major inspector general with the Indiana Volunteers in April 1861. He remained on active service before resigning in January 1863.⁴

Lieutenant George H. Gordon graduated from West Point in 1846 as a brevet second lieutenant, receiving his first assignment to the Regiment of Mounted Rifles. He served in several western posts, including Fort Scott in 1852-53. The Massachusetts native resigned his commission in October 1854 and practiced law, but when the war started the government appointed him as a colonel in the Second Massachusetts Infantry. He served in the Eastern theater, and later in Arkansas, Alabama, South Carolina and Florida. Appointed a brigadier general of U.S. Volunteers in 1862, and a brevet major general of volunteers in 1865, Gordon was mustered out in August 1865, returning to his Boston law practice until his death in 1886.

An 1822 graduate of the military academy, Lieutenant George A. McCall served in the Seminole War, rising to the rank of captain. He served with the Fourth Infantry when it was garrisoned at Fort Scott.

³ James T. King, *War Eagle, A Life of General Eugene A. Carr* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963).

⁴ Aurora Hunt, *Major General James Henry Carleton, 1814-1873, Western Frontier Dragoon* (Glendale, CA, A. H. Clark Co., 1958); Stewart Sifakis, *Who Was Who in the Civil War* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1988)

soned at Fort Scott in 1843-44 and 1844-45. The Pennsylvania native served during the Civil War as commander of the state's Reserve Corps. He commanded the unit in the Army of the Potomac, July 23, 1861 to June 9, 1862. McCall participated in combat during the Peninsular Campaign, and he commanded Union forces during the battle of Mechanicsville on June 26, 1862. During fighting at New Market Cross Roads four days later, he was captured while scouting his position. After his exchange for a Confederate general, McCall went on sick leave until his resignation on March 31, 1863.

Other officers enjoyed less colorful careers during the Civil War. Two were officers of the Regiment of Mounted Rifles stationed at Fort Scott from 1852 to 1853. Lieutenant Thomas Hendrickson, who started his Army career as a private in 1819, was commissioned a second lieutenant twenty years later and served as Fort Scott's commander during 1852. When the war started he was serving in the Third Infantry, receiving a brevet promotion for gallantry at Malvern Hill. He resigned a year later. Lieutenant Robert Emmet Patterson, a Pennsylvania native, went to Fort Scott a second lieutenant. After two years of sick leave he returned to duty in the west, finally resigning after six years service in 1857 to work as a cotton commission merchant in Philadelphia. He resumed his military career in 1861, rejoining the Army as a paymaster. Patterson was named a colonel in the 115th Pennsylvania Volunteers in 1862 and served in the Army of the Potomac until 1862, when he resigned and returned to Philadelphia as a cotton merchant.

Lieutenant Delos Bennet Sackett served on frontier duty with the First Dragoons after his 1845 graduation from West Point, and was assigned to Fort Scott during 1849. During the Civil War he served with the Second Cavalry and the Fifth Cavalry. Another First Infantry officer, Lieutenant George Weed Wallace, served at Fort Scott from 1845 to 1848. Promoted to captain in 1850 and major in 1862, Wallace was named a lieutenant colonel in the Twelfth Infantry in March 1866. Lieutenant Joseph Whittlesley was with the First Dragoons when the regiment was garrisoned at Fort Scott in 1846. The New York native began the Civil War in the First Cavalry. After a transfer to the Fifth Cavalry late in 1861 and promotion to major, he retired in November 1863.

Several officers were on duty away from their company while it was stationed at Fort Scott. Assigned to Fort Scott with the First Infantry from 1845 to 1847, Lieutenant James Nelson Caldwell never served at the post. The Ohio native, an 1840 West Point graduate, served as a major in the Eighteenth Infantry when he was recognized for gallantry at Murfreesboro in Central Tennessee. Ralph W. Kirkham, a Sixth Infantry captain, served in the quartermaster corps. Lieutenant Robert M. Morris, attached to the Regiment of Mounted Rifles, was honored for his service in the Southwest.

The post's longest-serving quartermaster, Captain Thomas Swords, graduated from West Point in 1829. The New York native served with the First Dragoons as quartermaster during his time at Fort Scott from 1842 to 1846. During the Mexican American War, Captain/Major Thomas Swords served as the Quartermaster General of General Stephen W. Kearny's Army of the West from 1846 to 1847. Then he was assigned to the Quartermaster General's office at Washington, D.C., from 1848 to 1850, St. Louis, Mo., for a year, and at New York City from 1852 through 1857. From New York City, he was transferred to California, where he served as the Chief Quartermaster. His assignment at the Department of the Pacific at San Francisco lasted from March 4, 1857 to September 10, 1861. He served as chief quartermaster of the Department of the Cumberland until Nov. 15, 1861, and in a similar post with the Department of the Ohio until May

30, 1863. Until Nov. 10, 1863, Swords was supervising Quartermaster of the Department of the Cumberland, and of the Department of the Ohio until January 17, 1865. He was breveted a brigadier general and a major general for his performance in the Quartermaster Corps. Swords retired from active service on February 22, 1869 after serving 40 years in the U.S. Army and died in his New York City home on March 20, 1886.⁵

Fort Scott also was a former post for two Surgeon Generals of the United States Army. Dr. William Alexander Hammond, a graduate of the Medical College of New York University, served at Fort Scott from 1847 to 1848, and then practiced in the frontier army until 1860, when he resigned to go into teaching and private practice. The former Army Assistant Surgeon relinquished his lucrative private practice and professorship at University of Maryland to rejoin the medical corps on May 28, 1861. Hammond was made responsible for establishing military hospitals in Maryland, and based on his early successes, he was named Surgeon General with the rank of brigadier general on April 25, 1862, replacing Col. C.A. Finley. He soon came into personal and professional conflicts with Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, and was ordered out of Washington, D.C., offices for inspection duties on Sept. 3, 1863. Stanton soon replaced him with Col. Joseph K. Barnes, another former Fort Scott surgeon. Hammond was later court-martialed and dismissed from the Army on Aug. 30, 1864. He started a practice in neurology, then in its infancy, and rapidly gained prominence as a teacher and clinician. By 1878 Hammond had acquired enough money to attempt to clear his military record. A Senate committee cleared his name the following year, vindicated the former Surgeon General, and placed him on the retired list with the rank of brigadier general.⁶

Dr. Joseph K. Barnes, his replacement as Surgeon General, was the medical officer at Fort Scott from 1851 to 1852. A medical graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Barnes entered military service as an assistant surgeon in 1840, and by the Civil War had been promoted to major. Barnes served as a medical inspector in a number of posts before becoming acting Surgeon General following Hammond's reassignment. After Hammond was dismissed from the Army in August 1864, the government promoted Barnes to brigadier general and was appointed as Surgeon General. Immediately after the Civil War, he directed the compilation and publication of the voluminous *Surgical and Medical History of the Civil War*. Barnes retired a year before his death in 1883, after having accomplished the singular medical feat of attending both Presidents Lincoln and Garfield in their last hours.⁷

Two other surgeons from Fort Scott's early days also served in the Union Army medical department. Dr. Josiah Simpson, post surgeon in 1842, was promoted to major surgeon in August 1855. He was breveted a lieutenant colonel and a colonel for his service. Dr. Levi H. Holden, post surgeon in 1852 to 1853, entered Civil War service as a major surgeon. He retired in 1868.

The outcome of the battle of Gettysburg, considered by most historians as the turning point of the war, was heavily influenced by several Fort Scott veterans. Second Lieutenant John Buford,

⁵ Harry C. Myers, ed., *From "The Crack Post of the Frontier:" Letters of Thomas and Charlotte Swords* (Fort Scott: Sekan Publications, n.d.), 1-5.

⁶ Harold L. Klawans, "Court-Martial of a Surgeon General," *MD* (April 1992), 103-116; Bonnie Ellen Blustein, *Preserve Your Love for Science: Life of William A. Hammond, American Neurologist* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁷ Sitakis, *Who was Who in the Civil War*.

a native of Kentucky, served with the Second Dragoons when he was stationed at Fort Scott from 1848 to 1849. Fourteen years later, the then-brigadier general of U.S. Volunteers commanded the two brigades of mounted troops that initiated the fighting on July 1, 1863, the first of three days fighting at Gettysburg. His quick recognition of the situation and spirited command in defense helped hold back Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill's divisions, allowing time for the Union Army to regroup and fortify the heights south of the town.⁸

Captain Sidney Burbank of the First Infantry Regiment commanded Fort Scott for half of 1845 and from April 1846 to September 1848. In the Civil War, he became a lieutenant colonel in the Thirteenth Infantry, joining the Second Infantry as a colonel in September 1862. Burbank served on administrative duties until May 1863, when he was given regimental command. He led them into combat at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Burbank's men fought in the Wheatfield on the second day of Gettysburg, suffering almost 50 percent casualties as they delayed Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's advance. The regiment won praise for its steadiness under fire, and provided time for the Union army to push troops up to the top of Round Top and Little Round Top. Burbank won a brevet promotion to brigadier general for his performance.

Leading one of Lee's corps at Gettysburg was Maj. Gen. Richard S. Ewell. After graduating from West Point in 1840 (thirteenth in the class of forty-two, where he was a classmate of William T. Sherman, Ewell was assigned to the First Dragoons and stationed at Fort Scott intermittently with escort and patrol duties from 1842 to 1845. After serving in the war against Mexico, Ewell returned to frontier duties, serving across the west. He resigned his commission May 7, 1861, to join the Confederacy, and began service as a lieutenant colonel in the Corps of Cavalry. Ewell, known to his men as "Old Baldy," saw action at First Bull Run before serving under Maj. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Ewell fought at Seven Days and Cedar Mountain before losing a leg at Groveton, one of the opening struggles in Second Bull Run. After a year-long recovery, he returned to duty and was promoted to commander of part of Jackson's old corps after his former commander was killed at Chancellorsville in May. At the second battle of Winchester he won a stunning victory and stirred memories of Jackson, but his reputation was destroyed at Gettysburg. Arriving late on the first day, his troops crushed the right flank of the Union army and pushed the survivors back through the city's streets. On the verge of victory, Jackson's fighting spirit suddenly left Ewell, and he rejected subordinates' pleas to advance onto the heights of Cemetery Ridge and Culp Hill, handing the tactical advantage to the North. During the second day's fighting, Lee ordered Ewell's corps to advance in support of Longstreet's attack, but again Ewell failed in a crucial moment. After the Confederate retreat back to Virginia, Ewell recorded several minor victories, but wounds and other injuries forced him from field duty. From June 27, 1864, to the end of the war, he commanded the Department of Richmond. Following the conflict, he retired to a Tennessee farm.⁹

Another veteran of the Mounted Rifles who served with the regiment at Fort Scott from 1852 to 1853, Lieutenant Laurence Simmons Baker followed his native North Carolina out of the

⁸ Edward G. Longacre. *General John Buford* (Conshohocken, PA : Combined Books, 1995); Warren W. Hassler, Jr., *Crisis at the Crossroads: The First Day at Gettysburg* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1970).

Union on May 10, 1861. The West Point graduate, class of 1851, was appointed a lieutenant colonel of cavalry in command of the Ninth North Carolina Cavalry, and served under Gen. J.E.B. Stuart. After promotion to colonel in March 1862, Baker fought at Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, Frederick City, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. His bravery at Brandy Station in June 1863, where he was seriously wounded, brought a promotion to brigadier general. He was assigned to the War Department of the Second Military District of South Carolina in 1864. He commanded troops that confronted Sherman at Savannah and August in late 1864. After fighting Sherman, Baker was given departmental command in North Carolina. He surrendered after Richmond fell and was paroled in May 1865, going on to a career in life insurance and farming after the war, and dying on April 10, 1907.¹⁰

Graduated from West Point in 1837, Lieutenant Robert Hall Chilton served at Fort Scott as a second lieutenant in Company C, First Dragoons, from May 30, 1842 to May 2, 1843. Named a lieutenant colonel in the Confederate army, he joined Lee's staff a few days after Lee took over the Army of Northern Virginia. Chilton rose to head the staff, and acted as such during the battles of the Seven Days, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. Named a brigadier general late in 1862, he reverted to his previous rank of lieutenant colonel when the Confederate Senate refused to confirm the appointment. Disappointed by the rejection, he continued to serve Lee for another year, but his request of relief from field duty was finally approved on April 1, 1864, and he spent the remainder of the war in Richmond as an inspector. After Appomattox, he moved to Georgia and ran a manufacturing firm, dying in 1879.

A Missouri native, Captain John G. Walker was assigned to the Mounted Rifles when he was stationed at Fort Scott from Nov. 1, 1852 to April 22, 1853. He resigned from the Army in 1861 to be commissioned major of Confederate cavalry, winning promotion to brigadier general in January 1862. During the Second Bull Run campaign, Walker served as division commander in Southside, Va., joining the Army of Northern Virginia for the Antietam campaign. In November 1862, he was promoted to the rank of major general, and over the next two years he commanded a division in the District of West Louisiana. Walker later commanded the district and later was in charge of the combined district of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Immediately after the war he fled to Mexico, eventually returning to become a U.S. diplomat in Colombia. He died July 20, 1893.¹¹

Other men served the Confederacy with less distinction. Lieutenant Thomas Claiborne, who served in the Regiment of Mounted Rifles when he was stationed at Fort Scott from 1852 to 1853, joined the Confederacy in May 1861, and served in the cavalry through the war. Lieutenant Edmunds Balard Holloway served with Company C of the Fourth Infantry Regiment when he was stationed at Fort Scott from 1843 to 1845. In May 1861 he resigned from the U.S. Army and joined the Confederate forces in Missouri as a member of the Missouri State Guard. He was accidentally killed on June 17, 1861.

⁹ Percy G. Hamlin, *The Making of a Soldier: Letters of General R.S. Ewell* (Richmond, Va., Whittet and Shepperson, 1935); Donald C. Pfanz, *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

¹⁰ Jon L. Wakelyn, *Biographical Dictionary of the Confederacy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 85.

¹¹ Mark M. Boatner, *The Civil War Dictionary*, rev. ed. (New York: David McKay Company, 1988), 885.

UNITS STATIONED AT FORT SCOTT

Frontier Years, 1842-1853

First Dragoons

Company A May 30, 1842 to June 4, 1846
Company C May 30, 1842 to May 2, 1843
Company F Nov. 19, 1848 to August 1850

First Infantry

Company B July 14, 1845 to Oct. 3, 1848

Fourth Infantry

Company C May 3, 1843 to July 21, 1845
Company D Oct. 23, 1842 to July 21, 1845

Sixth Infantry

Company H Sept. 29, 1848 to April 22, 1853

Mounted Riflemen

Company A Nov. 1, 1852 to April 22, 1853
Company K Nov. 1, 1852 to April 22, 1853

Bleeding Kansas, 1857-1861

First Cavalry

Company E Dec. 21, 1857 to Jan. 10, 1858
Company F Dec. 21, 1857 to Jan. 10, 1858
Company C Feb. 26, 1858 to May 17, 1858
Company I Feb. 26, 1858 to May 17, 1858

Third Artillery

Company E Feb. 26, 1858 to May 17, 1858
June 9, 1858 to Aug. 5, 1858

Second Infantry

Company B June 9, 1858 to Aug. 5, 1858
Dec. 20, 1860 to Feb. 1, 1861
Company D June 9, 1858 to Aug. 5, 1858
Dec. 20, 1858 to Feb. 1, 1861

Bleeding Kansas, 1857-1861

General William S. Harney and Staff

Dec. 3, 1860 to Dec. 11, 1860

Second Dragoons

Company C Dec. 3, 1861 to January 1861

Company K Dec. 3, 1861 to January 1861

U.S. Artillery

One Section Dec. 3, 1861 to January 1861

Civil War, 1861-1865

1861

July 1861

Sixth Kansas Cavalry

August 1861

Third Kansas Infantry

Fourth Kansas Infantry

Fifth Kansas Infantry Co. A

Co. F

Co. B

Co. C

Co. E

Sixth Kansas Cavalry

Tenth Kansas Cavalry

First Battery Light Artillery

September 1861

Fifth Kansas Infantry

Sixth Kansas Cavalry

Ninth Kansas Cavalry Co. C

First Battery Light Artillery

October 1861

Fifth Kansas Infantry

Sixth Kansas Cavalry

First Battery Light Artillery

November 1861

Fifth Kansas Infantry Co. A
 Co. F
 Co. B
 Co. C
 Co. E

Sixth Kansas Cavalry
First Battery Light Artillery

December 1861

Fifth Kansas Infantry Co. A
 Co. F
 Co. B
 Co. C
 Co. E

Sixth Kansas Cavalry
First Battery Light Artillery

1862

March 1862

Second Ohio Volunteer Cavalry
Ninth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry
Rabb's Battery

June 1862

Third Wisconsin Cavalry Co. C
 Co. F
 Co. I
 Co. M

July 1862

Third Wisconsin Cavalry Co. F
 Co. I
 Co. M

August 1862

Third Wisconsin Cavalry Co. C
 Co. F
 Co. I
 Co. M

September 1862

Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. F
	Co. I
	Co. M
First U.S. Infantry	Co. E
	Co. F
Second Battery Light Artillery	

October 1862

First U.S. Infantry	Co. E
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. I
	Co. M
Second Battery Light Artillery	

November 1862

First U.S. Infantry	Co. E
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C
	Co. G
	Co. I
	Co. M
Second Battery Light Artillery	

December 1862

First U.S. Infantry	Co. E
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C
	Co. G
	Co. I
	Co. M
Second Kansas Battery	Center Section

1863

January 1863

First U.S. Infantry	Co. E
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C
	Co. G
	Co. I
	Co. M
Second Kansas Battery	Center Section

February 1863

Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C Co. G Co. I Co. M
12th Kansas Infantry	Co. B Co. E Co. F
Second Kansas Battery	Center Section

March 1863

Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C Co. G Co. M
12th Kansas Infantry	Co. B Co. E Co. F
Second Kansas Battery	Center Section

April 1863

Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C Co. G Co. M
12th Kansas Infantry	Co. B Co. E Co. F
Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. G
Second Kansas Cavalry	
Second Kansas Battery	Center Section

May 1863

Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C Co. G. Co. I Co. M
Sixth Kansas Cavalry	
13th Kansas Cavalry	
12th Kansas Infantry	Co. B Co. E Co. F
Second Colorado Infantry	Six Companies

June 1863

Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. B
	Co. C
	Co. G
	Co. H
	Co. I
	Co. M
Sixth Kansas Cavalry	Co. L
Second Kansas Battery	
12th Kansas Infantry	Co. B
	Co. E
	Co. F

July 1863

Second Kansas Cavalry	
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. C
	Co. F
	Co. D
Sixth Kansas Cavalry	Co. L
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D

August 1863

Fourteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. B
	Co. E
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. H
Indian Home Guard	Co. C
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
Eighty-Third U.S.C.T.	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. E
Sixth Kansas Cavalry	Co. F
Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. G

November 1863

Tenth Kansas Infantry	Co. H
	Co. K
Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. L
Eleventh Kansas Cavalry	Co. F

	Fourteenth Kansas Infantry	Co. C
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
		Co. C
		Co. F
		Co. G
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
December 1863		
	Tenth Kansas Infantry	Co. H
		Co. K
	Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. L
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
		Co. C
		Co. D
		Co. F
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
1864		
January 1864		
	Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. L
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
		Co. I
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
		Co. C
		Co. D
		Co. F
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
	Fort Leavenworth	Post Battery
February 1864		
	Eleventh Kansas Cavalry	Co. C
		Co. F
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
		Co. E
		Co. I
		Co. L
		Co. N
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A

		Co. C
		Co. D
		Co. F
		Co. N
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
March 1864	Ninth Kansas Cavalry	Co. L
	Eleventh Kansas Cavalry	Co. C
		Co. F
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
		Co. B
		Co. I
		Co. L
		Co. N
	Sixth Kansas Cavalry	Co. F
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
		Co. C
		Co. D
		Co. F
		Co. N
April 1864	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
	Eleventh Kansas Cavalry	Co. F
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
		Co. L
May 1864	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
		Co. L
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
June 1864	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
		Co. L
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

July 1864	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D Co. L
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
August 1864	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D Co. L
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
September 1864	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. A Co. B Co. C Co. D Co. F Co. J Co. K Co. L Co. N
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
	Eleventh Kansas Cavalry	Co. B Co. D
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
October 1864	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D Co. L
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A Co. C Co. D Co. F Co. N
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section
November 1864	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D Co. L
	Sixteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. D
	Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A Co. C Co. D Co. F Co. N
	Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

December 1864

Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. N
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

1865

January

Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. B
	Co. D
	Co. E
	Co. F
	Co. I
	Co. L
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. N
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

February 1865

Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. B
	Co. D
	Co. E
	Co. F
	Co. I
	Co. L
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. N
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

May 1865	Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Inf.	Co. A Co. B Co. D Co. E Co. I
	Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. B Co. K Co. N
	Ninth Wisconsin Battery	Right Section
June 1865	Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Inf.	Co. A Co. B Co. E Co. K
	Ninth Wisconsin Battery	Right Section
July 1865	Forty-Eighth Wisconsin Inf.	Co. A Co. B Co. B Co. K
	Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry	Co. D
	Ninth Wisconsin Battery	Right Section
August 1865	Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry	Co. I Co. N
September 1865	Seventeenth Illinois Cavalry	Co. I Co. N

Post of Southeastern Kansas, 1869-1873

Sixth U.S. Infantry

Co. A September 1869 to October 1871
 Co. G September 1869 to July 1870
 Co. I September 1869 to October 1871
 Co. K September 1869 to April 1870

Seventh U.S. Cavalry

Co. A November 1869 to March 1871

Fifth U.S. Infantry

Co. B September 1869 to April 1873
 Co. C September 1869 to September 1872

Sixth U.S. Cavalry

Co. E November 1871 to April 1873

December 1864

Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. N
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

1865

January

Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. B
	Co. D
	Co. E
	Co. F
	Co. I
	Co. L
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. N
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

February 1865

Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry	Co. B
	Co. D
	Co. E
	Co. F
	Co. I
	Co. L
Third Wisconsin Cavalry	Co. A
	Co. C
	Co. D
	Co. F
	Co. N
Second Kansas Battery	Right Section

1855 PUBLIC AUCTION

Account of Sales of Buildings and Other Public Property at Fort Scott, Kansas Territory,
April 16, 1855

No.	Names	Description	Amount
1	Wm. Barbee	Log Crib, Log ox shed, & rails enclosing The same, near Saw Mill	\$ 16.00
2	John Conner	2 log huts & rails enclosing them	5.00
3	A. Masters	1 log hut near Mill bank	2.50
4	A. Masters	Saw Mill	50.00
5	Wm. Barbee	1 log hut on hill outside of enclosure	1.50
6	H. T. Wilson	Blacksmith shop & Roothouse, near Sutler Store	25.00
7	James Kill	Stone Sink, near Sutler Store	6.00
8	James Kill	Rails enclosing 126 acre lot	65.00
9	Thomas Watkins	Hay Scale House	50.00
10	B.F. Hill	Rails enclosing small lot in front of hay scale & 2 gates one near Hay Scale House	5.50
11	John Linn	4 log huts & rails enclosing them near hay scale	19.50
12	Wm. Barbee	Log (Slaughter) hut & pump	1.00
13	John Linn	Small sheds & rails enclosing, opposite side of creek from slaughter hut	11.00
14	Robert Kill	Log hut near ox yard	2.00
15	J. M. Linn	Rails enclosing ox yard, with shed enclosed	13.00
16	Wm. Barbee	Roothouse & Stone Sink, S.E. corner of garrison	2.00
17	John Hamilton	Rails enclosing garden & Hut, opposite side of creek, East corner of garrison	14.00
18	John Hamilton	Log hut near Bake House	6.00
19	D.F. De Wint	Small lot of rails in rear of 4 th off. Qrts	4.00
20	James Kill	Bake House	70.00
21	Thomas Watkins	9 large posts	4.00
22	T. F. Whitlock	Qr. M. Stable & shed, Corn Crib & shops	405.00
23	H. T. Wilson	Blacksmith Shop & Carpenter Shop (wood)	60.00
24	H. T. Wilson	loose lumber in shop	11.00
25	James Kill	Qr. Mrs. & Subsistence Store House	134.00
26	James Kill	Company quarters East corner	200.00
27	J. M. Mitchell	Guardhouse	151.00
28	H. T. Wilson	Well cover & posts	28.00
29	T.S. Dodge	Magazine	50.00
30	T. F. Whitlock	Case of drawers in hospital	20.00

31	C. T. Hayden	Copper boiler in hospital	5.00
32	T. F. Whitlock	Hospital	400.00
33	T. S. Dodge	Compy Quarters, West Cor	300.00
34	T. S. Dodge	Stable	200.00
35	Geo. Oldham	Compy Quarters, N.W. Cor	200.00
36	Wm. Barbee	Adjts office & gun house	200.00
37	A. Hornbeck	1 st block offrs quarters	350.00
38	H. T. Wilson	2d block offrs quarters	300.00
39	G. M. Stratten	3d block offrs quarters	505.00
40	C. Mitchell & T.S. Burgess	4 th block offrs quarters	425.00
41	D.F. De Wint	Smoke House in rear of 4 th off Qrts	10.00
42	G.M. Stratten	Smoke House in rear of 3d off Qrts	10.00
43	H.T. Wilson	Smoke House in rear of 2d off Qrts	5.00
44	H. Procter	Rails enclosing 2 small (?) in rear of Adjts office	4.50
45	James Miller	Ice house & 2 loghouses near Ord. Sergt. Qrts	5.00
46	T. Shoemaker	Hut occup by Ord Sergt & shed in enclosure, rails enclosing	60.00
47	T. Shoemaker	Rails round Ord Sergt garden	10.00
48	Geo. Oldham	12 bunks in north set of Barracks	2.50
49	T.S. Dodge	10 bunks in west set of Barracks	2.50
50	B.F. Dodge	Small Building	1.00
51	B.F. Dodge	Fence enclosing Parade Grounds	11.00
52	John Herford	Lightning rod & staff & Flag staff	1.00
53	Peter Duncan	Wardrobe in east end 4 th block	9.00
54	T.S. Burgess	Sideboard in east end 4 th block	13.00
55	D.F. De Wint	Sideboard & Wardrobe in North End 4 th block	13.00
56	A. Masters	Wardrobe in east end 3 rd block	10.00
57	A. Margrave	Sideboard in east end 3 rd block	11.00
58	D.F. Greenwood	Sideboard & Wardrobe in Nth end 3 rd block	28.00
59	H.T. Wilson	2 Wardrobes & 2 Sideboards in 2 nd block	60.00
60	A. Hornbeck	1 Wardrobe & 1 Sideboard E. end 1 st block	25.00
61	Wm. Barbee	1 Wardrobe & 1 Sideboard North end 1 st block	25.00
62	S.A. Williams	Large table in Hospital	4.00
63	H. Bloomfield	Benches in Hospital	1.50
64	Wm. Barbee	Benches in Hospital	1.50

65	S.A. Williams	Ladder	1.00
66	B.F. Hill	Bottles	1.00
67	A. Hornbeck	Tables & Benches in North Brks	3.00
68	Wm. Barbee	Tables & Benches in West Brks	4.00
69	B.F. Hill	Tables & Benches in East Brks	1.00
70	D. Bloomfield	10 Bunks in East Brks	1.00
71	T.F. Whitlock	Small lot Stair posts	5.00
72	Cash	Small table in Hosp	.50
73	Cash	2 old Sabre blades	.50
74	J. Conner	Boxes &c belonging to Co. A, 1 st Drags	<u>4.50</u>
			\$4,666.00
		Deduct 5% Auctions fee	<u>233.30</u>
			\$4,432.70

1865 PUBLIC AUCTION

All of the structures built in Fort Scott by the Army were sold by the Quartermaster Department late in 1865. The structures were described in two documents: a notice advertising the sale, and a complaint filed by several Fort Scott residents, led by Hiero T. Wilson, concerning the rent paid on the land occupied by the buildings. According to an Army investigation, the land owners assumed they would come into possession of the improvements at the end of hostilities.¹

1. Post stable, 71 by 25 feet, shed attached, located on Block 121
2. Mess house, 55 by 20 ½ feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, 2 rooms plastered, 10-foot shed attached, on Block 137
3. House, for Keeper of Mess house, 32 by 16 feet, 10 feet high, boards, set upright and battened, shingle roof, 2 rooms plastered, on Block 137
4. Forage Office, 26 by 14 feet, 10 feet high, weather boarded, shingle roof, 2 rooms plastered, in forage yard, Blocks 65 and 127-28
5. Two corn cribs, 28 by 12 feet each, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, in forage yard, Blocks 65 and 127-28
6. Four corn cribs, 30 by 12 feet each, 10 feet high, lathed, shingle roof, in forage yard, Blocks 65 and 127-28
7. Hay Press Building, 60 by 38 ½ feet, 14 feet high, boards set upright, shingle roof, pine floor in loft, located in forage yard, Blocks 65 and 127-28
8. Fence, around forage yard, 1,932 by 5 ½ feet, solid plank, Blocks 65 and 127-28
9. Military Prison, 80 by 20 feet, 15 feet high, 2 floors, logs 8 inches thick, shingle roof, located on the 80 acres donated to government
10. Prison Office, 16 by 12 feet, 9 feet high, weather boarded, shingle roof, one room plastered, located on the 80 acres donated to government
11. Fuel Office, 18 by 14 feet, 9 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, 2 rooms plastered, located in the wood and coal yard, Blocks 65, 66 and 68
12. Ice House, 37 by 50 feet, 10 feet high, planks laid length-wise inside and out, shingle roof, located on Block 1 (near old Officers Row)
13. Blacksmith Shop, 40 by 26 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, on Block 3 (on southeast side of the old parade)
14. Store House, 40 by 17 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, attached to the blacksmith shop, Block 3
15. Building, 50 by 27 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, attached to the blacksmith shop, Block 3

¹ Unidentified newspaper clipping, Nov. 24, 1865, cited in Erwin Thompson, *Fort Scott, Kansas: Site Identification and Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: Division of History, National Park Service, 1967), 194-96.

16. Shed, attached to No. 15, for shoeing horses, 27 by 12 feet, planked and shingled, Block 3
17. Repairing Shop, 50 by 16 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof. (This may have been the wagon shop, if so it was also on Block 3; if not, location unknown)
18. Storeroom Shed, 26 by 16 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, location unknown
19. Fence, around fuel yard, 1,290 by 5 six-inch boards high, Blocks 65, 66 and 68
20. Sexton's Building, 14 by 14 feet, 9 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, located in military (national) cemetery
21. Corrals, located on the 80 donated acres
22. Lunette Henning, composed of log blockhouse, octagonal, 14-foot diameter, 2 floors, weather-boarded, shingle roof, enclosed by a log palisade, 342 feet long, 9 feet high (6½ feet above ground), 6 inches thick, located near present intersection of Second and National
23. Lunette Insley, composed of a "double" log blockhouse, 32 by 20 feet, 15 feet high, 2 floors, weather-boarded, shingle roof, enclosed by a log palisade 326 feet long, 9 feet high (6½ feet above ground, 6 inches thick, near point of the bluff on which old fort was located. Site obliterated.
24. Hospital, for civilian employees, 32 by 16 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, 2 rooms plastered, location unknown
25. Stable for mules, 171 by 24 feet, 10 feet high, boards set upright and battened, shingle roof, a 12-foot shed attached, location unknown

Depot Quartermaster Office¹

¹National Archives Microfilm No. 3, Frame 365-66, Fort Scott National Historic Site archives.

Fort Scott Kansas June 30 1865

Maj. Gen. M.C. Meigs
Quartermaster General USA
Washington DC

General:

I have the honor to transmit herewith enclosed Special Report of vacant lots and property taken and occupied by the Q.M.'s Dept. at this post for Gov't purposes, under the provision of Gen Ord No. 8 series of 1864 Qr. Mt. Gen'l office.

The best interests of the service required the use of this property, as reported, and in justice to the owners thereof, who are loyal men and good citizens, reasonable compensation should be made therefore.

I will thank you to notify me of your actions on the report.

Very Respectfully

Your Obedient Servant

M.N. Insley

Capt. & AQM USA

Special Report of vacant lots and property taken and occupied by the Quartermaster's Department at Fort Scott Kansas, for Government purposes under the provisions of Gen. Ord. No. 8, Series of 1864, Q.M.G.O. by Captain M.N. Insley A.Q.M. U.S.A. June 30 1865

Date When Taken	Description of Property Owned	By Whom	For what Purpose	No. & kind of Building	Cost to U.S.	Remarks
June 1 1862	Lot 1 Block 68 Lots 2,4,6,8,10, & 12 Blk 66 Lots 1,3,5,7,9,11 Blk 65 and part of Lots 2,4,6,8,10, 12 Block 65	Hiero T. Wilson	Wood & Coal Yard	1 office for Fuel Master	25.00	
Nov 1 "	Lots 3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11,12 Block 121	"	Post Stables	Stable for Post Teams	25.00	
" 1 "	Lot 2 Block 137	"	Mess	1 Temporary House Wooden Building	5.00	For Post teamsters & laborers
May 1, 1864	Lots 1,2,3,4,5,6, 7,8,9,10,11,12 Block 127 Lots 1,2,3,4,5, 6,7,8,9,10,11,12 Block 128 Lots 7,8,9,10,11,12 Blk 65 part of lots 2,4,6,8,10,12 Blk. 65	"	Forage Yard & Hay Press	5 Corn Crib 1 office for Forage Master 1 Building	30.00	
Oct 1 1862	Lots 6,7,8,9 Block 3	"	Blacksmith & Wagon Shops		25.00	
Nov 1 1863	Lot 9 Block 1	"	Ice House		5.00	For Post Hospital&c
Oct 1 1861	80 Acres	"	Camping	One Military Guard House		The best camping ground that could be obtained adjacent to the depot
June 1 1863	80 Acres	J.E.Dillion	Corrals	No Buildings		By agreement, the Gov't to pay the rents to June 1, 1865, at which time the property was to revert to the owner

I certify that the above is correct and just; that the interest of the service required that I should occupy the above mentioned lands and premises for the purpose therein specified and that the prices, as reported, are reasonable.
A True Copy

M.N. Insley, Capt & A.Q.M. USA
(Furnished to Hiero T. Wilson ESQ. for his information)

The Archeology of Fort Scott

Kansas State Historical Society conducted a series of archeological investigations at Fort Scott from 1968 to 1972. All of the excavations were under the direct supervision of Thomas P. Barr, Society archeologist. Thomas A. Witty, Jr., state archeologist, was overall project supervisor. The archeological investigations were just part of the Society's contributions; during the 1970s, Barr was intensively involved in the structure's restoration and reconstruction of the post's structures.¹

1968: The research contract of 1968 specified that the Society was to test and/or excavate Historic Structures 1 through 17, 30, 31 and 32. The work was to serve as an aid in locating and delineating structural features for eventual stabilization, restoration, or reconstruction. A Society archeologist first formally visited Fort Scott on Feb. 12, 1968. The Society undertook its first excavations during May 1968. The work centered around the suspected location of HS-17, the Powder Magazine. Excavation revealed portions of the footing trench of an octagonal structure.

1968-69: The Society resumed its investigations at Fort Scott in September 1968, and worked until the following January. The first structure investigated was the east half of HS-4, Officer's Quarters no. 4. A second officer's quarters, HS-3, was investigated after removal in November 1968 of a house built on the site around 1900. Society archeologists also researched the location of HS-11, the Post Headquarters and Ordnance Storehouse. Construction of basements had eradicated most of the original foundations for both buildings, but portions of the foundation walls and footings were studied. Archeology crews investigated the area east of HS-6 and found secondary structures associated with the Infantry Barracks, including a latrine drainage system. Excavations around the Hospital Building, HS-8, uncovered the flagstone verandah surrounding the building. Work near the alleged location of HS-33, the wagon scale house, found isolated artifacts but no evidence of a building foundation.

1970: A short field season in September provided Park Service historical architects with information about four fort structures. Excavations inside HS-8 identified stone and brick remnants of the chimney foundations. Researchers conducted a preliminary investigation near HS-15, the Well Canopy, while a reconnaissance of HS-14, the Bake House, uncovered an oven foundation.

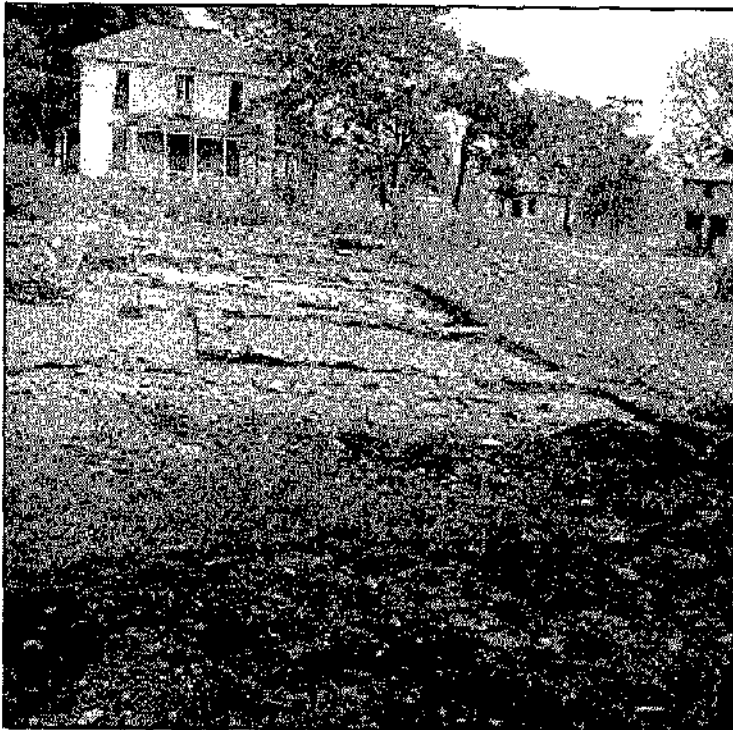
1971: Extensive excavations from June through August focused on three structures: HS-6 and HS-7, the Infantry Barracks, and HS-9, the Guardhouse. Archeologists found a number of in situ artifacts at HS-9. Construction had heavily damaged the foundation structure for the two barracks buildings, but portions of the original structures were found.

1972: From April through July, Society archeologists led excavations at HS-5, the Dragoon Barracks, HS-10, Dragoon Stables, HS-13, Quartermaster Stables, HS-15, and HS-16, the Flagpole. The entire stone footings for HS-5 were found to be nearly complete, while modern construction had eradicated all but the northeast corner of HS-10. Archeological investigations near HS-13 were limited to cross-section tests. Excavations near HS-15 revealed major portions of the foundation, while investigations in the presumed location of HS-16 failed to find evidence of a flagpole foundation.

¹ John D. Reynolds, *Archeological Investigations at Old Fort Scott, 14B0302, Fort Scott, Kansas, 1968 to 1972*. Omaha, NE: National Park Service, Midwest Region, April 1983.



HS-4, Sept. 20, 1968: Investigating east foundation of HS-4 (Officers Quarters). View looking south, with Lincoln Avenue in the background.



HS-6, July 9, 1971: Investigating the foundation of HS-6 (Infantry Barracks) on the east side of the Parade Grounds. Background buildings include, from left to right, HS-12 (Quartermaster's Storehouse), HS-14 (Post Bakery), and HS-30 (Stone/Trade Building).



HS-7, June 1971: Initial investigation of HS-7 (Infantry Barracks) on the south side of the Parade Ground. View looking west toward the Kansas Gas and Electric Building and substation.



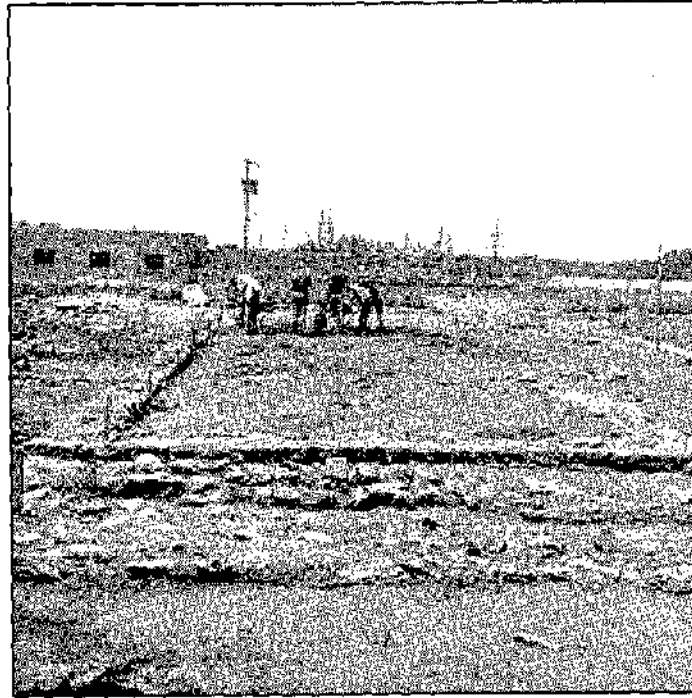
HS-7, June 1971: Ongoing investigation. Approximately the same view as above photograph.



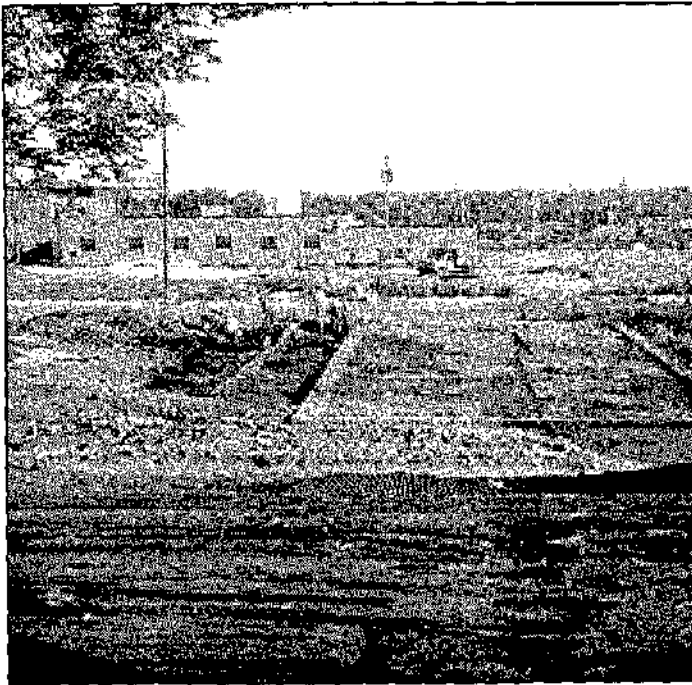
HS-7, June 1971: Ongoing investigation. View of the east end of the excavation, looking south with rear of the buildings on Market Street in the background.



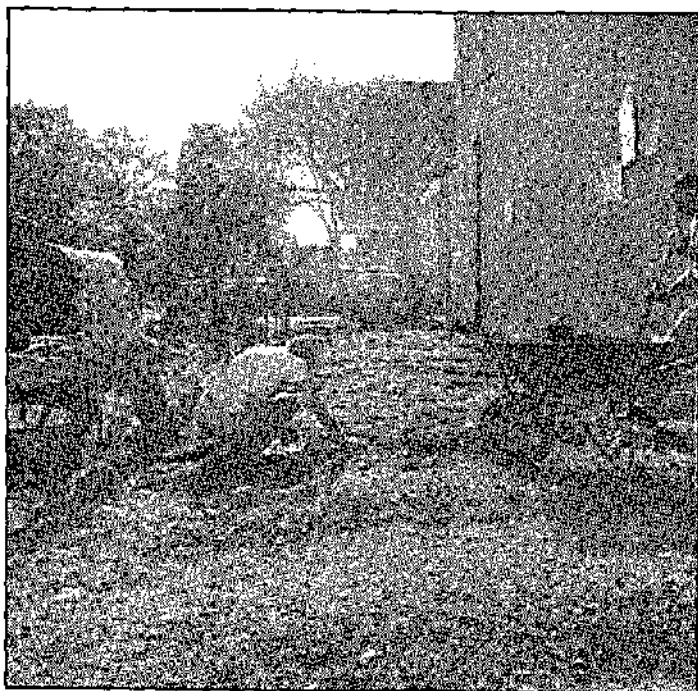
HS-7, June 1971: Continued excavation of the east side feature that is on the outside of the building foundation. View is looking south, similar to above photograph.



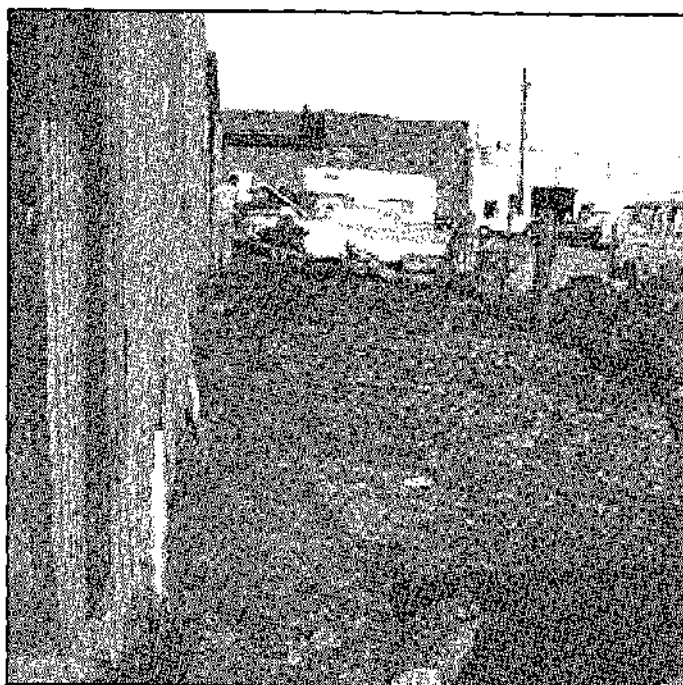
HS-7, June 1971: Excavation of the west side of the building foundation. View looking west, with KG&E building, KG&E substation and roof of Bruce Marble Works in the background.



HS-7, June 25, 1971: Excavating southwest corner of the building foundation. View looking west. Marmaton Avenue going from left (south) to right (north) almost immediately adjacent to the west side of the building foundation. KG&E building and substation in background.



HS-8, Oct. 15, 1968: Excavating porch along north (Parade Ground) side of Post Hospital building. View is looking east. Rear (west) side of city jail (brick structure) is in background.



HS-8, Oct. 15, 1968: View of excavated porch looking west. Winchel Manufacturing Company buildings on the west side of Marmaton Avenue in background.



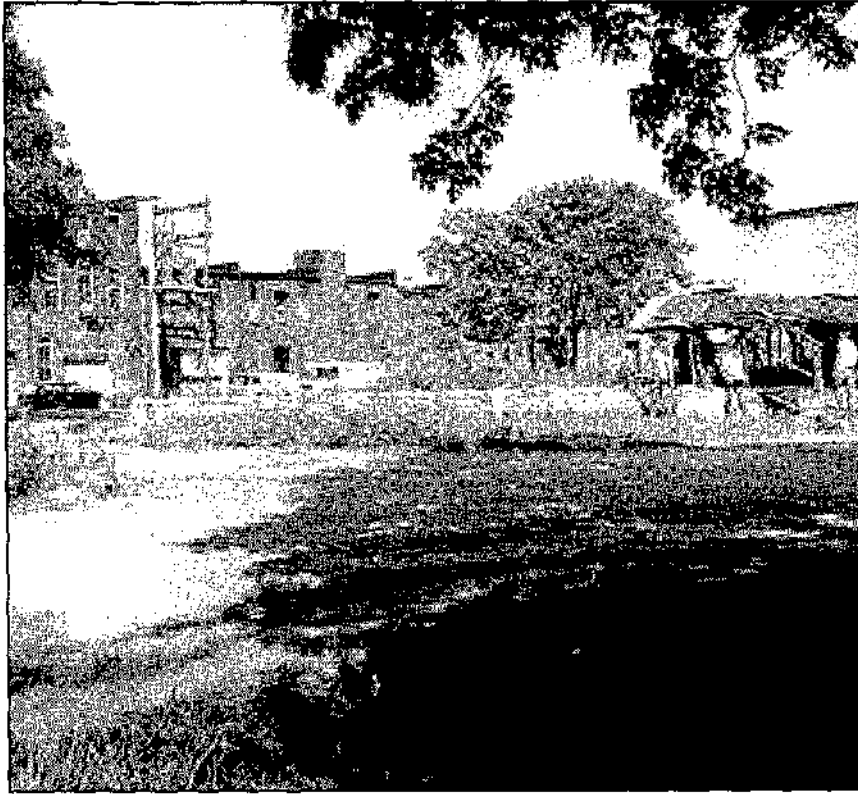
HS-8, Sept. 16, 1970: West side of the ground level of the Post Hospital looking north toward the Parade Ground. Majority of the west stone chimney foundation is visible.



HS-8, Sept. 16, 1970: East side of the interior of the Post Hospital, looking north toward the Parade Ground. View of excavated east chimney foundation.



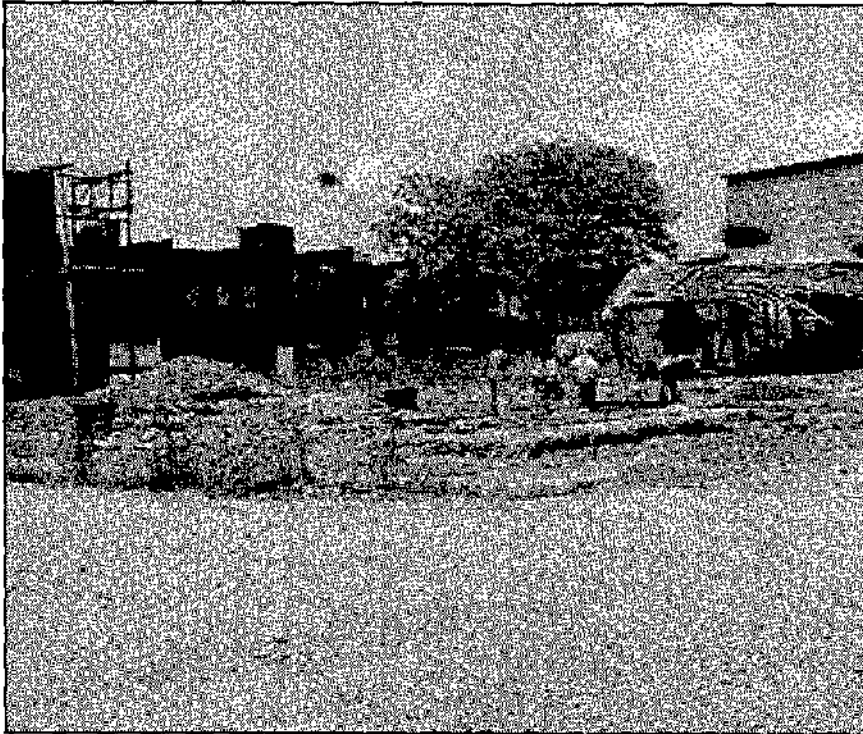
HS-8, Sept. 16, 1970: Interior of Post Hospital, view to the east.



HS-9, June 1971: View to the southwest. Initial excavation. Note, stone foundation of razed city jail is still in place. East side of HS-8 (covered with galvanized tin roofing) is visible in the right of the photograph. Rear of the buildings that fronted on Market Street are in the background.

HS-9, June 1971:
View to the southwest. Removing stone foundation of razed city jail.

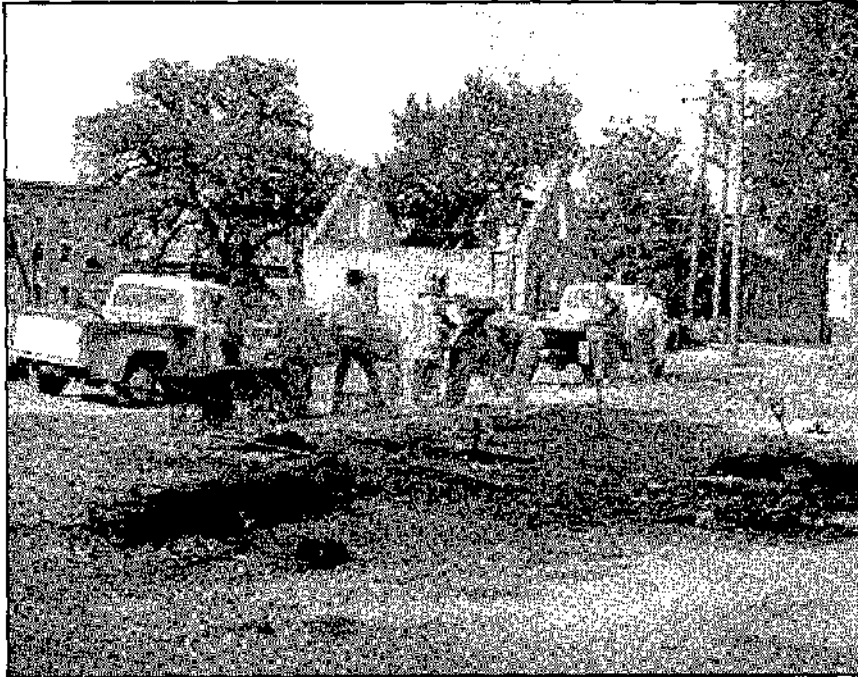




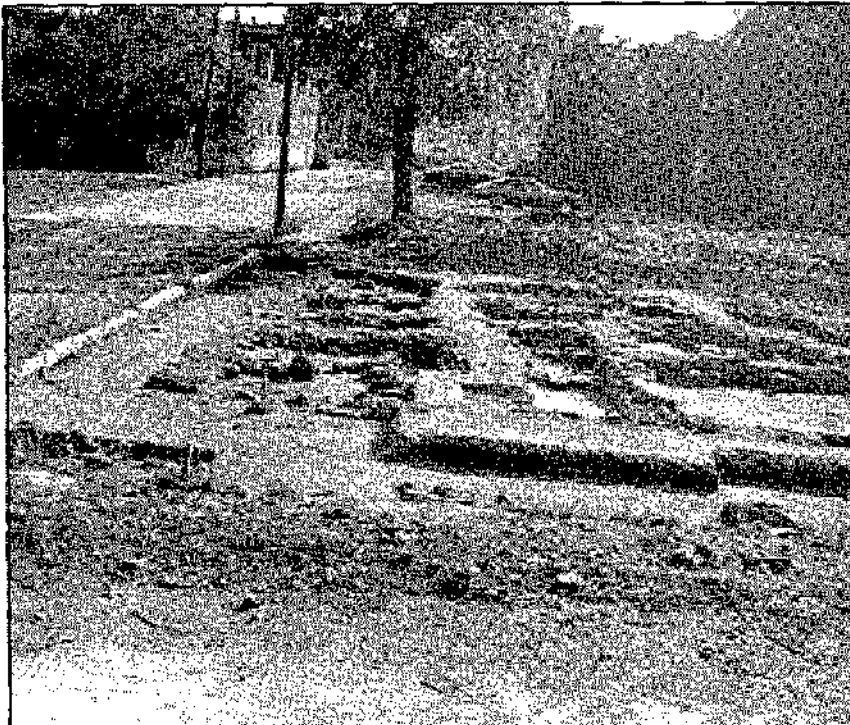
HS-9, June 1971: View to the southwest. Foundation of the original guardhouse uncovered. HS-8 (Post Hospital/Visitor Center) covered with galvanized tin roofing is at extreme right.



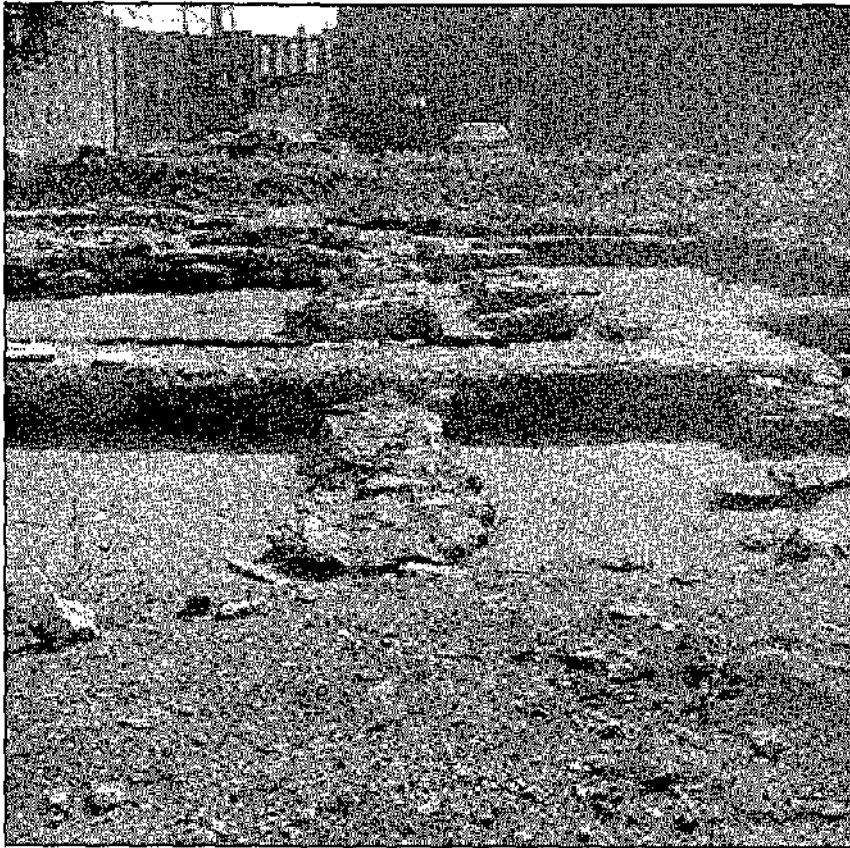
HS-9, June 1971: View to the south. Northeast corner of original foundation uncovered. Lincoln Avenue to the left and the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Market Street in the center of the background.



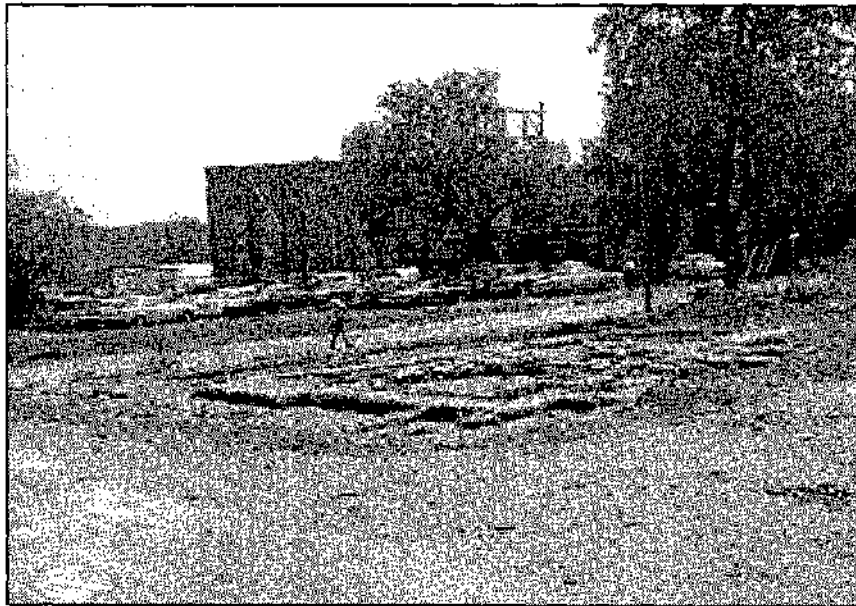
HS-9, July 9, 1971: View to the southeast. Removing concrete sidewalk along west side of Lincoln Avenue to locate northeast corner of HS-9. Note: The stone building being razed is not HS-33 and was not recommended for further study in the 1967 Master Plan. HS-33 was described as a small frame building that was located on the east side of Lincoln Avenue and was directly across from the city jail.



HS-9, July 1971: South view facing the front of the guardhouse from Fenton Street. Lincoln Avenue is the street in the left of the photograph. The east half of the excavation is completed.

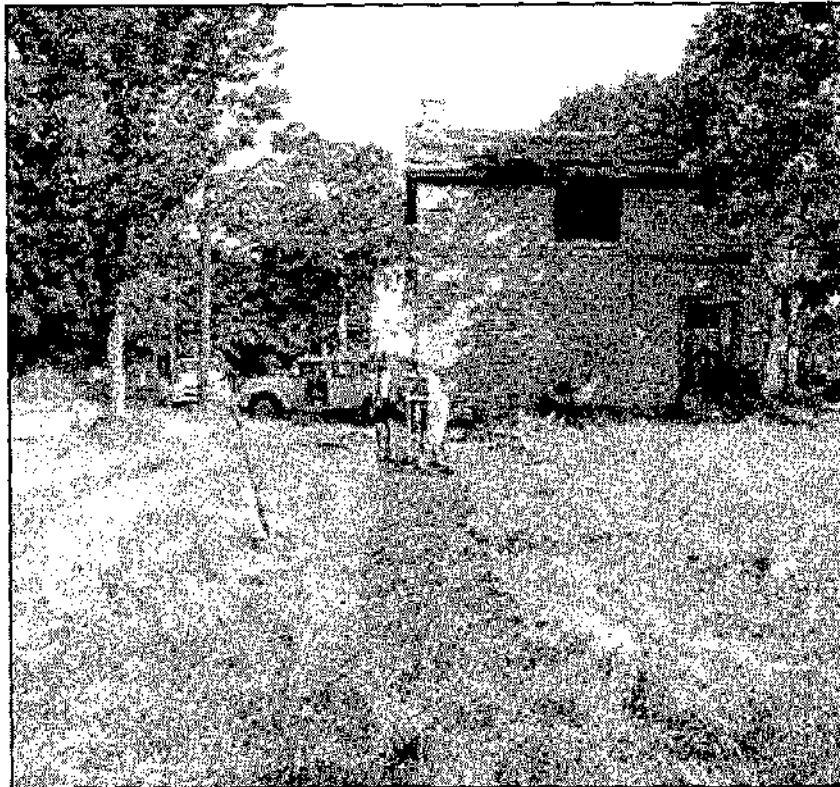
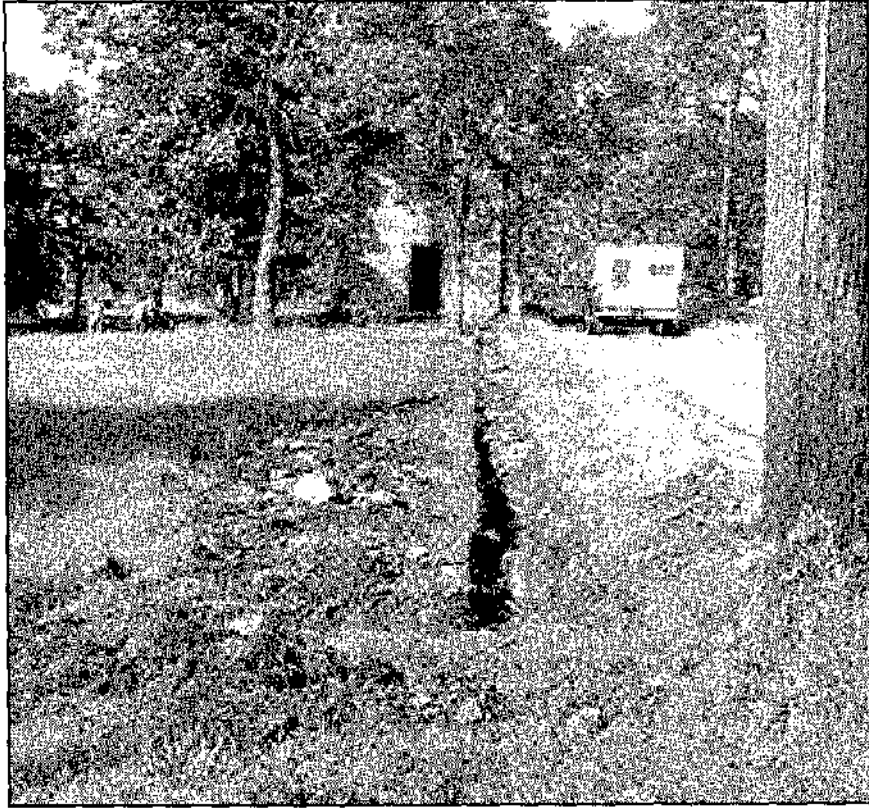


HS-9, July 1971: South view. West half of the excavation is completed. The rear of the buildings that fronted on Market Street are in the background of the photograph. The photograph is from the front, or Parade Ground, side of the guardhouse looking south.



HS-9, 1972: Southeast view. Photograph is approximately one year after the HS-9 investigation was completed. The uncovered foundation remains exposed and the urban renewal along Lincoln Avenue has been completed. The YMCA is the large brick building in the background. It was formerly located on the southeast corner of Scott Avenue and Wall Street.

HS-13, Quartermaster's Quadrangle, April-July 1972: South view of the 118-foot trench of the west perimeter footing foundation. Trench commenced at the northwest corner of HS-30 with a north-to-south orientation. Trench is parallel to the north/south municipal alley which was behind, to the east, of the Quartermaster's Storehouse (HS-12) and the reconstructed Infantry Barracks (HS-6).



HS-13, Quartermaster's Quadrangle, 1972: West view. Removal of groundcover on top of the south perimeter footing foundation of HS-13. This trench was 100 feet long, with an east-to-west orientation. Trench commenced at the southeast corner of HS-30, which is the stone structure in the photograph.



HS-13, April-July 1972: West view of the exposed stone footing foundation of the south perimeter wall of HS-13. This trench was 100 feet long, with an east-to-west orientation, and commenced at the southeast corner of HS-30.

HS-15 (Well Canopy), April-July 1972: North view. Includes the west side of the octagonal-shaped structure. Buildings in the background, from left to right, include the east exterior staircase of HS-2, HS-36 (small stone out-building) and HS-19 (Lunette Blair), showing the south entrance through the earthworks.





HS-15, April-July 1972: Southeast view. Includes the north half of the octagonal-shaped structure. Buildings in the background include, from left to right, the Tremont Hotel (formerly on the southeast corner of State and Wall streets), and the Hermann Lumber Yard (the Bootjack Western Wear Store in 2001) on the northeast corner of State and Wall streets.



HS-15, April-July 1972: South view. Includes the east half of the structural foundation. Concrete well cap is in the center of the photograph. HS-8 (Post Hospital), covered with galvanized tin roofing is in the upper left-hand corner of the photograph.



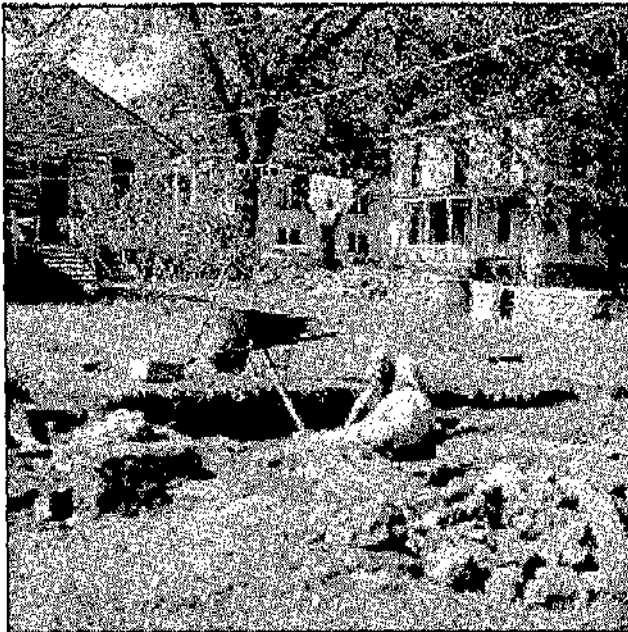
HS-15: April-July 1972. West view. Includes the south half of the structural foundation. Buildings in the background, from left to right, include the KG&E building and substation, and the Bruce Marble Works (razed circa 1996).



HS-15, April-July 1972:
West view. Includes north half of structural foundation. buildings in the background include the KG&E building and the KG&E substation.



HS-17 (Powder Magazine), May 1968: East view. Establishing a grid matrix at the possible location of the subsurface foundation of the Powder Magazine on the south side of Carroll Plaza. This view includes the 1930s WPA stone arched entrance to the plaza at the southeast corner. Also pictured is the WPA stone wall that had an east-west orientation across the plaza's south end. It is visible in the right side of this photograph.



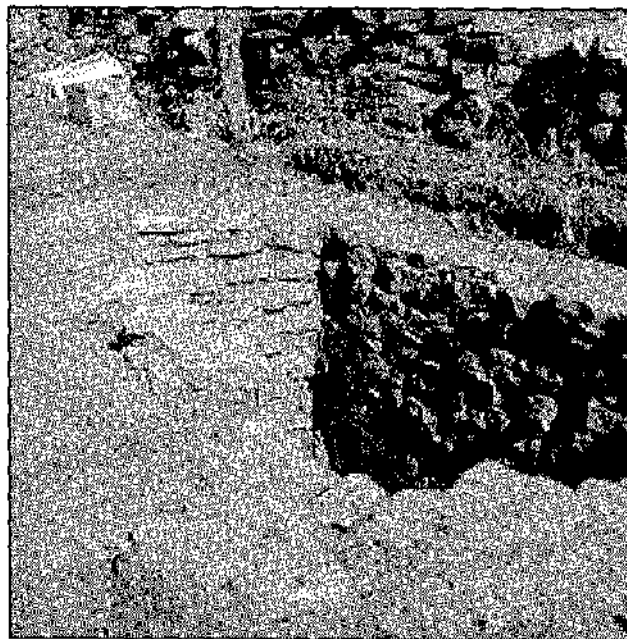
HS-22 (Company Washhouse and Latrine behind HS-6), September-October 1968: West view. Includes the northwest perimeter of the excavation. Buildings in the background, from right to left, include HS-12 (Quartermaster's Storehouse) before restoration, HS-4 (Officers Quarters) before restoration, and the back of the frame house that was located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Blair and Lincoln avenues.



HS-22, September-October 1968: West view. Includes the northwest perimeter of the excavation with a full front and the east side of HS-12 before restoration.



HS-22, September-October 1968: North view. Includes north half of the excavation. Features, from top to bottom, include stone-lined rectangular latrine pit, circular rock-lined shaft, north section of two-room washhouse. HS-30 (stone building) is in the upper right-hand corner. North/south municipal alley is immediately to the east (right) of the excavation.



HS-22, September-October 1968: North view of the rectangular stone-lined latrine pit.



HS-22, September-October 1968: South view of rectangular stone-lined latrine pit in foreground, circular stone-lined shaft and north foundation of two-room washhouse.



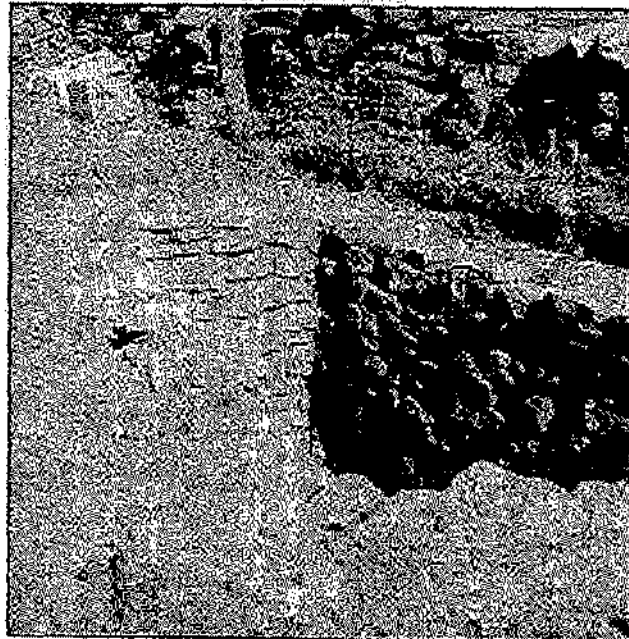
HS-22, September-October 1968: South overview of excavation. North/south alley to the left of the excavation. West/back wall of Hawkins School (large brick building) is visible in upper left corner of the photograph.



HS-22, September-October 1968: West view. Includes the northwest perimeter of the excavation with a full front and the east side of HS-12 before restoration.



HS-22, September-October 1968: North view. Includes north half of the excavation. Features, from top to bottom, include stone-lined rectangular latrine pit, circular rock-lined shaft, north section of two-room washhouse. HS-30 (stone building) is in the upper right-hand corner. North/south municipal alley is immediately to the east (right) of the excavation.



HS-22, September-October 1968: North view of the rectangular stone-lined latrine pit.

Fort Scott's Structures

Fort Scott National Historic Site provides an example of a U.S. Army post on the nation's frontier from 1842 to 1853 by combining original buildings with reconstructed structures. The post survived threats of conquest during the Civil War, but many of its buildings later fell victim to remodeling or removal for residential or commercial reasons; others were destroyed by fire. The town of Fort Scott became interested in restoring the fort to its original appearance in the 1950s, the start of restoration and reconstruction that led to the 1965 establishment of Fort Scott Historical Area, a joint project with the town and the National Park Service. Congress established Fort Scott National Historic Site in 1978. Its enabling legislation states the site, through its buildings and interpretative services provided by the National Park Service, will "commemorate the role that Fort Scott played in the opening of the west, the Civil War and the strife that preceded the Civil War in the state of Kansas."

Building Description	Park Service Designation
Officers Quarters No. 1	HS-1
Officers Quarters No. 2	HS-2
Officers Quarters No. 3	HS-3
Officers Quarters No. 4	HS-4
Enlisted (Dragoons) Barracks	HS-5
Enlisted (Dragoons) Barracks	HS-6
Enlisted (Infantry) Barracks	HS-7
Hospital	HS-8
Guardhouse	HS-9
Dragoon Stables	HS-10
Ordnance and Post Headquarters	HS-11
Quartermaster Storerooms	HS-12
Quartermaster Stable	HS-13
Bake Shop	HS-14
Well Canopy	HS-15
Flag Pole	HS-16
Magazine	HS-17
Lunette Blair	HS-19
Company Wash House and Latrine	HS-22
Stone Building	HS-30
Carriage House Behind Officers Quarters No. 2*	HS-31
Carriage House Behind Officers Quarters No. 4*	HS-32
House*‡	HS-33
Stone Building †	HS-34
Outbuildings behind HS-1	HS-35
Outbuildings behind HS-2	HS-36

* Believed by Erwin Thompson, in *Fort Scott, Kansas, Site Identification and Evaluation*, to have been constructed after 1855.

‡ Determined in urban renewal period (1965-1970) to be non-historic to park's fort historic period. Structure was razed.

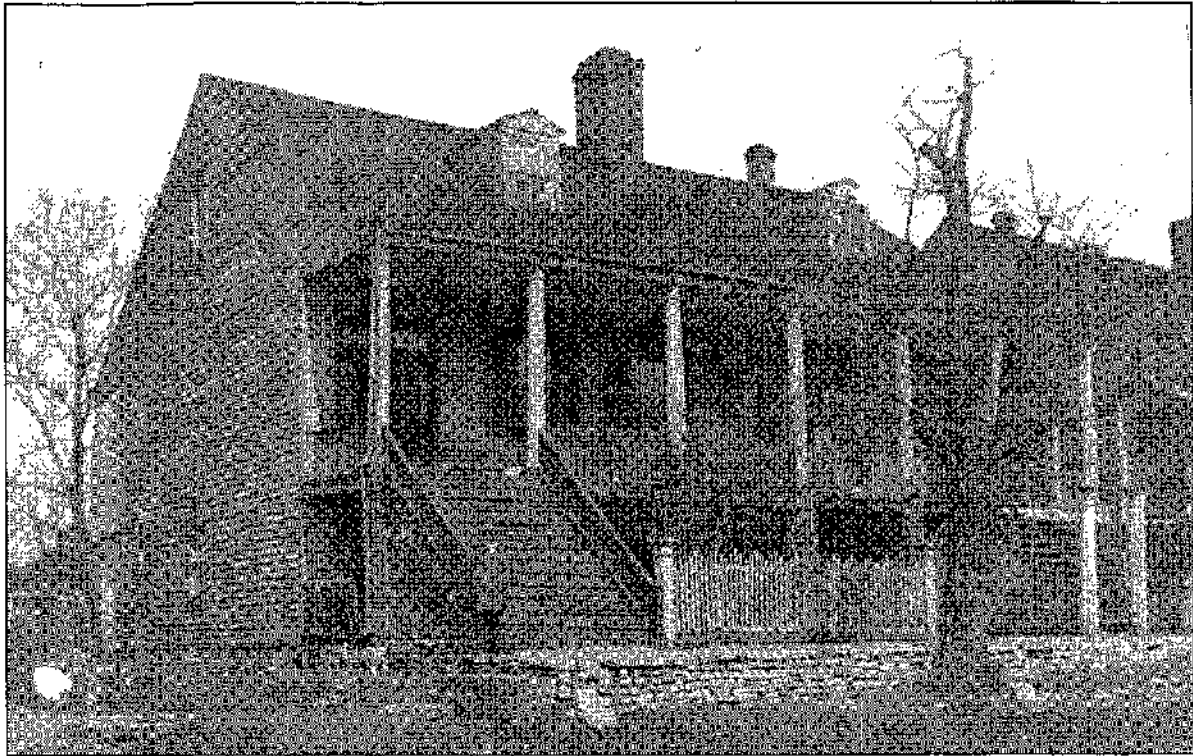
† Determined to be of early twentieth-century construction during an archeological investigation in the 1980s.



Officers Row (South elevation) and Bandstand, circa 1900.



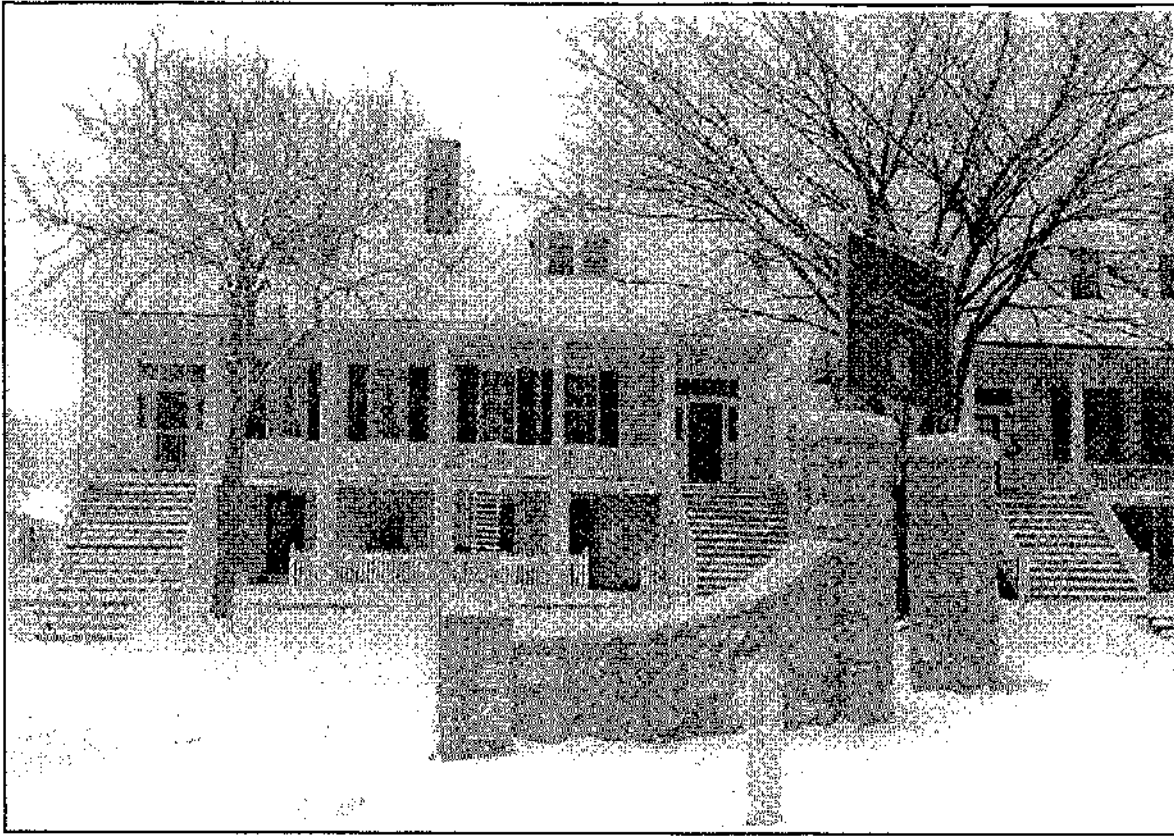
HS-1 (South elevation), circa 1900.



HS-1 (Southwest elevation), circa 1900-1905.



HS-1 (Southwest elevation), circa 1910-1915.



HS-1 (South elevation), museum operated by the Fort Scott Business and Professional Women's Club. Foreground: Northwest stone entrance to Carroll Plaza constructed as part of a 1930s' WPA project. 1956.



Former Officers' Quarters No. 1 and 2 (now HS-1 and HS-2, South elevation), 1956.



HS-1 (North elevation). Heavy fire damage destroyed the third level and exposed original timber and frame construction. Note: lower left is the original stone wall separating HS-1 and HS-2. May 1967.



Detail of above photograph (North elevation). View of Swords' guest bedroom, third level, and dining room, second level. May 1967.



HS-1 (Southeast elevation). Restoration following the May 1967 fire. Photograph 1975.



HS-2 (South elevation), circa 1885.



HS-2, front view of the Goodlander Home (South elevation), circa 1900.



HS-2, rear view (Northeast elevation), circa 1956.



HS-2 (West elevation),
Front view photo-
graphed from Carroll
Plaza. HS-1 east
exterior staircase in
lower left corner of
photograph.



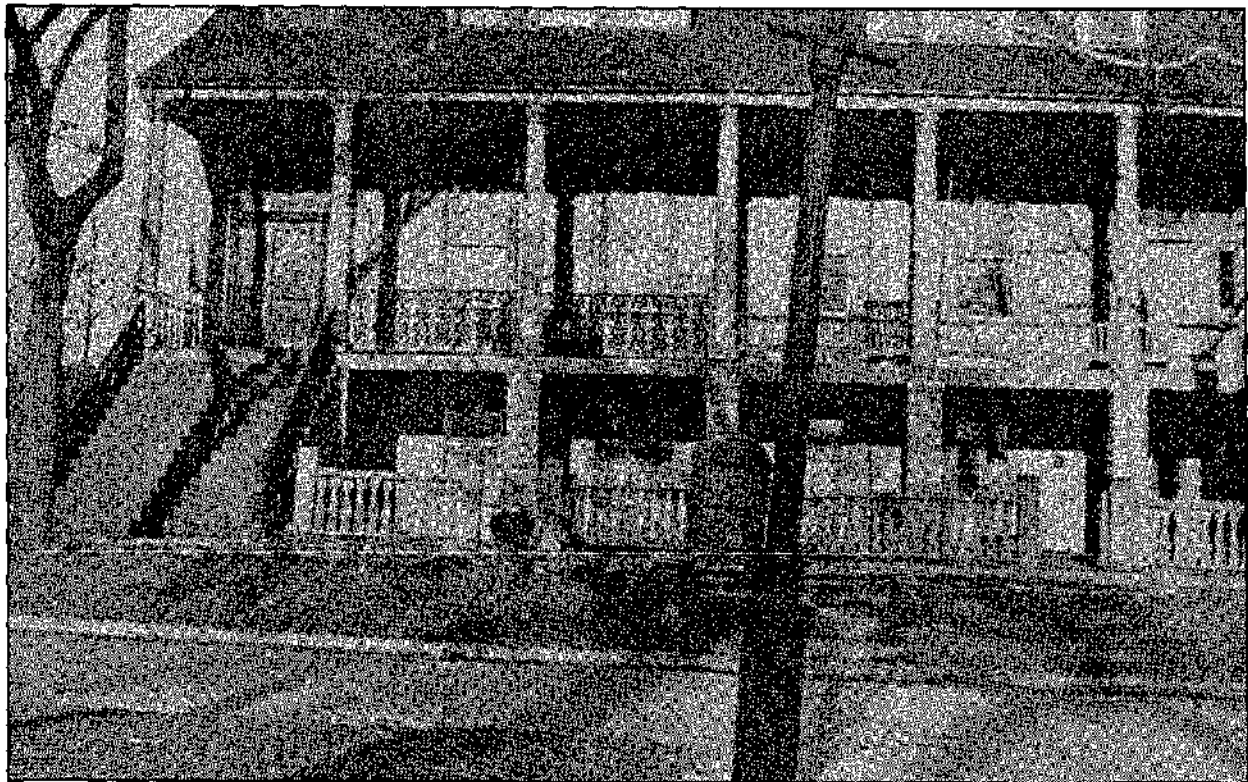
HS-2, front view (South elevation), 1970



HS-2, rear view (North elevation). Note: brick addition, right, contained furnace room and steam laundry of the former Goodlander Home. 1970.



HS-3 (left) and HS-4, (right) front view (South elevation). Foreground: Blair Avenue. Circa 1900.



HS-4, Front View (South Elevation). Note: HS-3 was formerly located to the left (west) of HS-4 and has been razed. Foreground, Blair Avenue. 1905.



HS-4, rear view (North elevation). 1966.



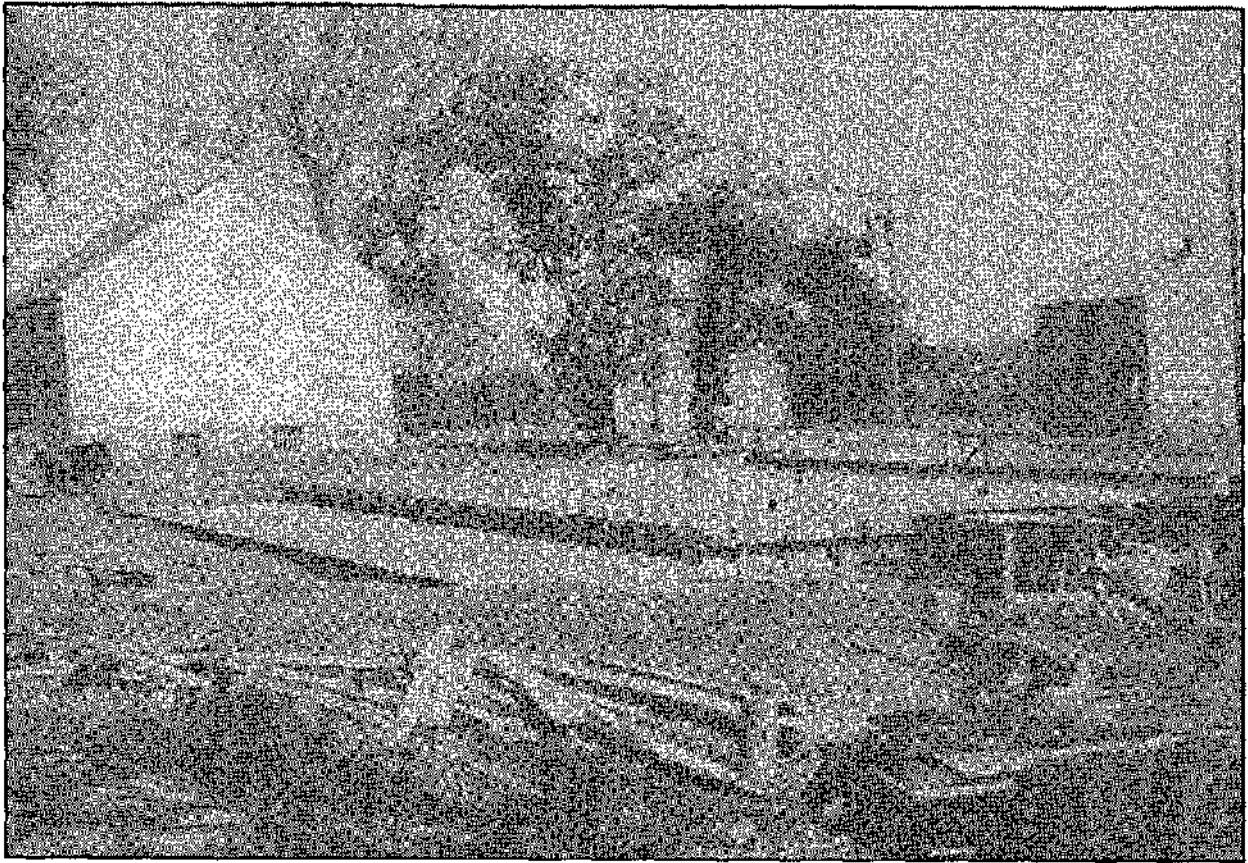
HS-4 (West elevation). Note: foreground is the site of HS-3 and location of insitu HS-3 subsurface foundation. 1966.



HS-4 west half (Southeast elevation). The east half of this building was destroyed by fire in 1945 and was never replaced. 1966.

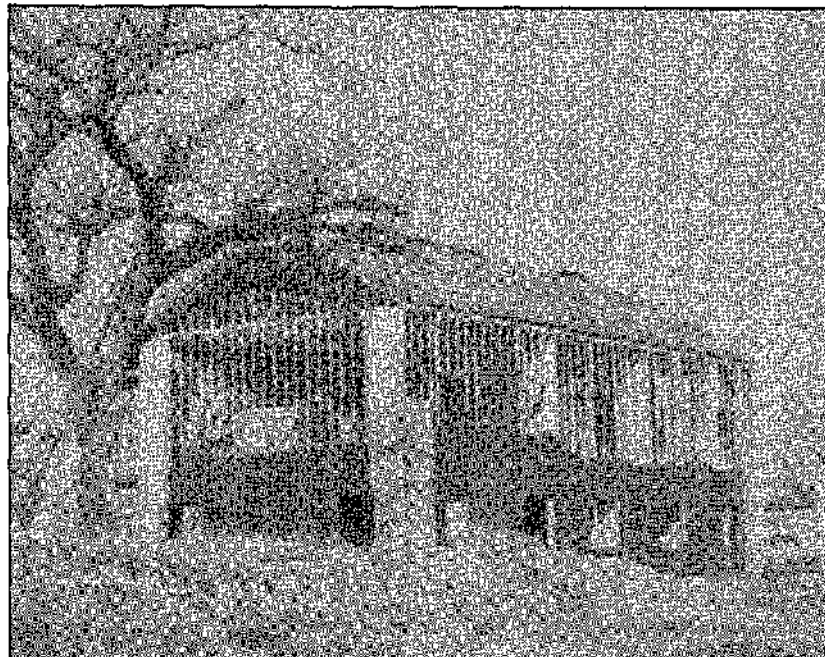


Restored HS-4, front view (Southwest elevation) from Carroll Plaza. Background: restored Carriage House (HS-32), 1976.



HS-6: Infantry Barracks foundation (Northeast view). Background: restored HS-12, Quartermaster Storehouse (left); HS-14, Post Bakery (center); and HS-30, Stone Quartermaster Building (right). 1978.

HS-6, Infantry
Barracks
(Southeast
elevation),
reconstruc-
tion in
progress.
1979.





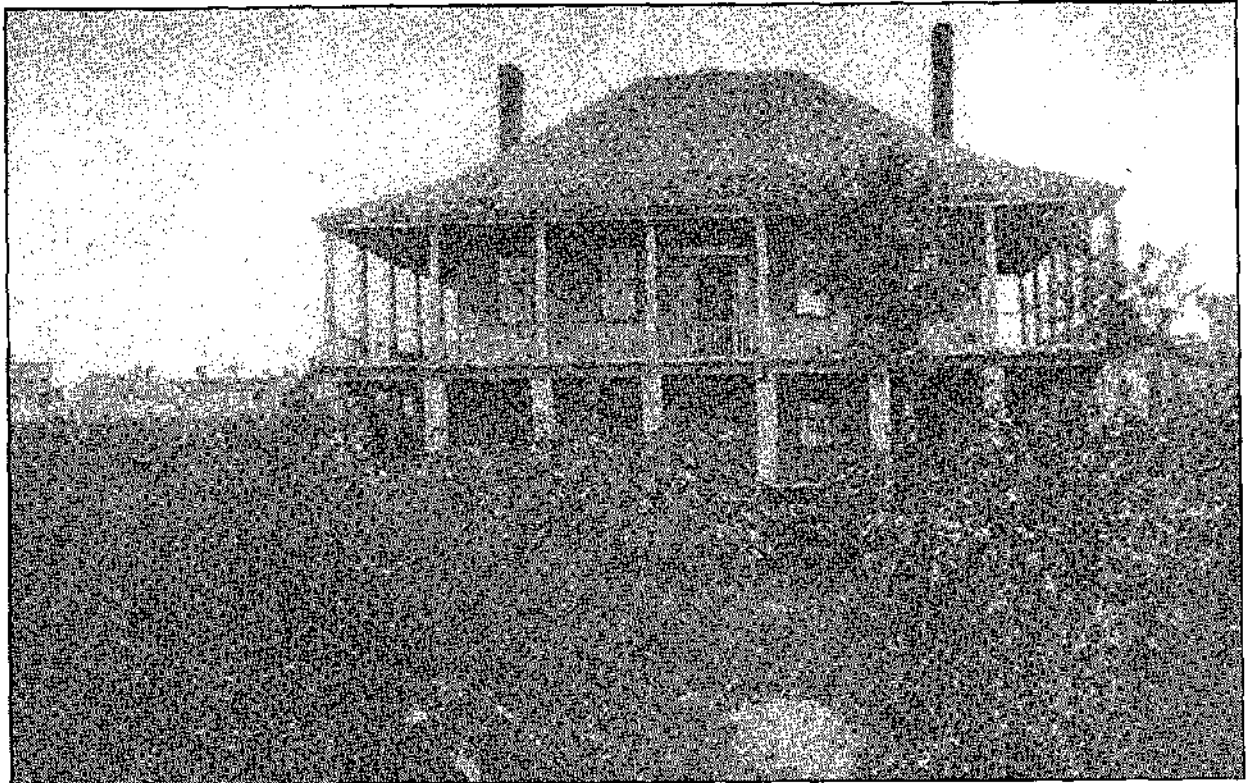
HS-7: Infantry Barracks; reconstruction in progress. Rear view (South elevation). HS-8, restored Post Hospital/Visitor Center (right). 1976.



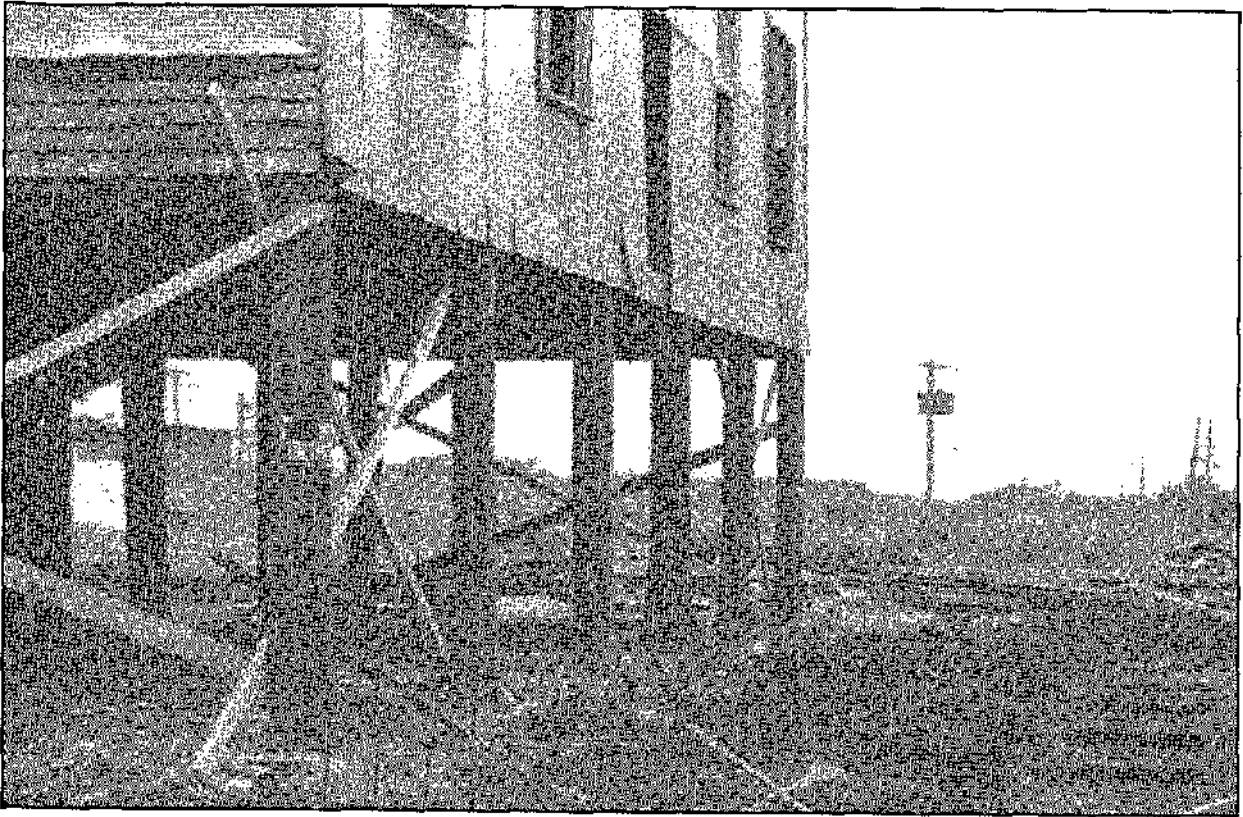
HS-7, Infantry Barracks; reconstruction in progress. Front view (Northwest elevation), HS-8, restored Post Hospital/Visitor Center (left); HS-9, reconstructed Post Guardhouse (extreme left), 1976.



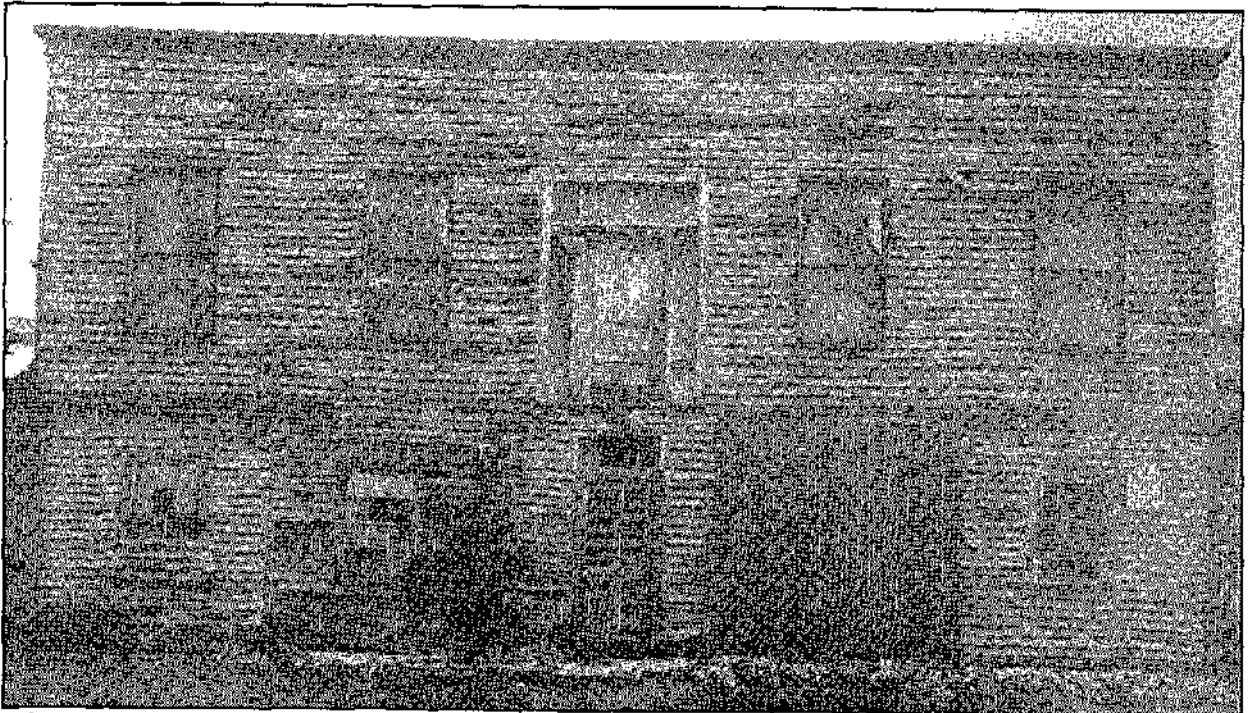
HS-5, reconstructed Dragoon Barracks, front view (northeast elevation). Background, left, reconstructed Dragoon Stables (HS-10). Circa early 1980s.



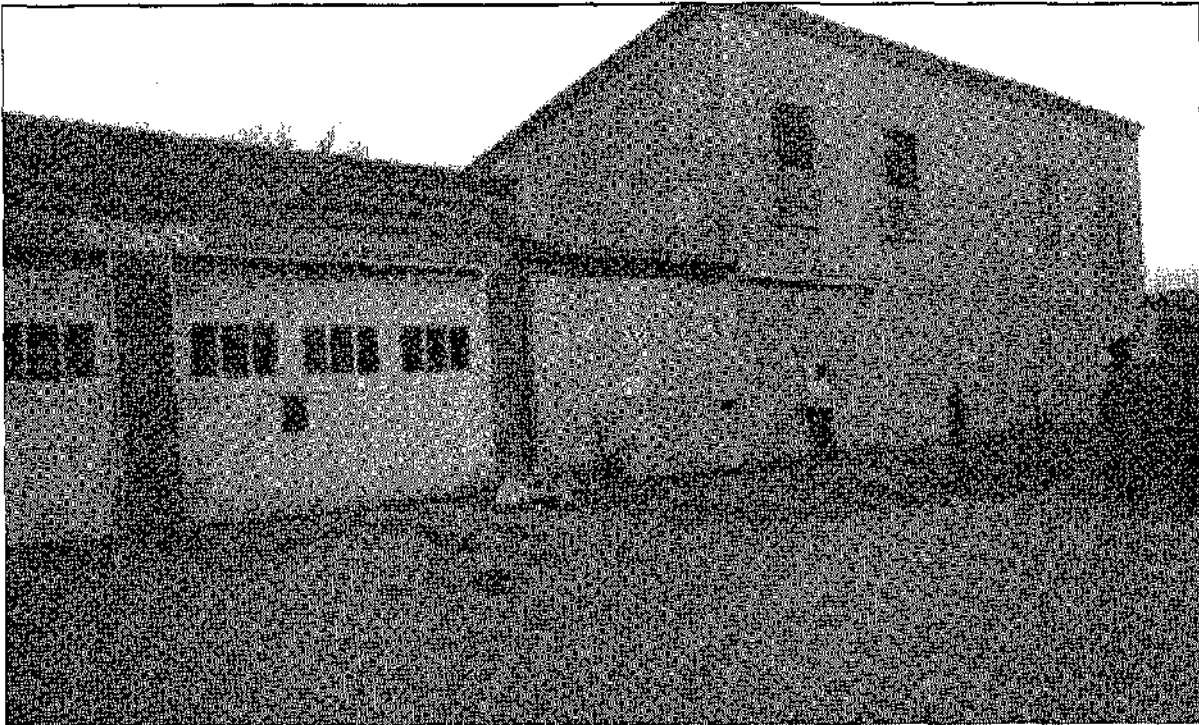
HS-8, former Post Hospital in 1873.



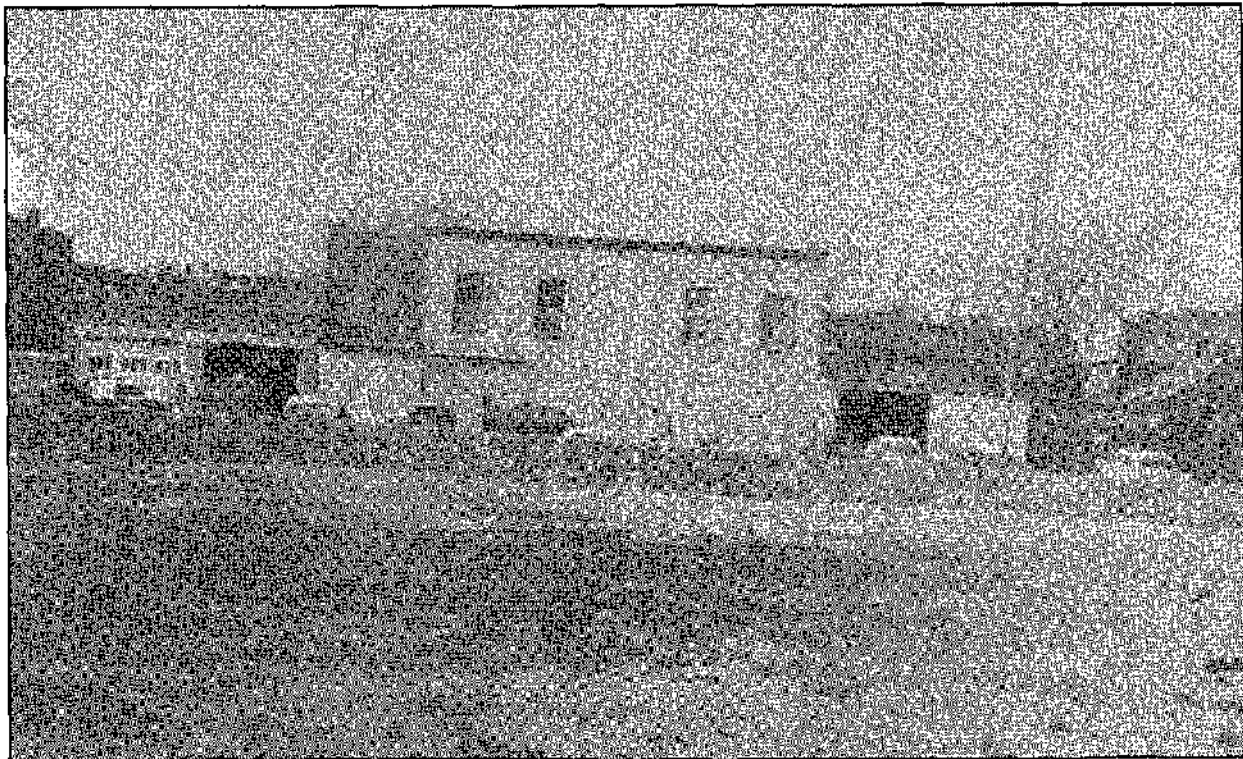
HS-8, former Post Hospital, front view (North elevation), from overgrown Carroll Plaza. Circa 1873.



HS-8, former Post Hospital (North elevation). Front view from Fenton Avenue. Note: original Black Walnut clapboard siding in situ. 1952.

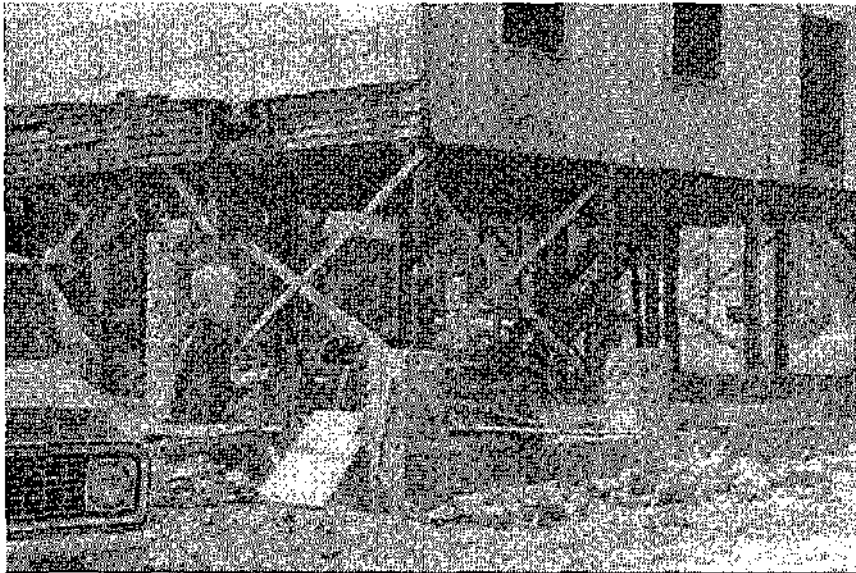
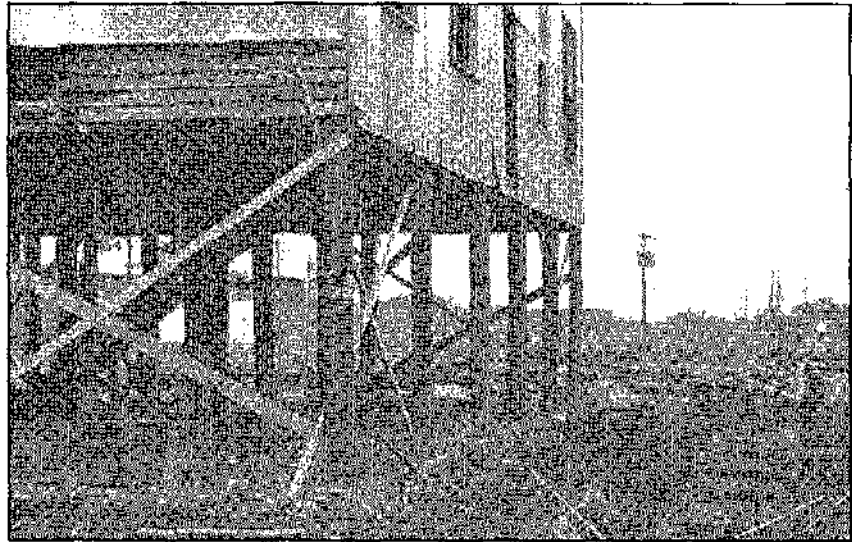


HS-8; central core of former Post Hospital covered with tin roofing. Front view (Northeast elevation) from Fenton Avenue. October 1966.



HS-8, former Post Hospital, front view (North elevation) from Carroll Plaza. Note: pictured stone wall was constructed in the 1930s as a WPA work project. October 1966.

HS-8, excavating footer foundations for stone porch pillars. Carroll Plaza view (Northeast elevation). 1972.



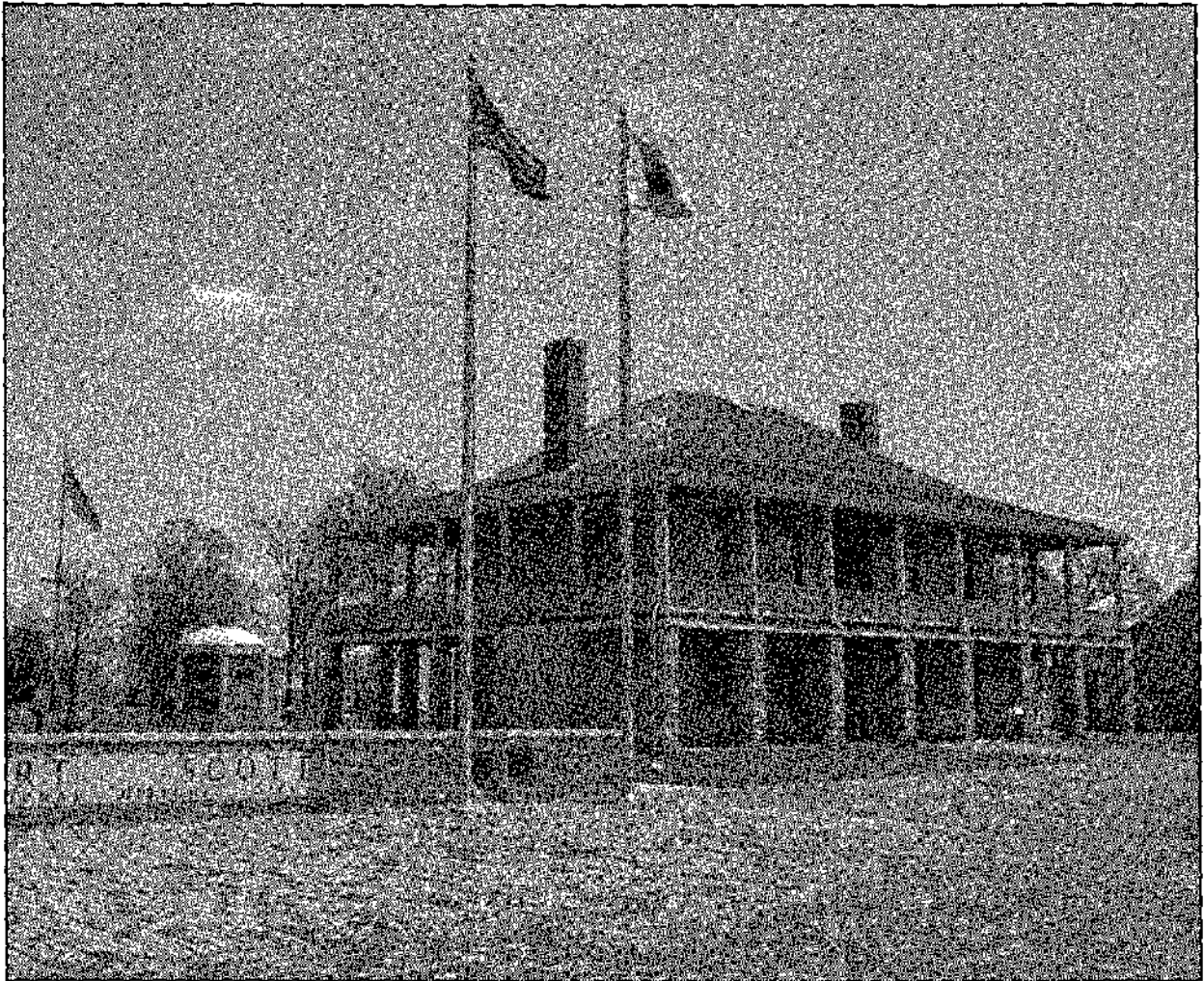
HS-8, constructing stone porch pillars. Carroll Plaza view (Northeast elevation). 1972.

HS-8, completed stone porch pillars with a few new porch framing timbers in place. Carroll Plaza view (Northeast elevation). 1972.

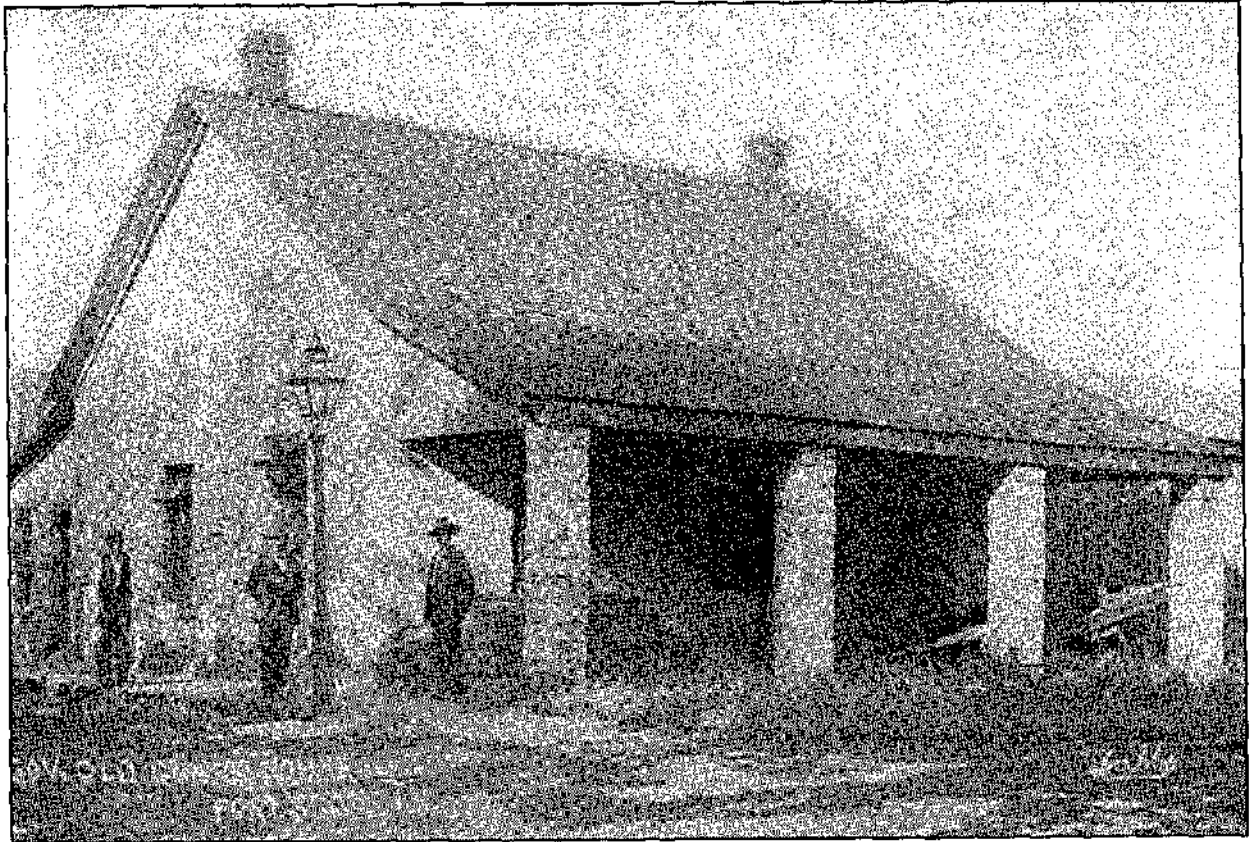




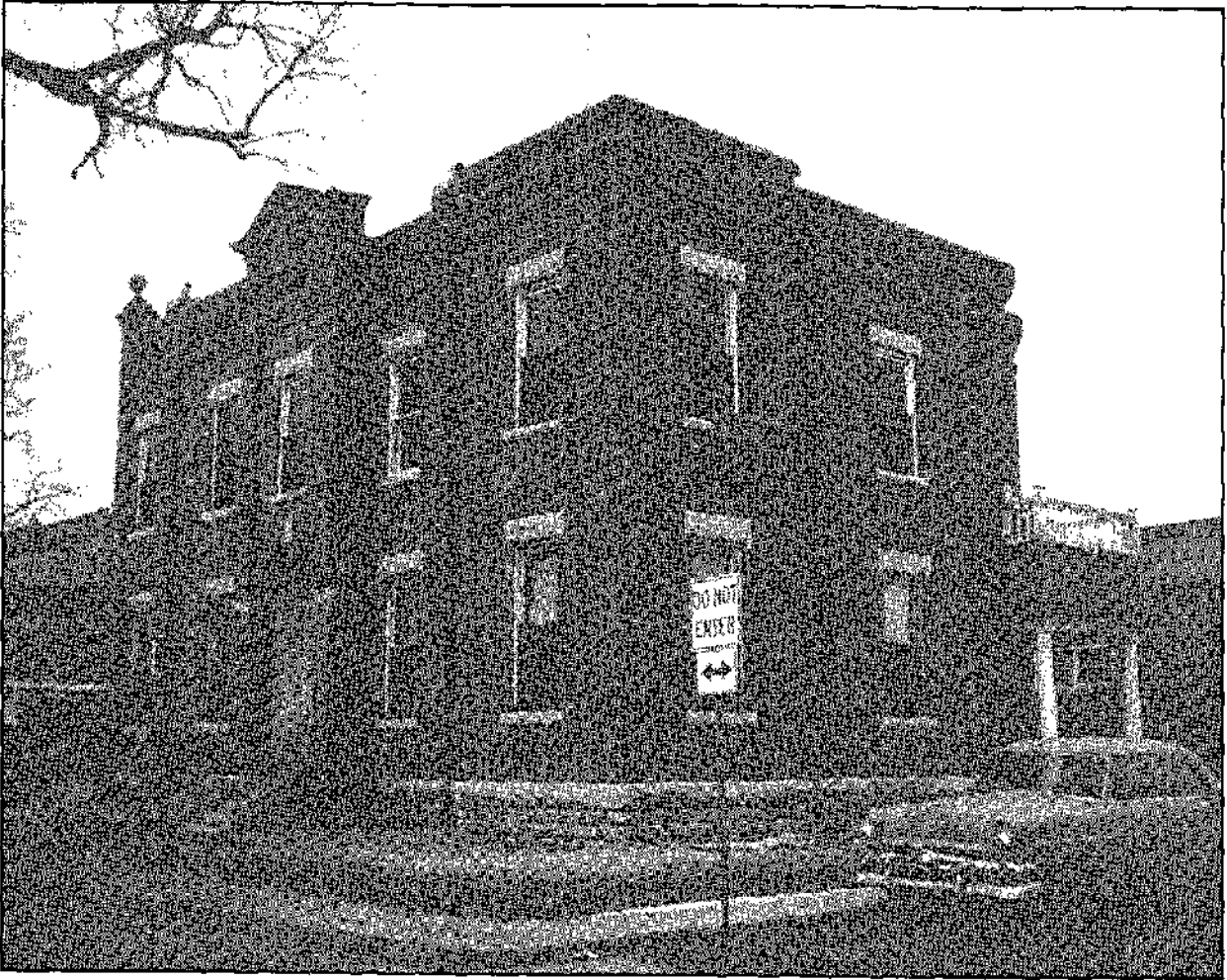
HS-8, Post Hospital/Visitor Center, reconstruction in progress (Northwest elevation). 1974.



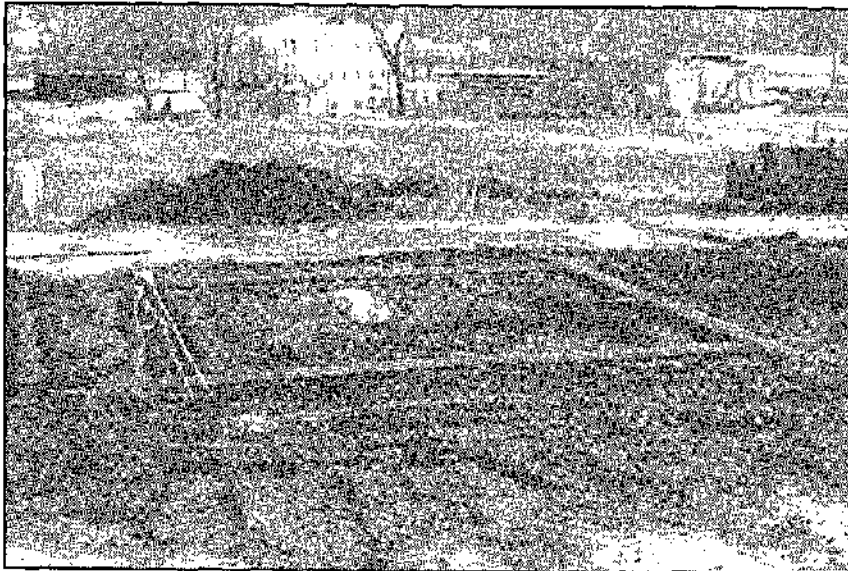
HS-8, Post Hospital/Visitor Center restoration and reconstruction completed in 1975. View of south entrance (Southwest elevation). Note: HS-17, reconstructed Powder Magazine (left center); HS-16, reconstructed Flagpole (left); and HS-9, reconstructed Post Guardhouse (right). 1982.



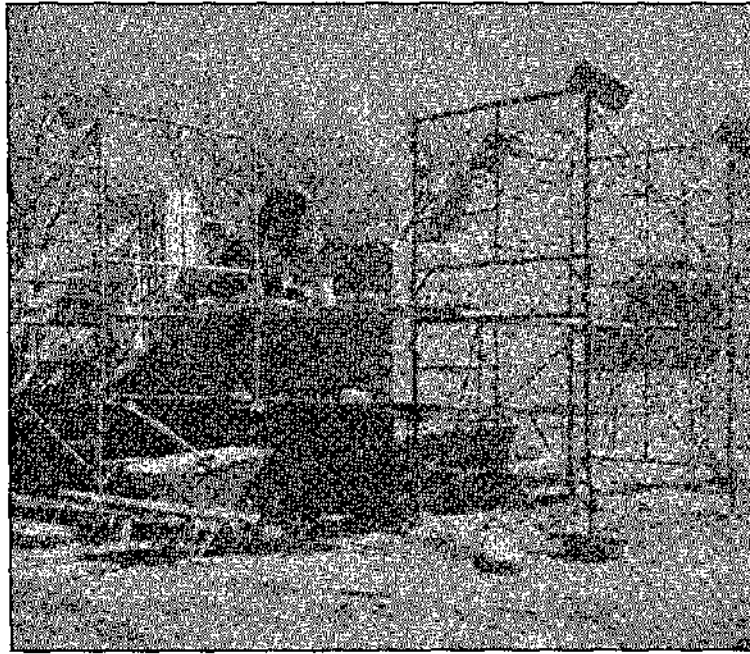
HS-9, the former Post Guardhouse, served as the Fort Scott municipal jail until the city razed it in 1906 and replaced it with a new brick jail. View from intersection of Fenton and Lincoln avenues (Northeast elevation). Circa 1900.



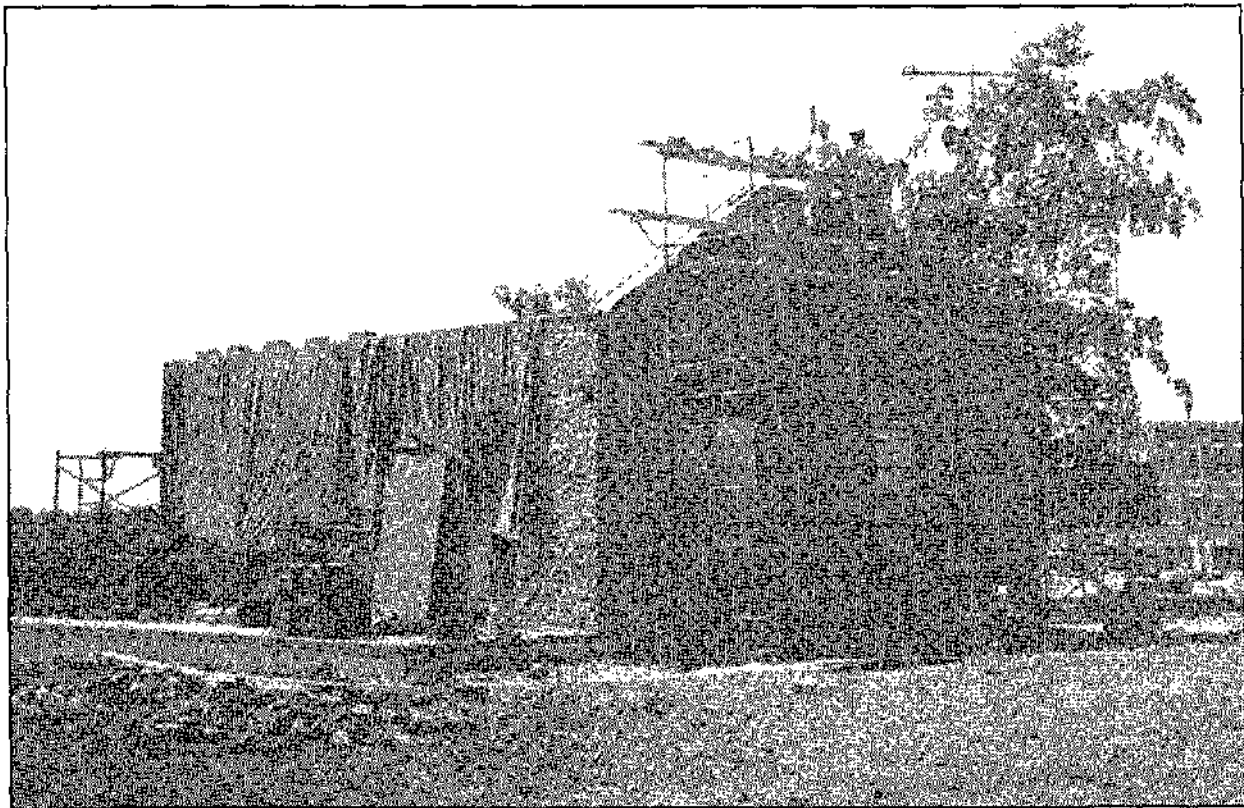
The new city jail constructed in 1906 that replaced the original post guardhouse (Northeast elevation). The city razed this building during the 1965-1970 Fort Scott Urban Renewal Project. Circa 1955.



HS-9: Post Guardhouse foundation, reconstruction in progress (East view). 1974.



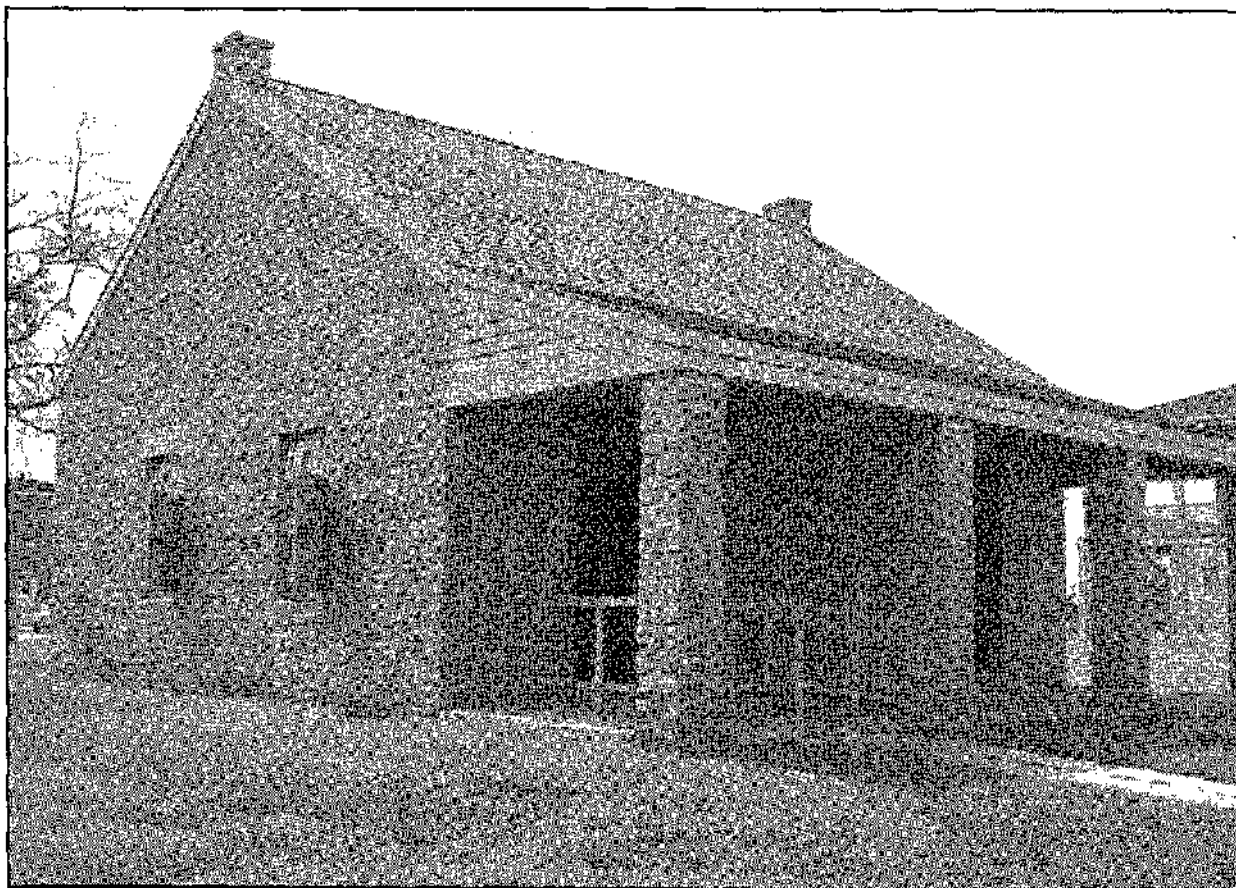
HS-9: Post Guardhouse, reconstruction in progress. View photographed between Post Hospital and Guardhouse (Southwest elevation). April 4, 1975.



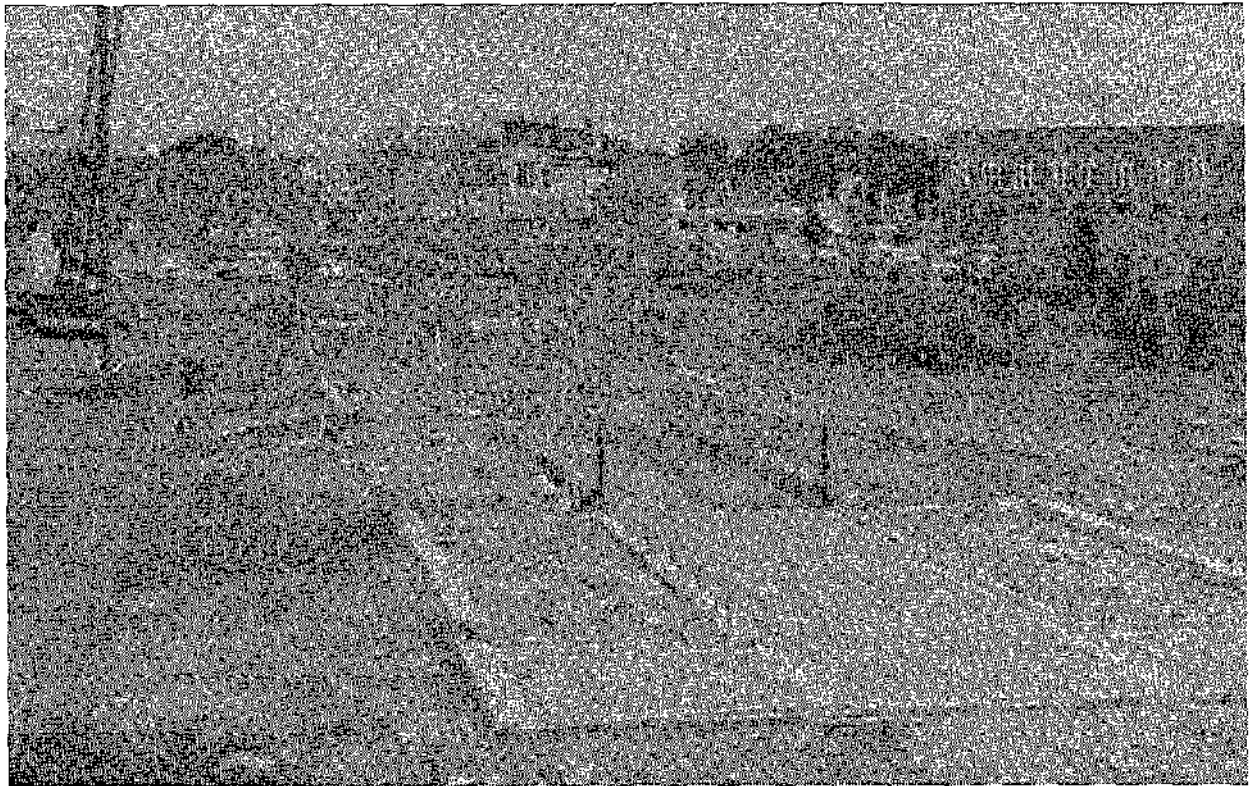
HS-9: Post Guardhouse, reconstruction in progress. Foreground: concrete slab porch foundation. View from Carroll Plaza (Northwest elevation). May 1975.



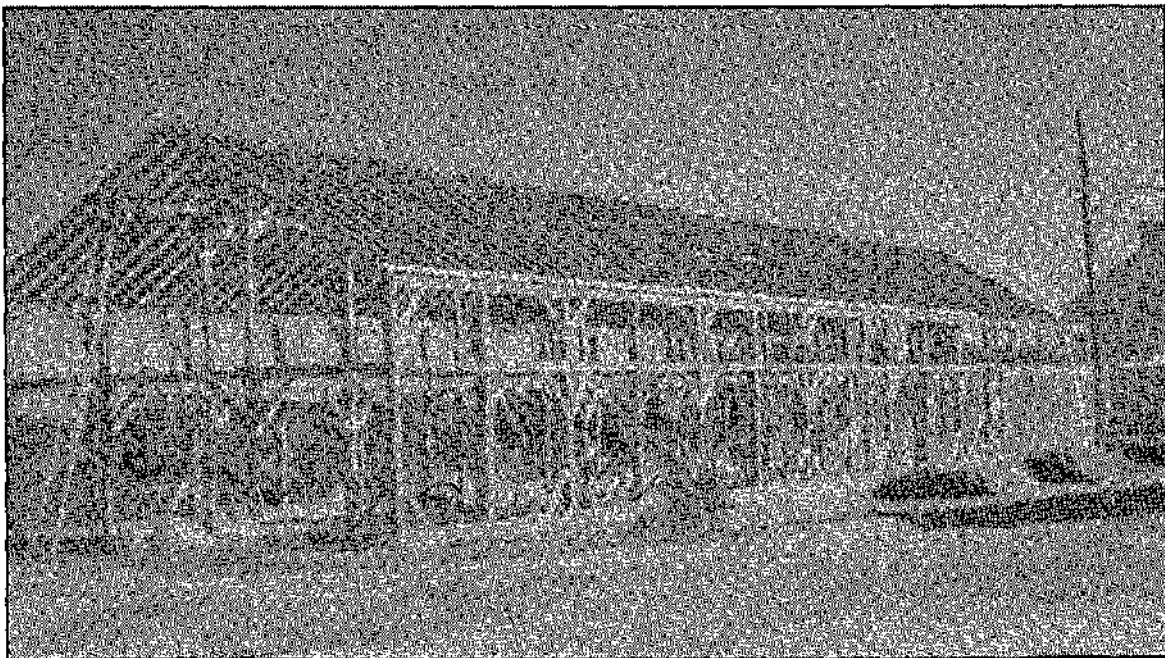
HS-9: Post Guardhouse reconstruction, installing porch roof rafters (Northeast elevation). View from Carroll Plaza. May 1975.



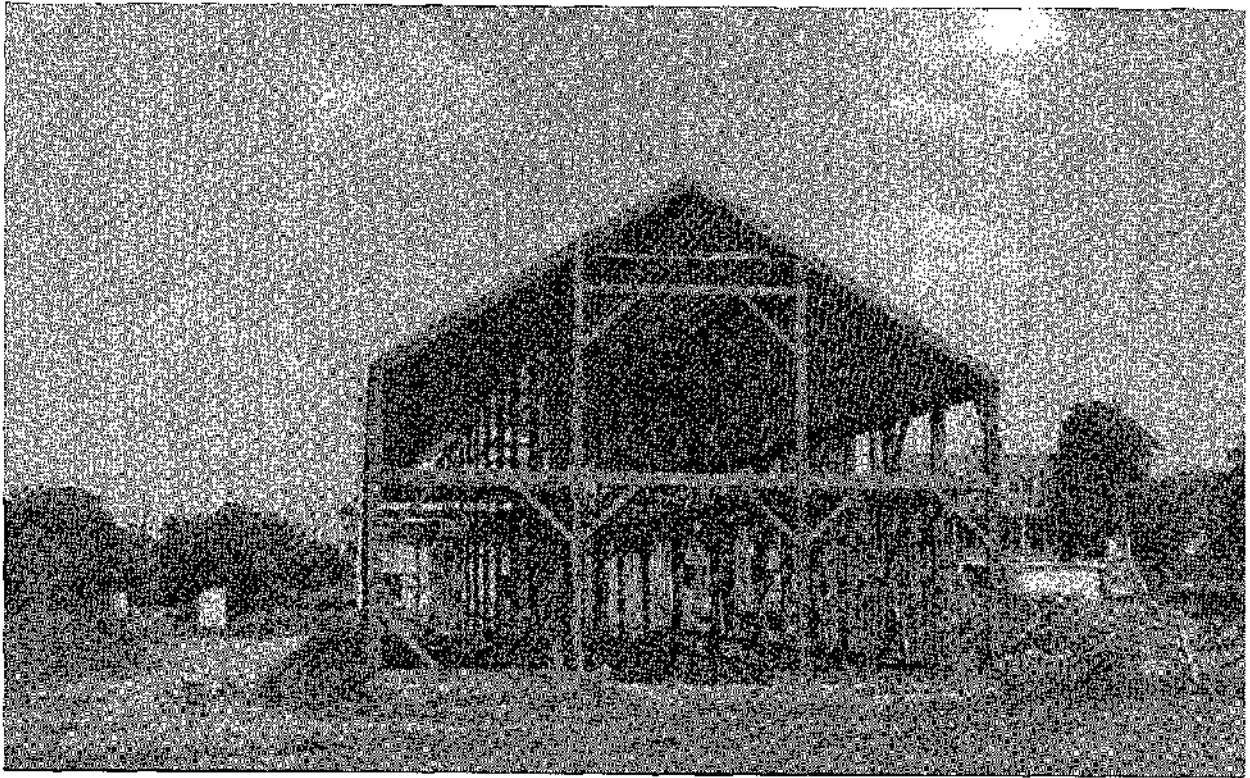
HS-9: reconstructed Post Guardhouse (Northeast elevation), 1980.



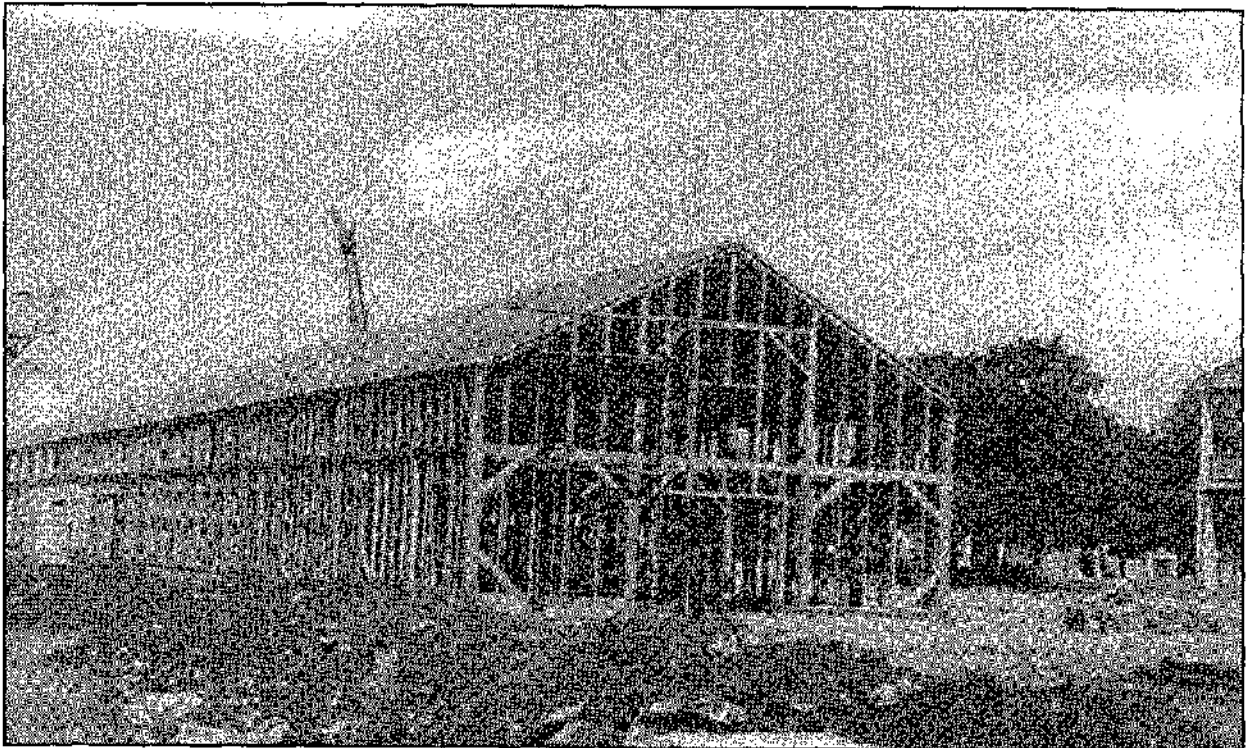
HS-10, Dagoon Stables, reconstruction in progress. North end of the building in immediate foreground. Southwest view from the porch of HS-5 (reconstructed Dagoon Barracks). 1978.



HS-10, Dagoon Stables. Framing timbers and rafters in place (Southeast elevation). View from Carroll Plaza. HS-5 (Dagoon Barracks) at right center. 1979.



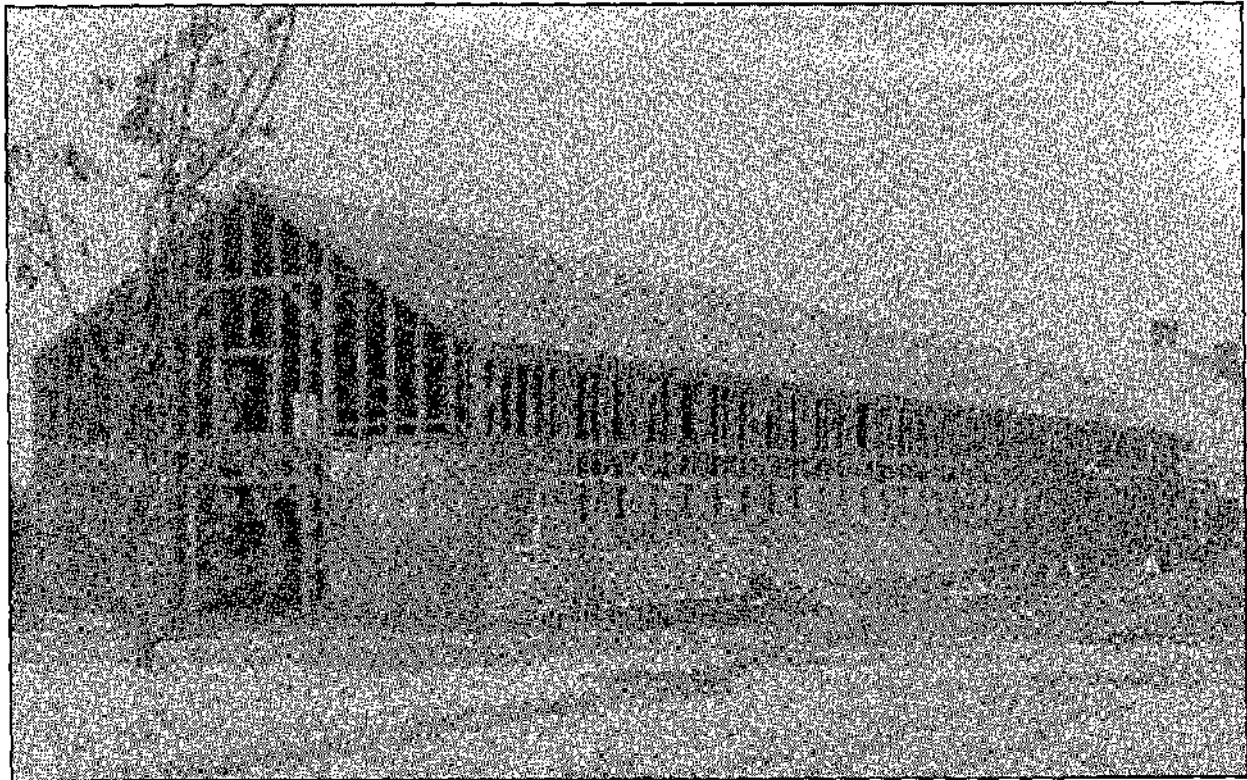
HS-10 Dragoon Stables (South elevation). HS-2, Officers Quarters at right. 1979.



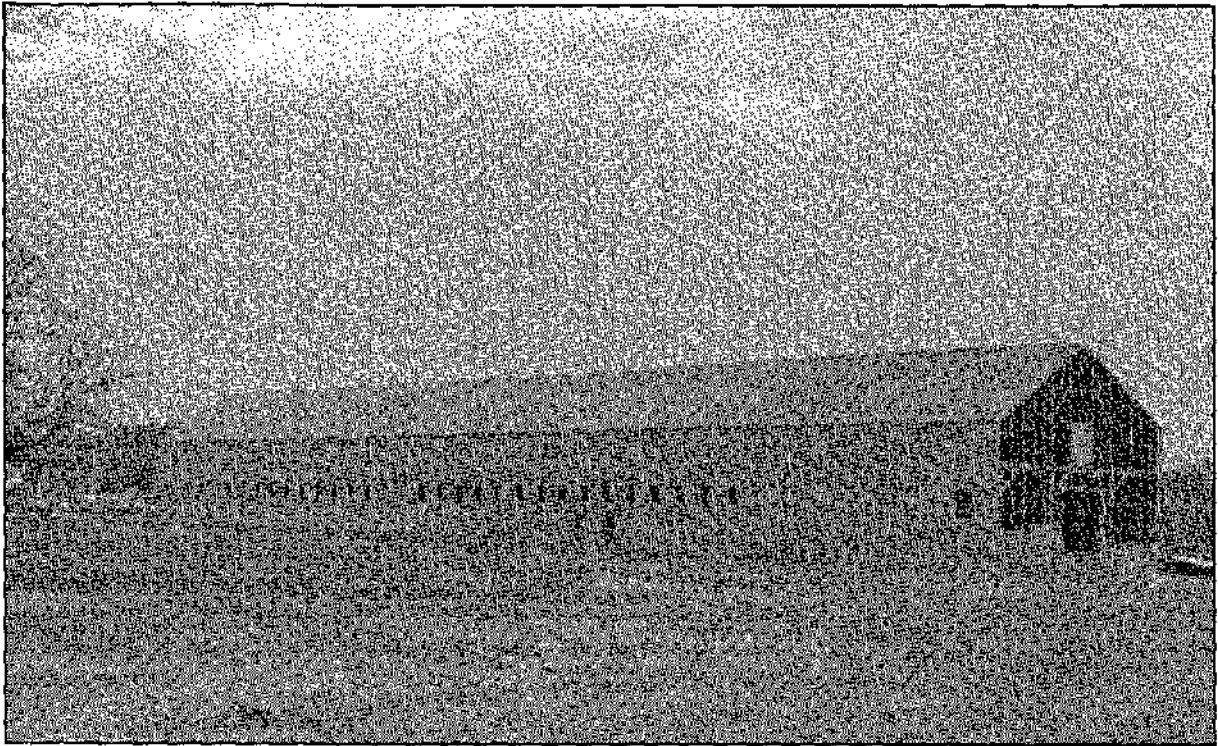
HS-10 Dragoon Stables (Southwest elevation). HS-5, Dragoon Barracks, at left, and HS-7, Infantry Barracks at right. 1979.



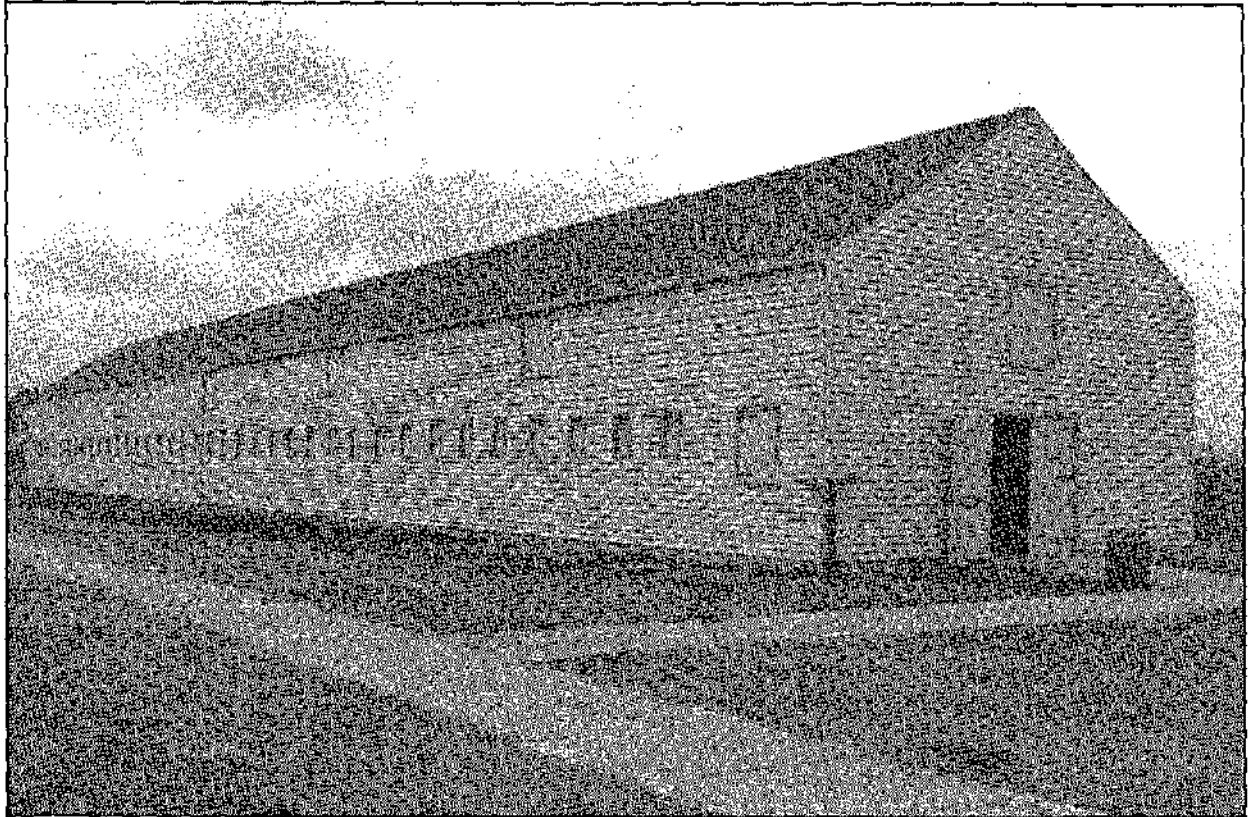
HS-10: Dragoon Stables (Northwest elevation). 1979.



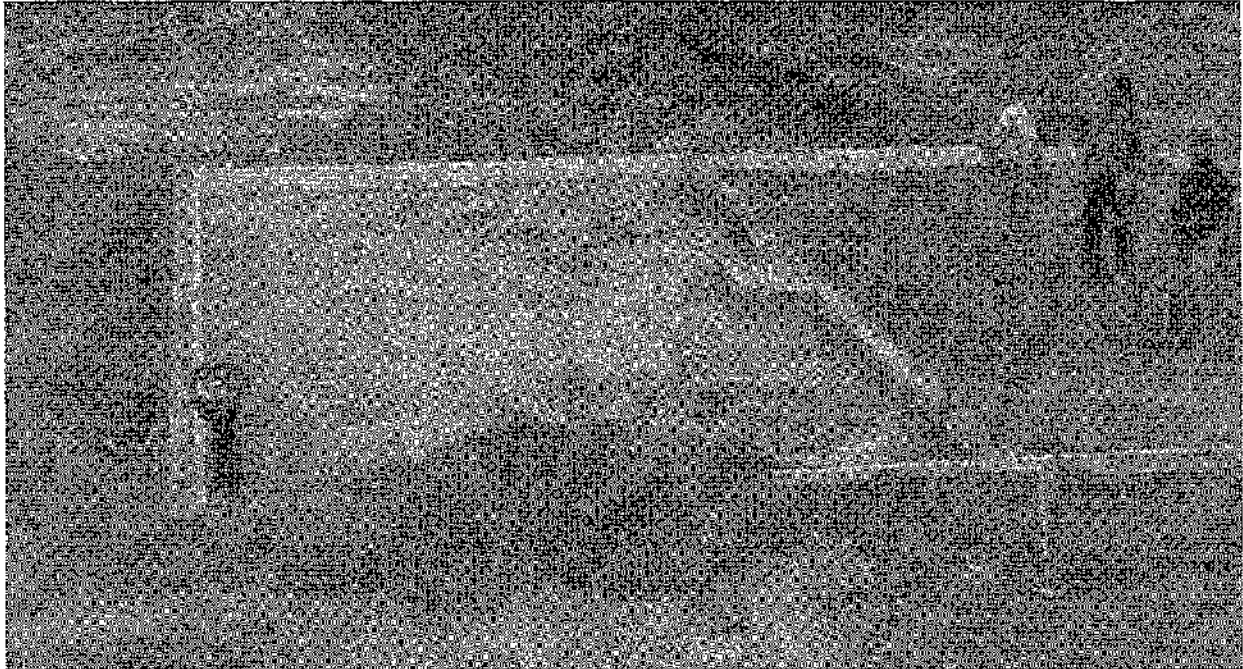
HS-10 Dragoon Stables (Southeast elevation). HS-5, reconstructed Dragoon Barracks, right. 1979.



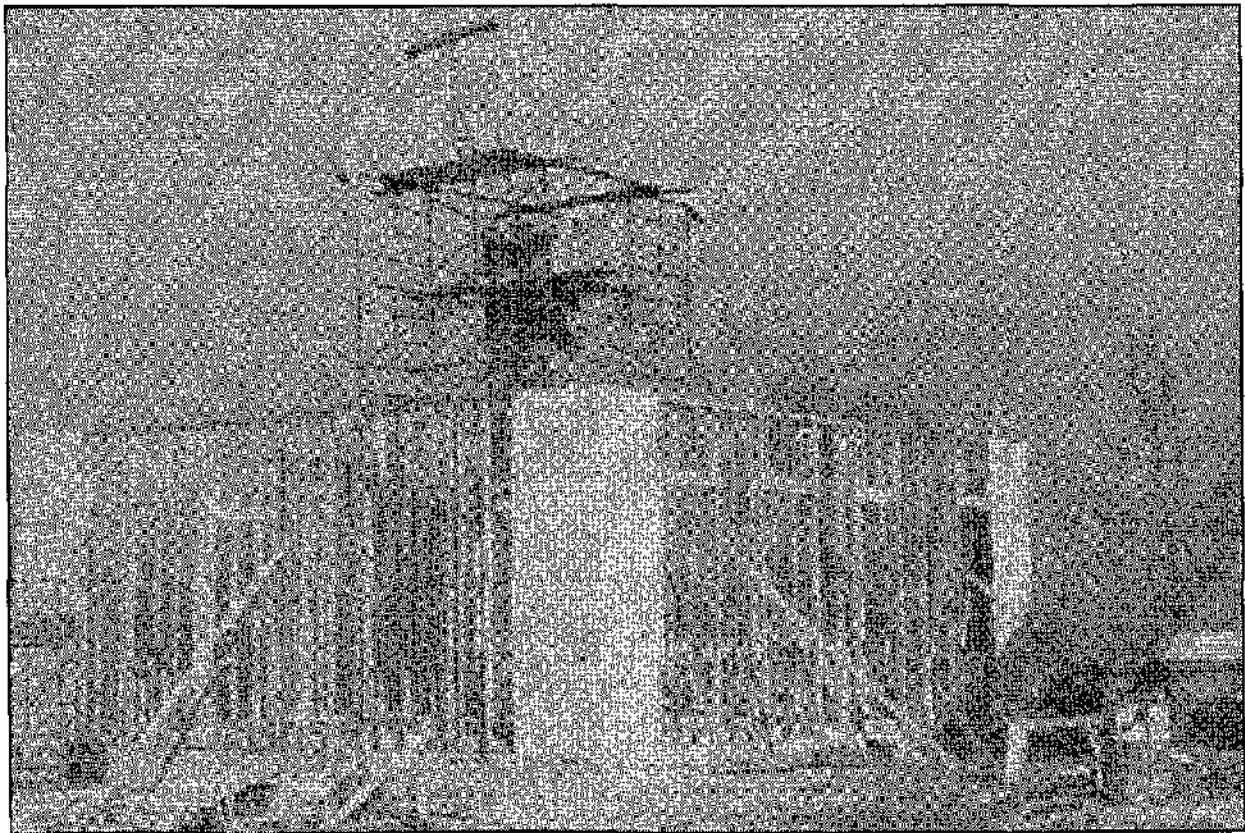
HS-10 Dragoon Stables (Northeast elevation). View from Carroll Plaza/Parade Ground. 1979.



HS-10, reconstructed Dragoon Stables (Northeast elevation). View from Parade Ground. 1980.



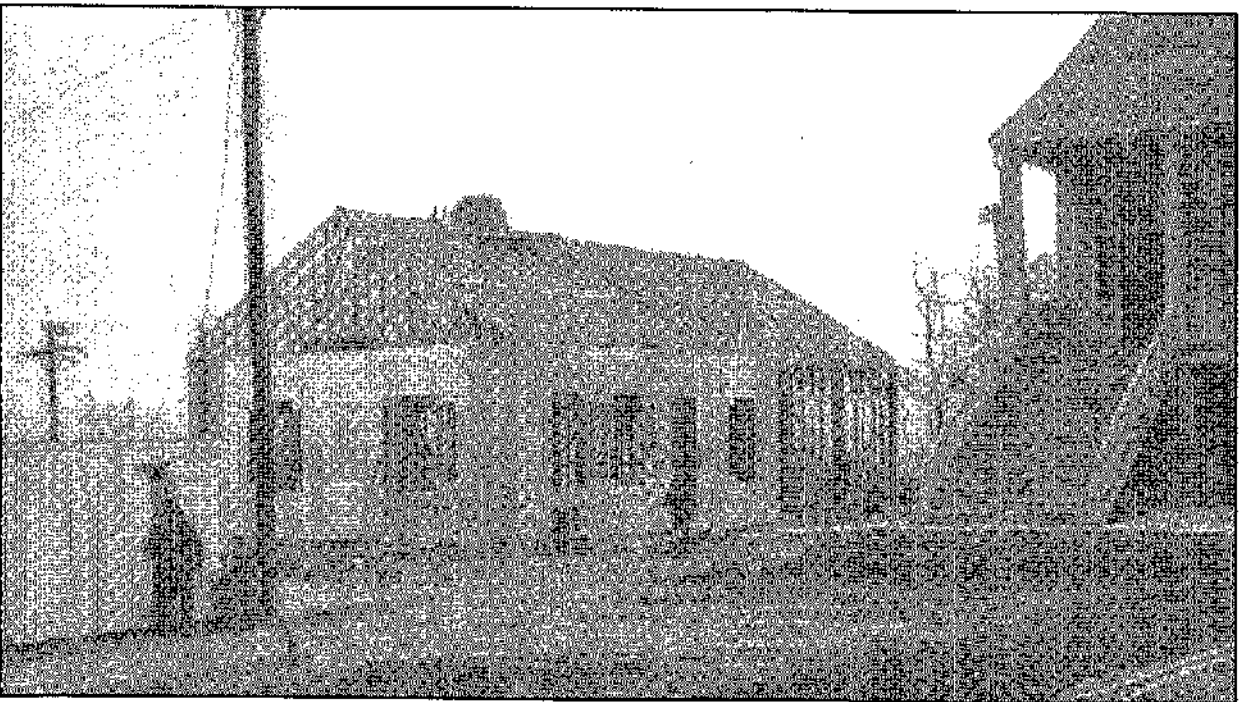
HS-11, Post Headquarters/Ordnance Storage: construction of foundation. Front view (East side of building). 1979.



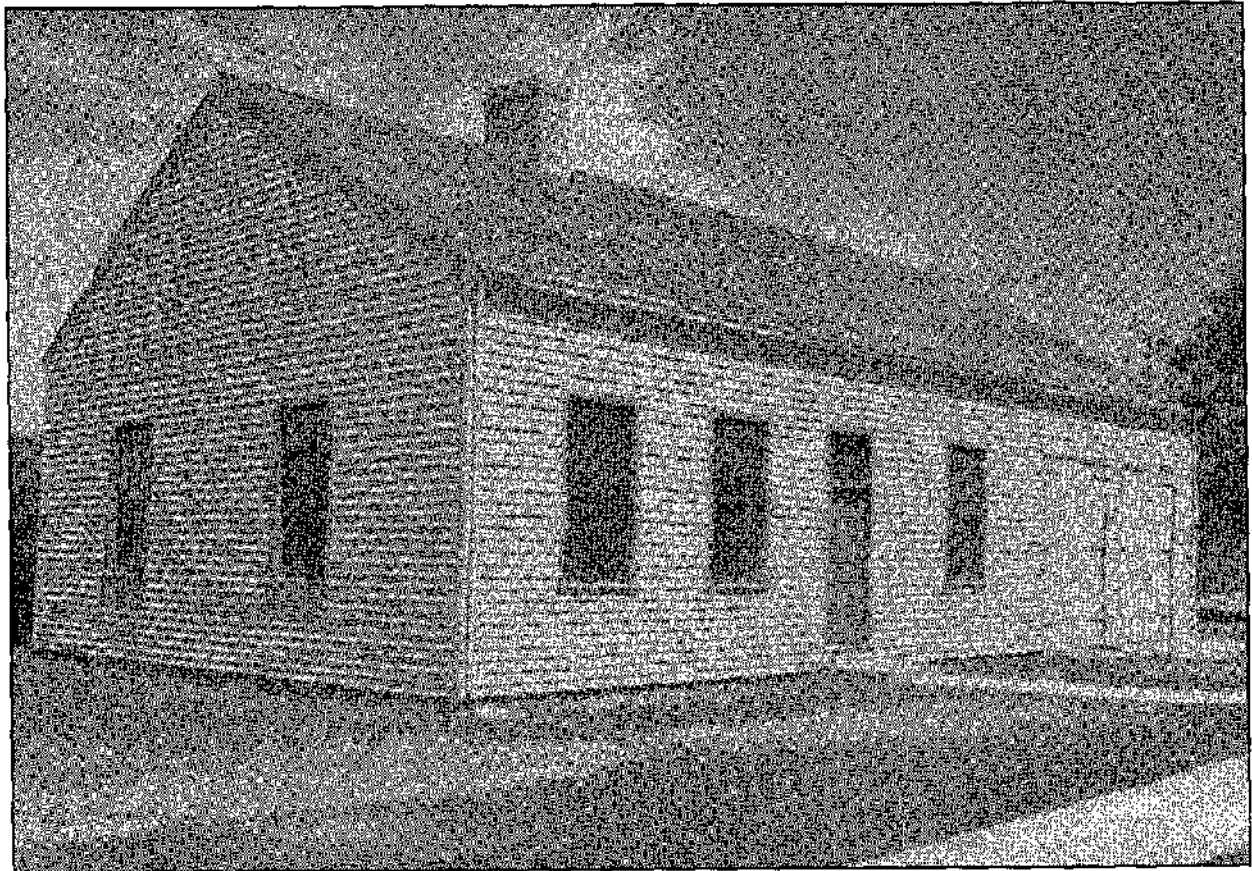
HS-11, Post Headquarters/Ordnance Storage. Construction of frame and interior chimney (Southeast elevation). 1979.



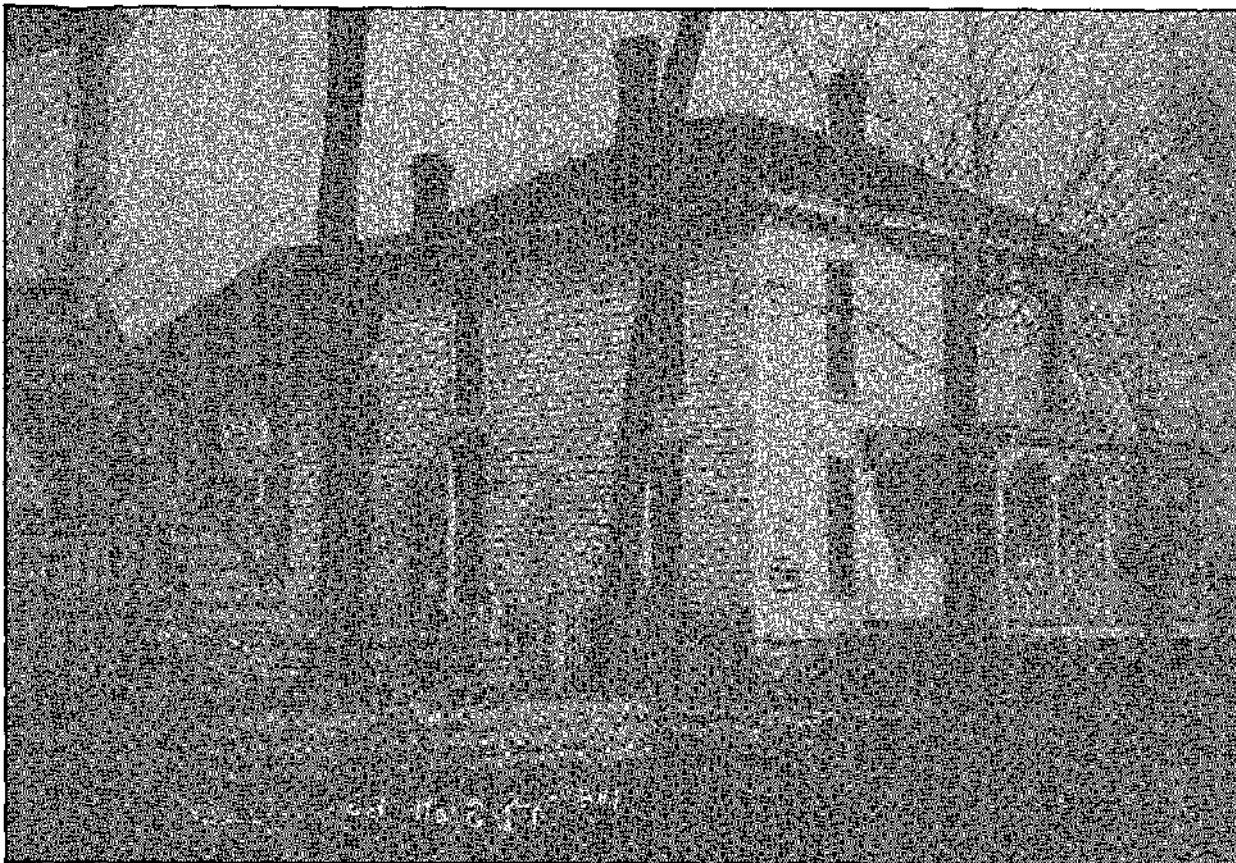
HS-11, Post Headquarters. Reconstruction in progress (Southwest elevation). HS-1, Officers Quarters, at right. 1979.



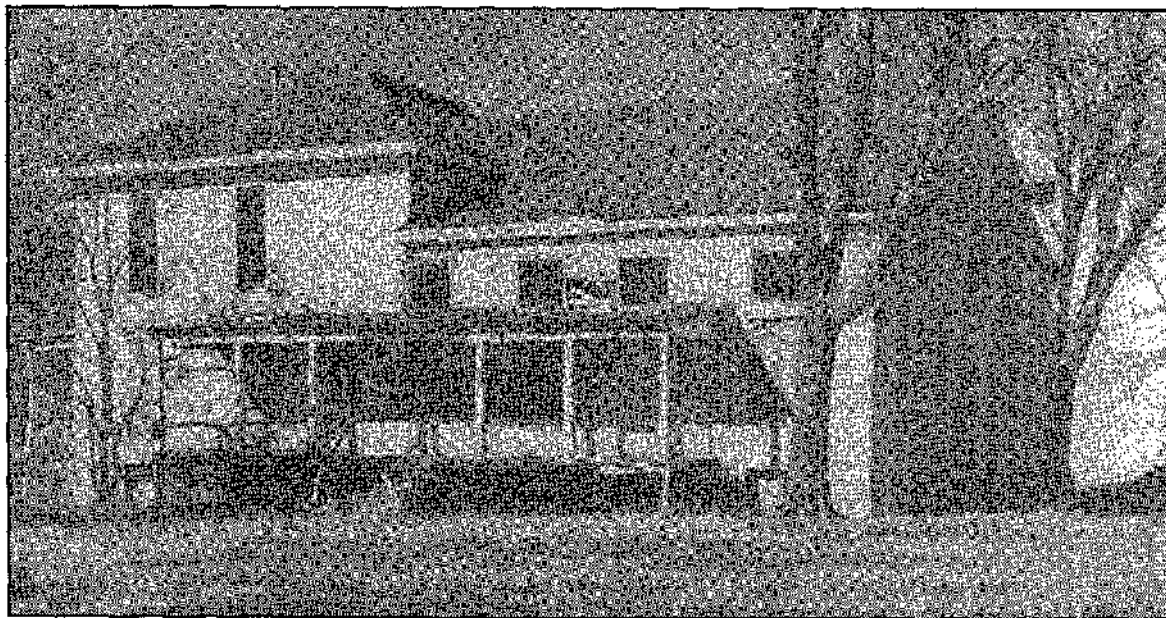
HS-11, Post Headquarters. Reconstruction in progress (Southeast elevation). Ordnance/Artillery Storeroom at north end of building. View from Parade Ground. HS-1, Officers Quarters at right. 1979.



HS-11, reconstructed Post Headquarters/Ordnance Storeroom. Reconstruction completed in 1980 (Southwest elevation), 1985.



HS-12, former Quartermaster Storehouse in use as a private residence (Southwest elevation). Circa 1905. Note: rear section of house has original roofline. Front of structure enlarged and includes addition of second story.



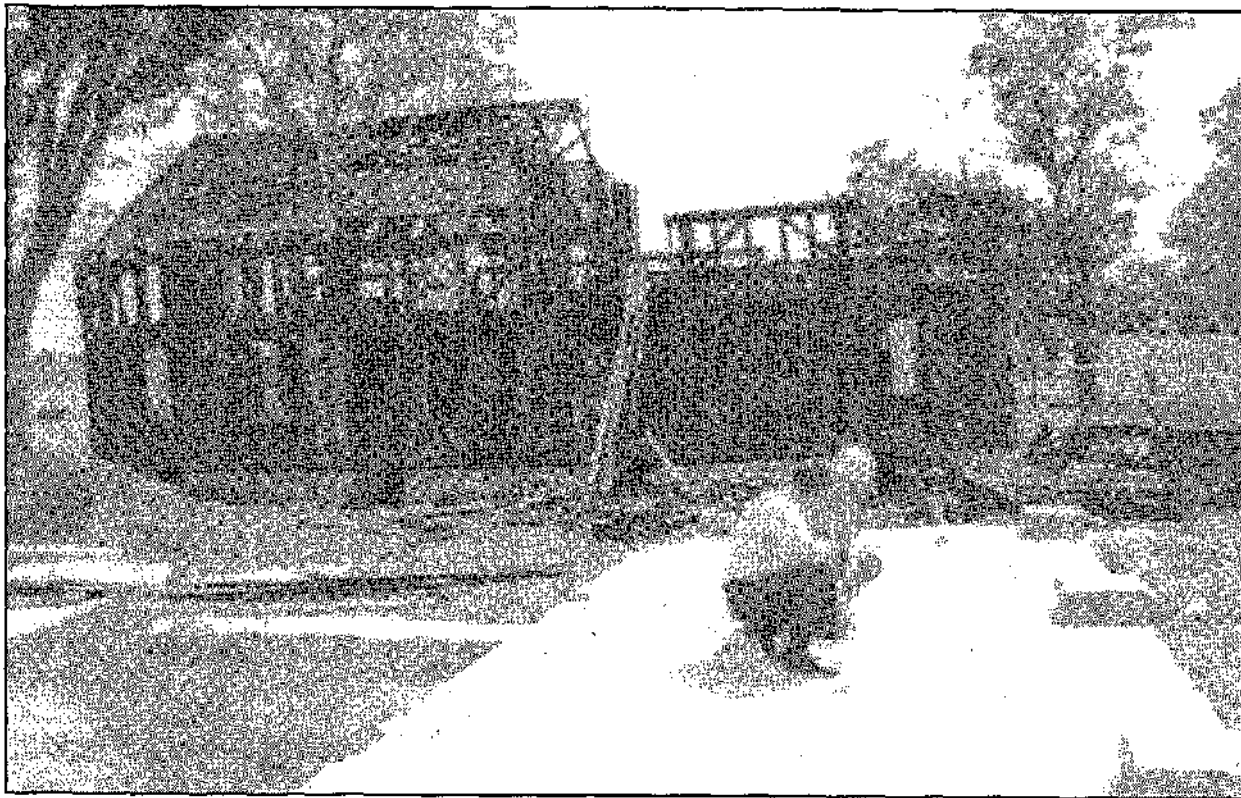
HS-12, former Quartermaster Storehouse, pre-stabilization (East elevation). 1972.



HS-12, former Quartermaster Storehouse, initial stabilization (Southwest elevation). 1976.



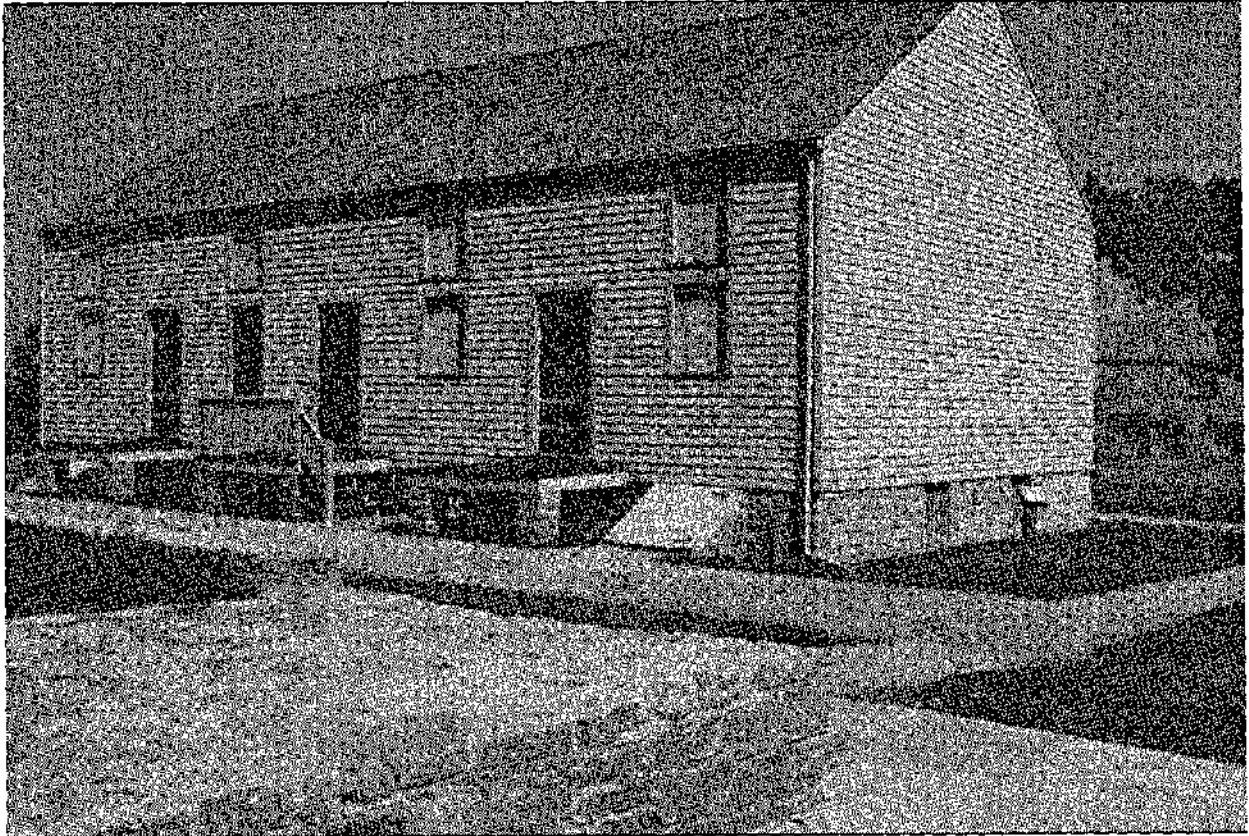
HS-12, Quartermaster Storehouse. Restoration of west subsurface foundation (West elevation). 1976.



HS-12, Quartersmaster Storehouse. Restoration in progress with original framing timbers, braces and rafters exposed (West elevation). 1976.



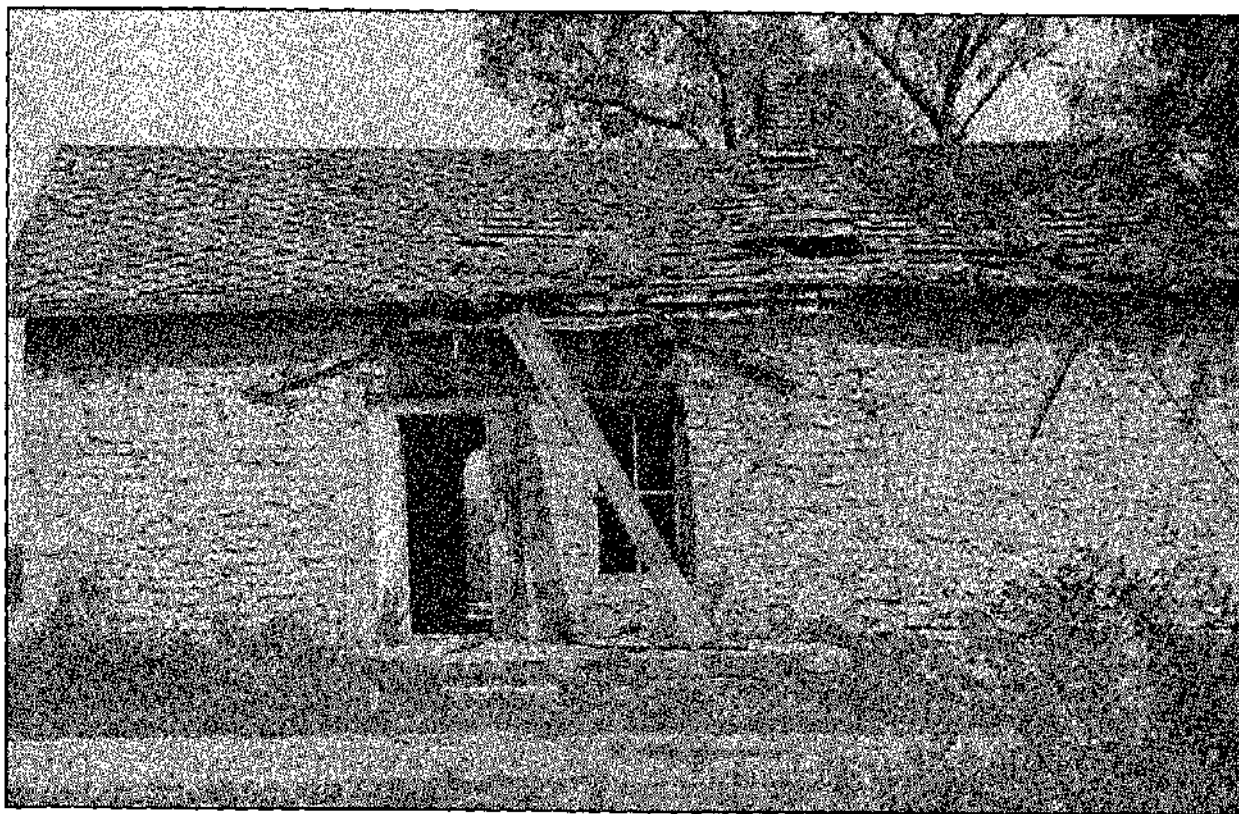
HS-12, Quartersmaster Storehouse. Restoration in progress (Southeast elevation). 1976.



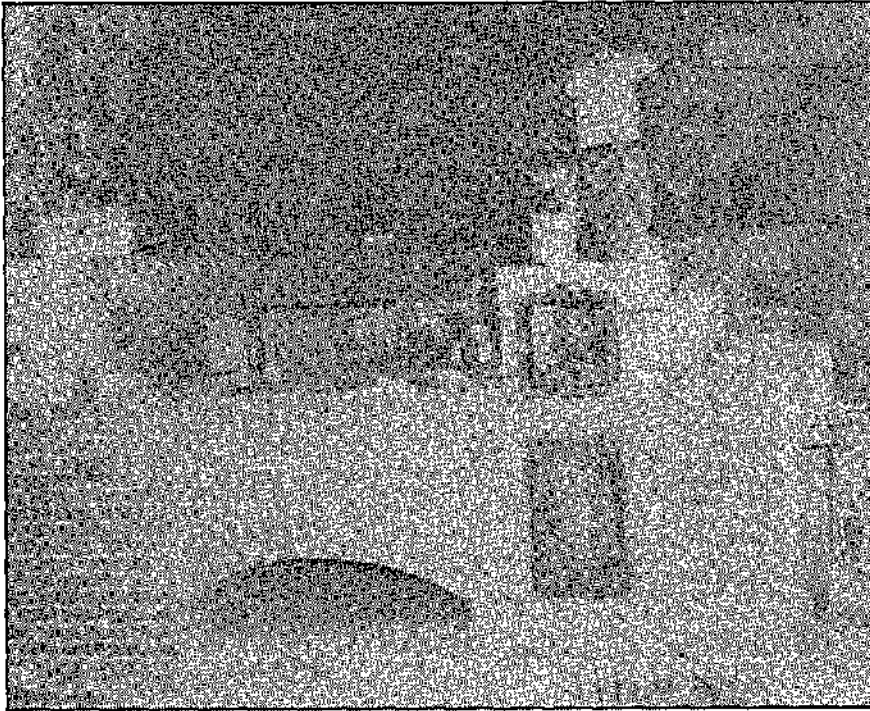
HS-12, restored Quartermaster Storehouse (Southwest elevation). 1980.



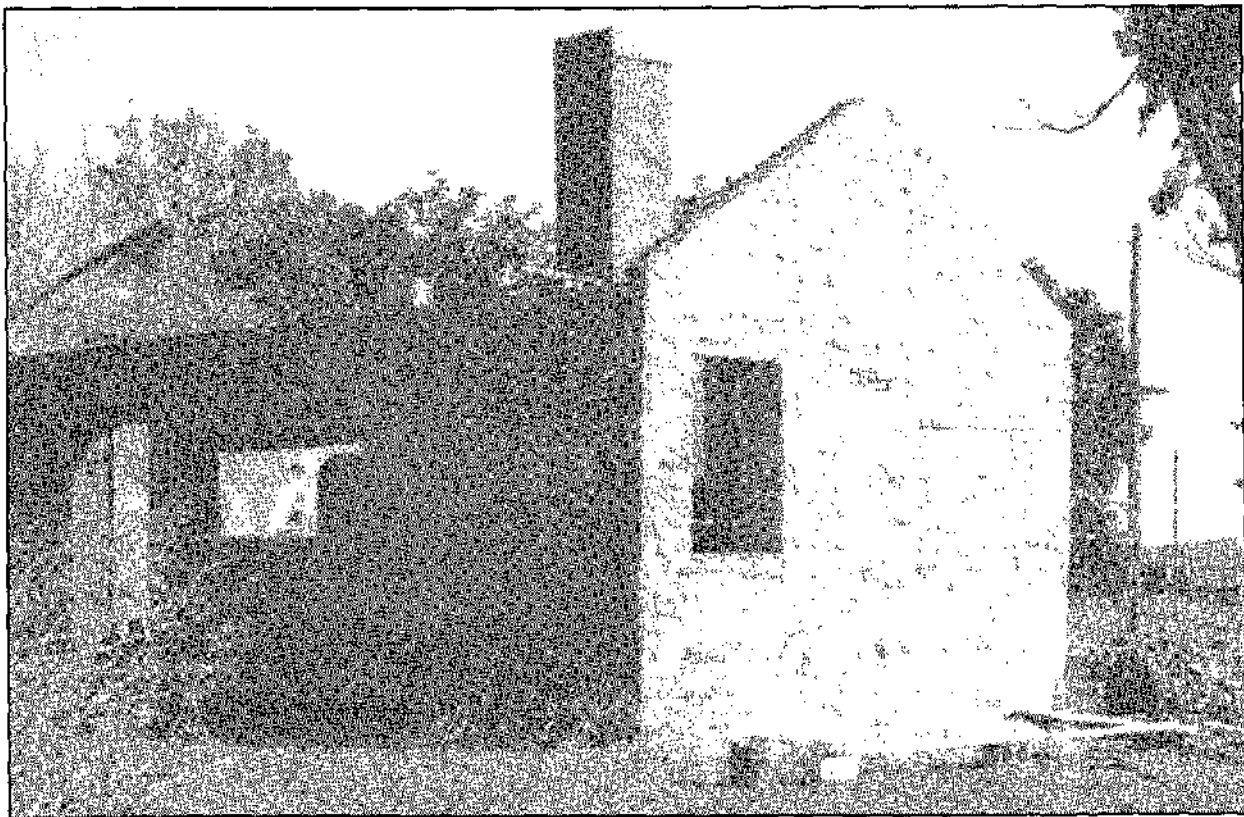
HS-14, Post Bakery, was used as a residence (Southwest elevation). October 1966.



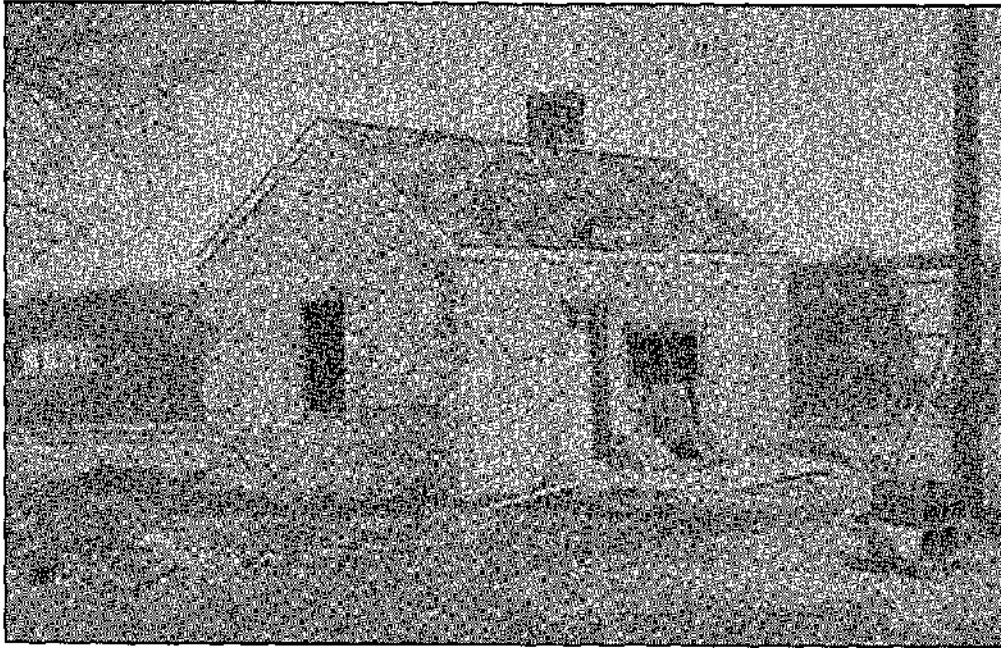
HS-14, abandoned Post Bakery (South elevation). 1972-1973.



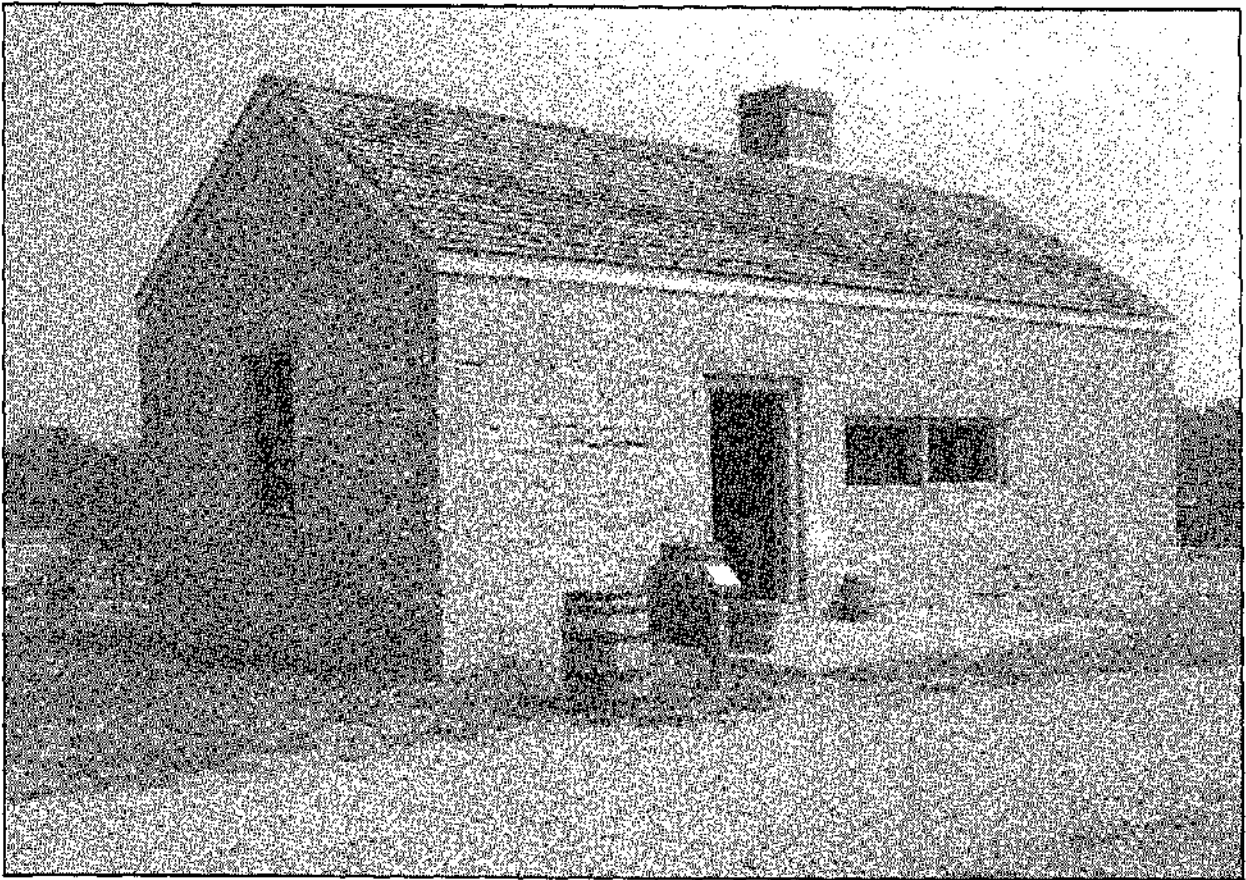
HS-14, Post Bakery, construction of bake oven and interior chimney (West elevation). 1974.



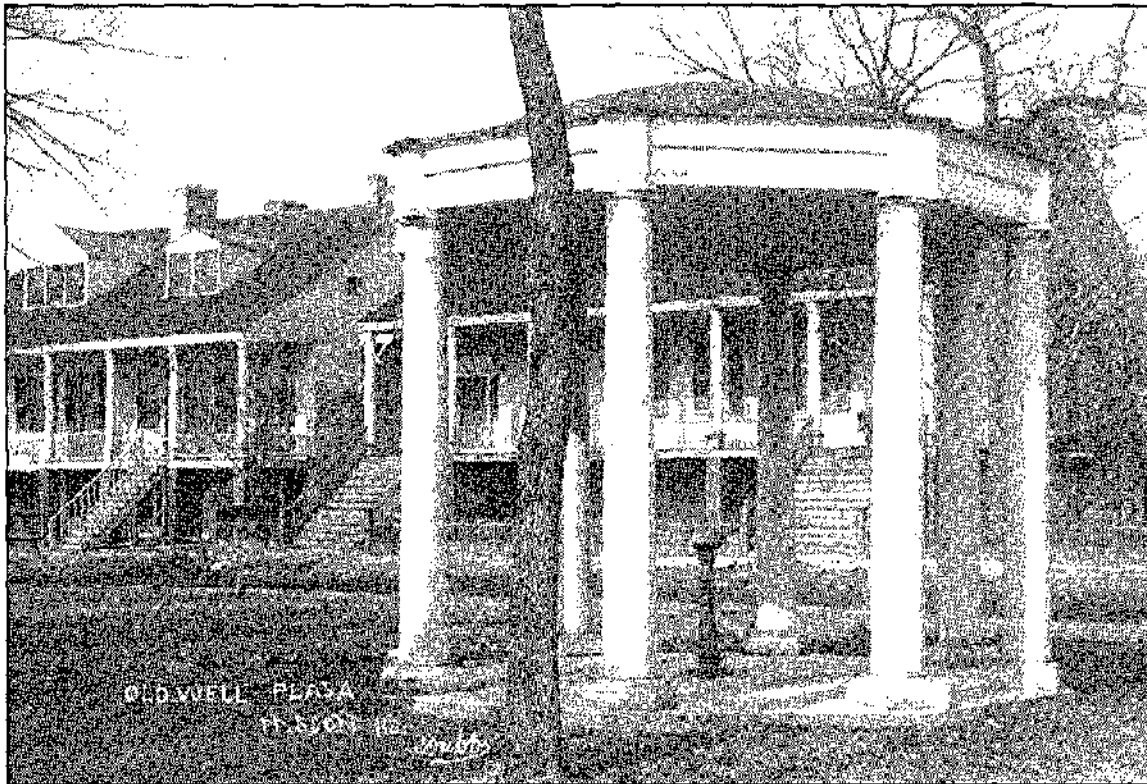
HS-14, Post Bakery, restoration in progress. Exterior walls restored and construction of the bake oven completed (Southeast elevation). 1974.



HS-14, Post Bakery, restoration almost completed (Southwest elevation). 1974.



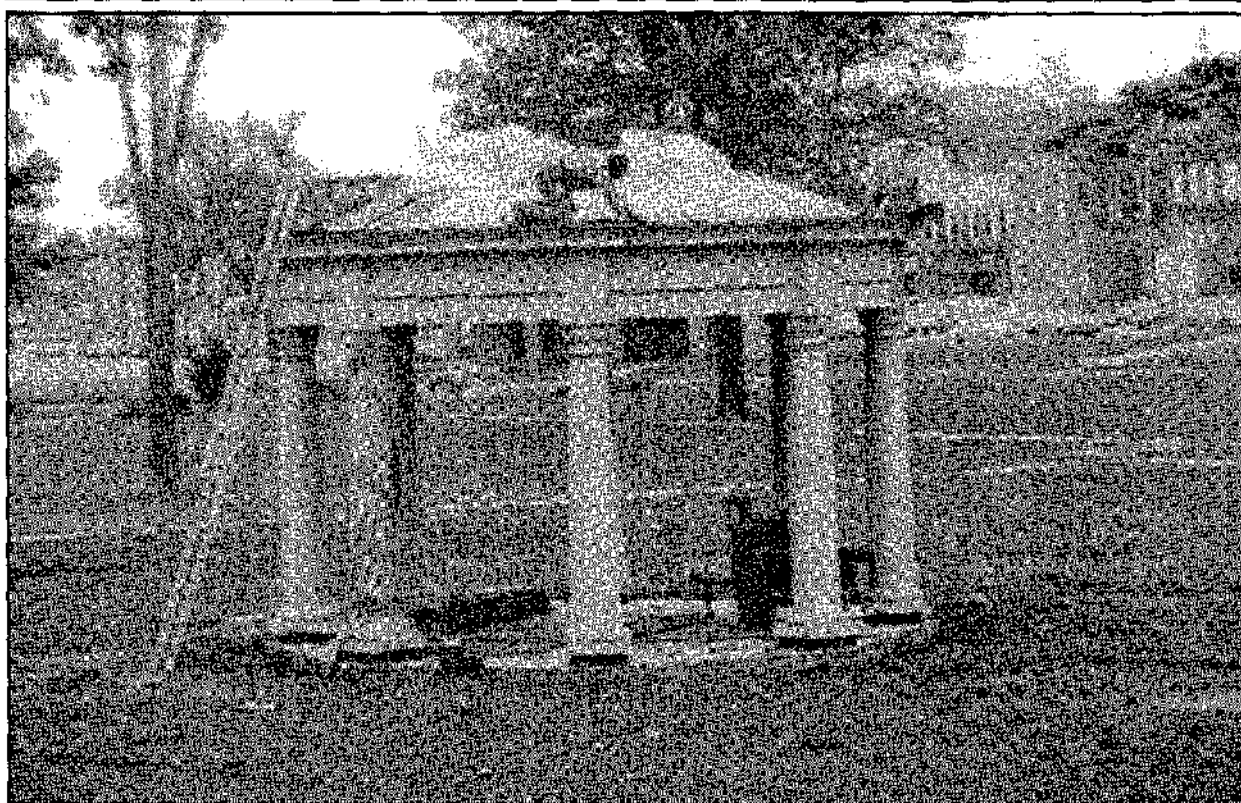
HS-14, restored Post Bakery. Restoration completed in 1974 (Southwest elevation). 1980.



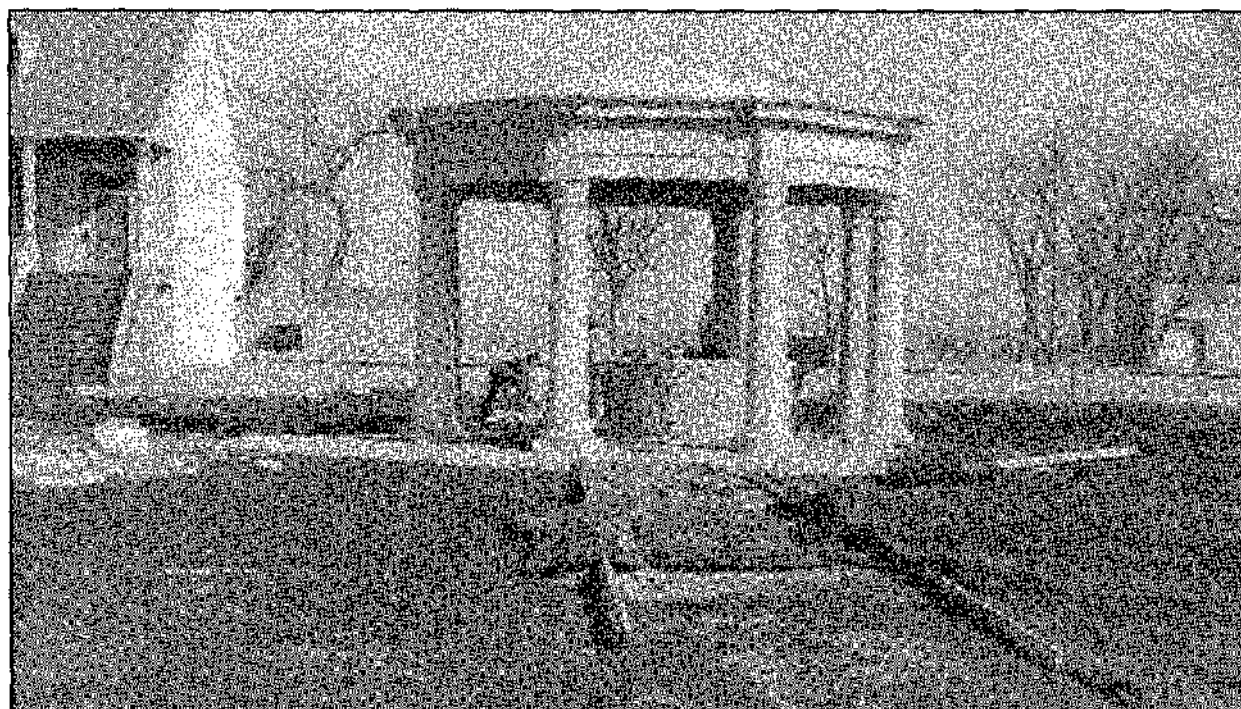
HS-15, Well Canopy. First reconstructed well canopy (Southeast elevation). Circa 1900. Background: HS-1 (left) and HS-2 (center).



HS-15, Well Canopy. First reconstructed well canopy (Southwest elevation), circa 1900 and Bandstand (right), circa 1920s.



HS-15, Well Canopy. Second reconstruction in progress (Northwest elevation), August 1977.

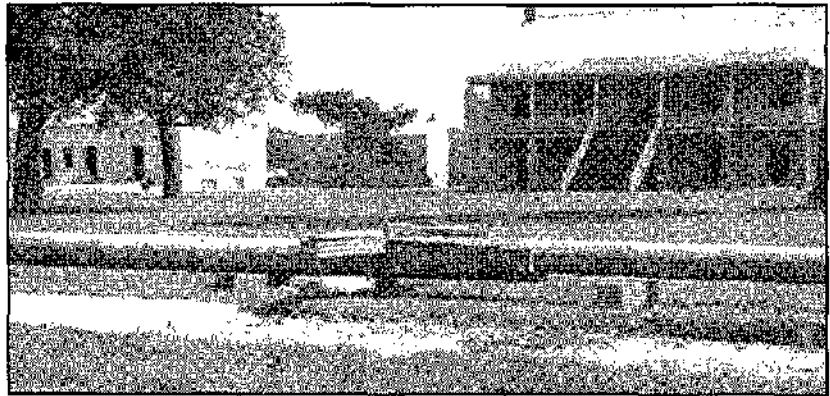


HS-15, Well Canopy. Second reconstructed well canopy (South elevation), December 1977. Note: construction of Cottonwood Stone walkway in progress. Background: restored buildings, from left to right, HS-2 (Officers Quarters), HS-36 (Storage Building), and HS-32 (Carriage House).

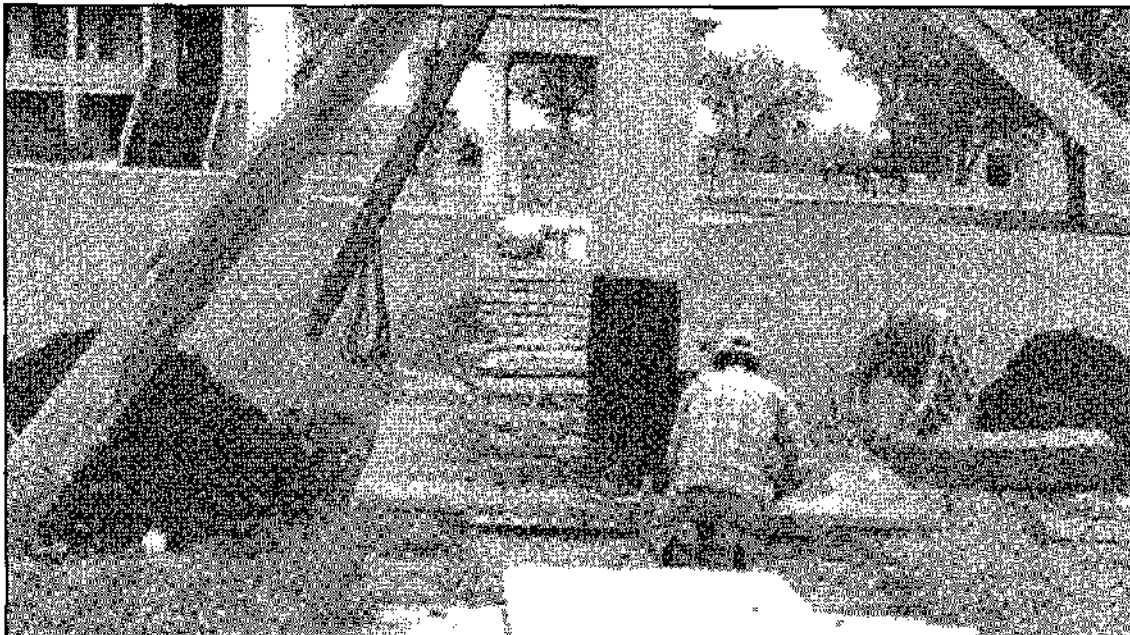


HS-15, Well Canopy. Second reconstructed well canopy (Southwest elevation). 1980. Background: restored buildings, left to right, HS-4 (Officers Quarters) and HS-12 (Quartermaster Storehouse).

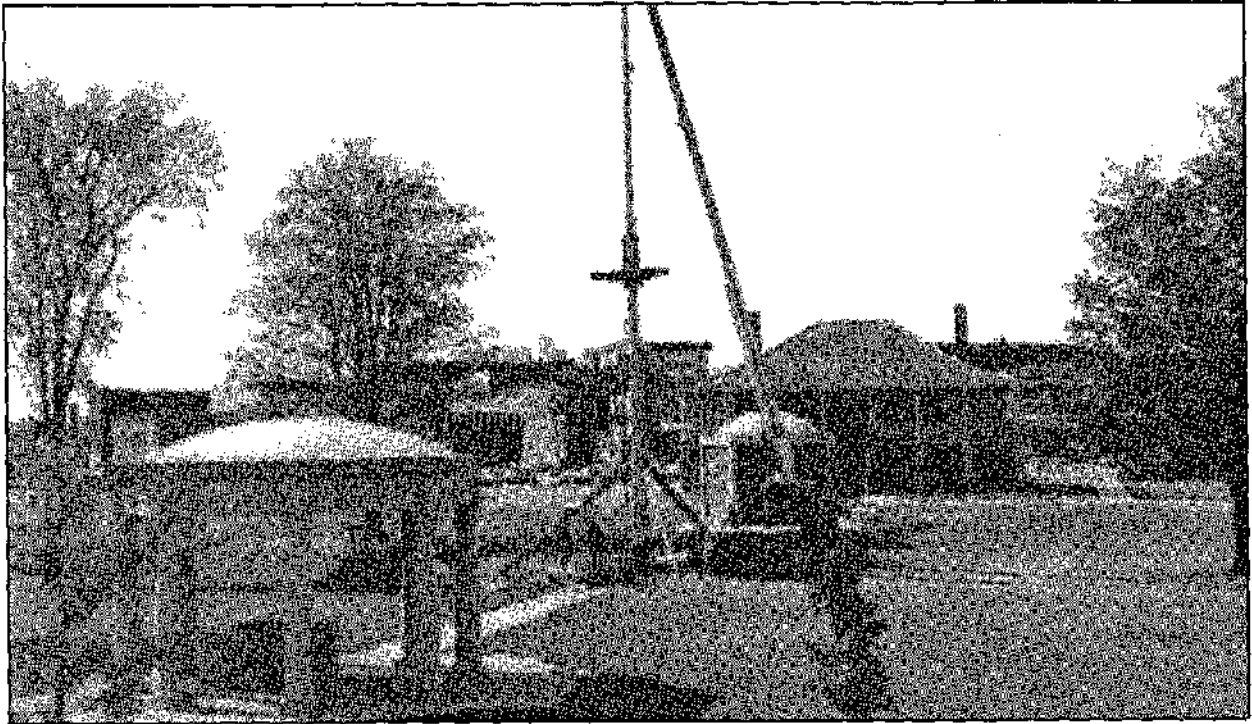
HS-16: Flagpole. Site of flagpole at center of Parade Ground, with partially assembled flagpole (Southwest elevation). September 1981. Background, left to right, HS-12 (Quartermaster Storehouse), HS-30 (Quartermaster Building), and HS-6 (Infantry Barracks).



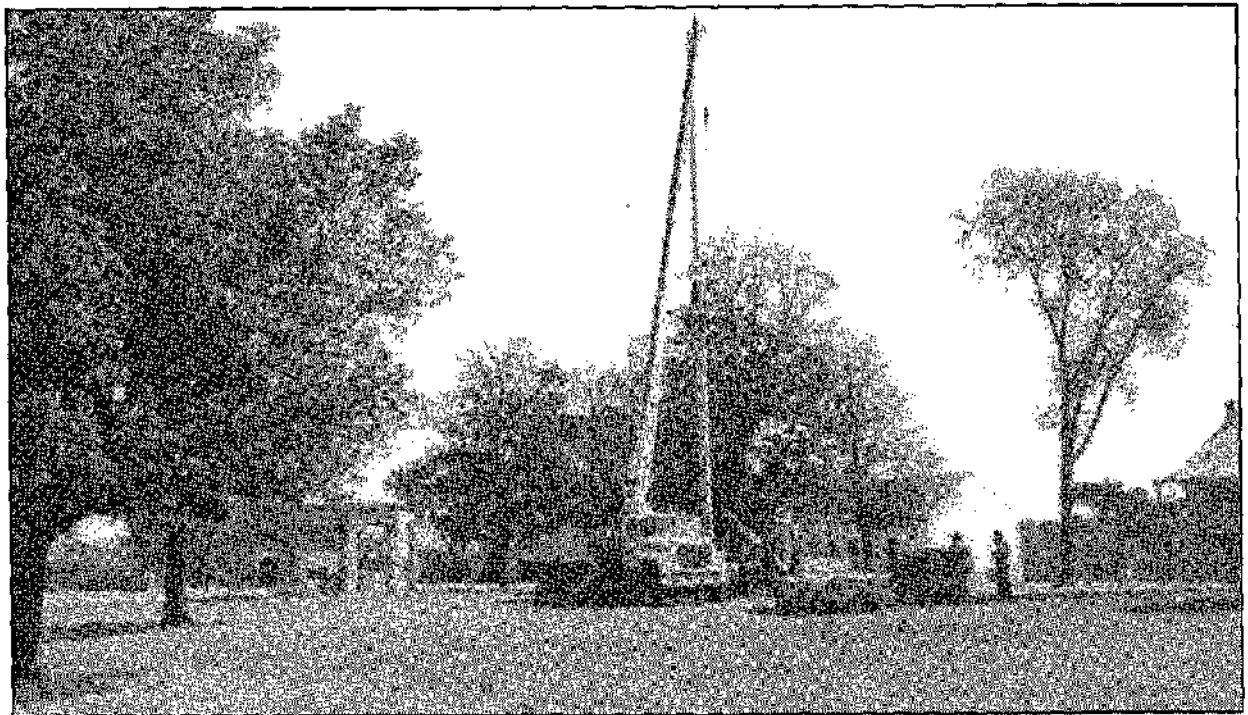
HS-16, Flagpole. Excavating foundation for subsurface flagpole base (Southwest elevation). Background: Assembled flagpole. September 1981.



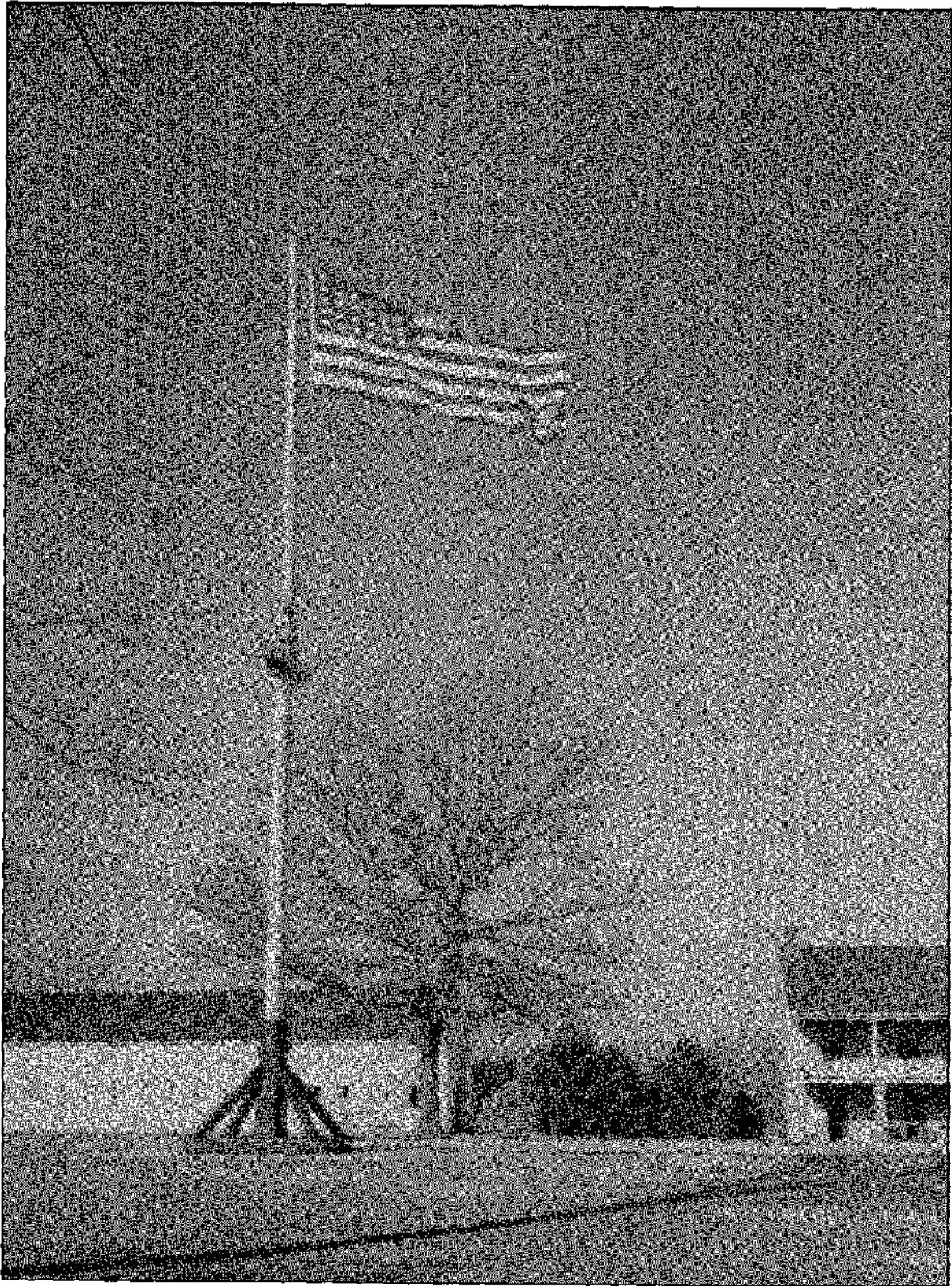
HS-16: Flagpole. Construction of footer foundation to support above-ground platform surrounding base of flagpole (South elevation). Background, left to right, HS-2 (Officers Quarters), HS-15 (Well Canopy), and HS-32 (Carriage House).



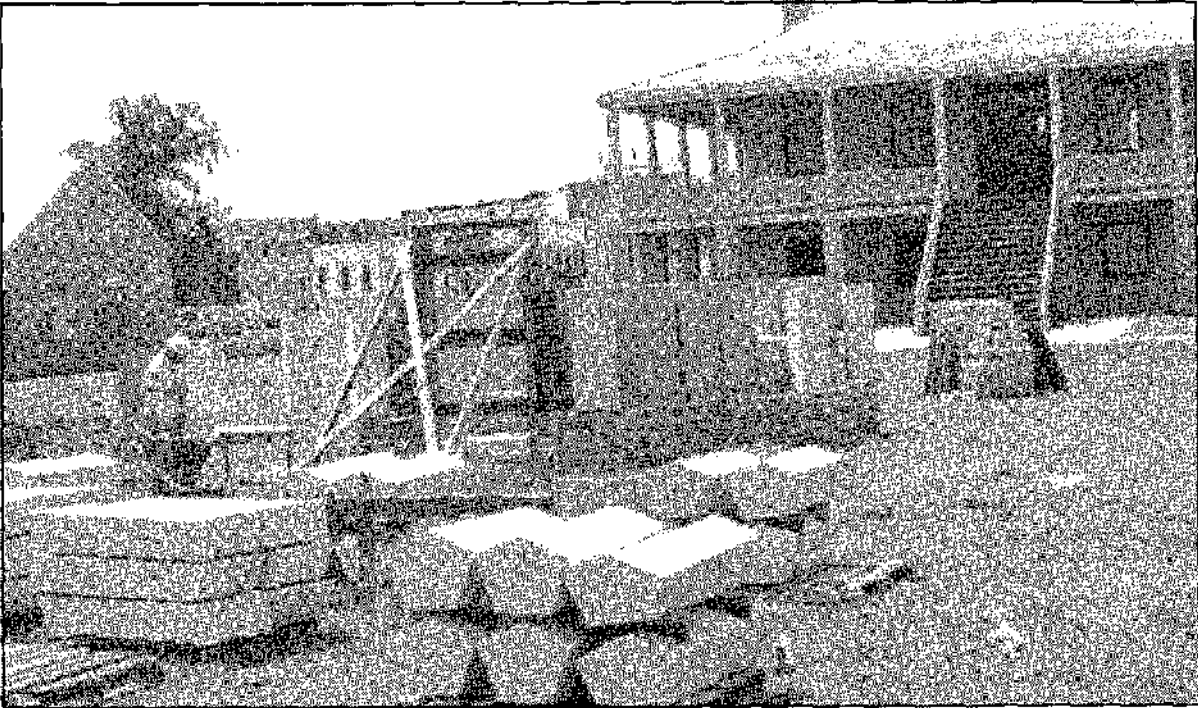
HS-16, Flagpole. Installation of Flagpole (North elevation). September 1981. Note buildings, front to back, HS-15 (Well Canopy), Flagpole, HS-17 (Powder Magazine) and HS-8 (Post Hospital/Visitor Center).



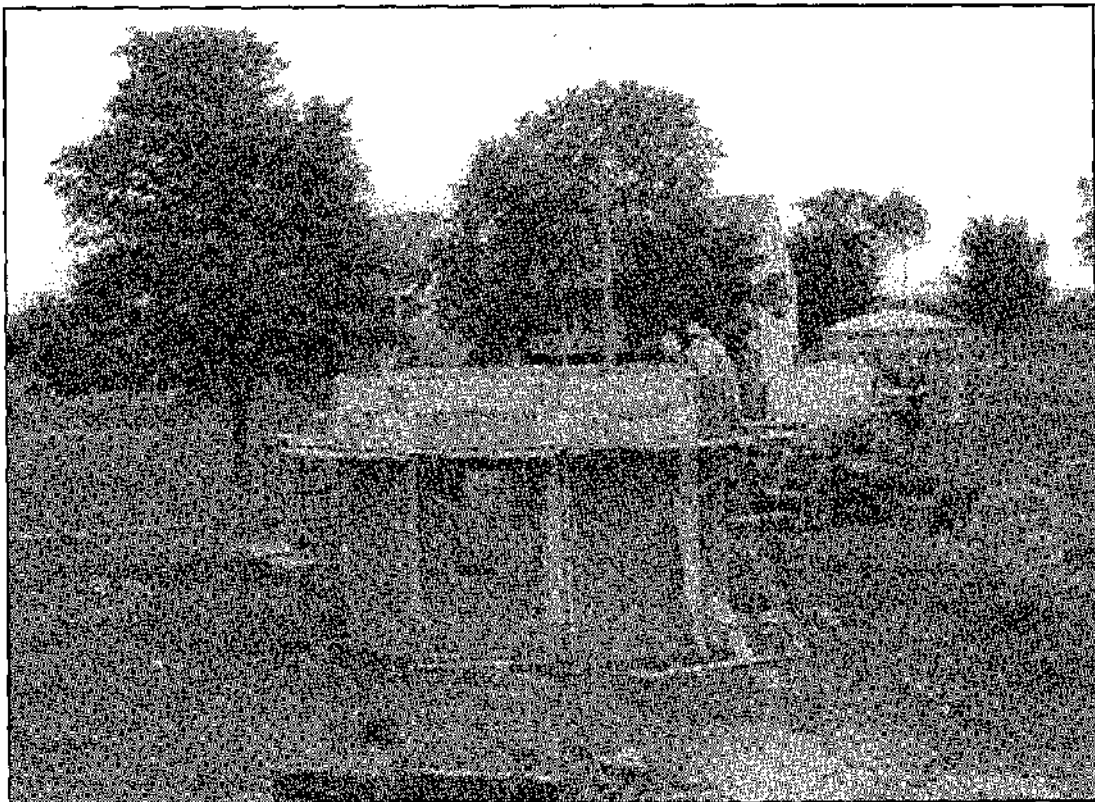
HS-16, Flagpole. Installation of Flagpole (Southwest elevation). September 1981. Note buildings, left to right, HS-15 (Well Canopy), HS-4 (Officers Quarters), HS-12 (Quartermaster Storehouse) and HS-6 (Infantry Barracks).



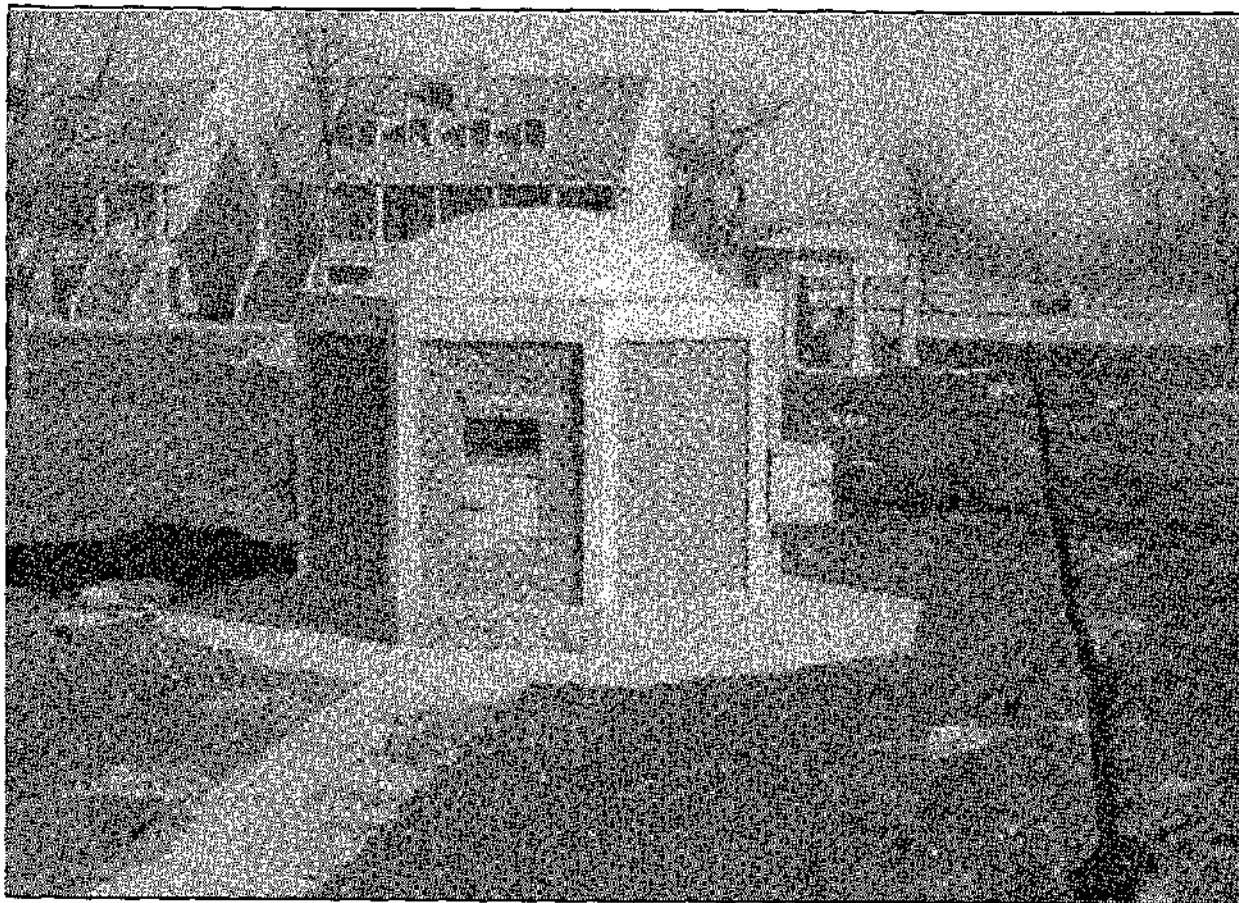
HS-16, reconstructed Flagpole (West elevation). September 1981. Note buildings, left to right, reconstructed HS-10 (Dragoon Stables) and HS-5 (Dragoon Barracks).



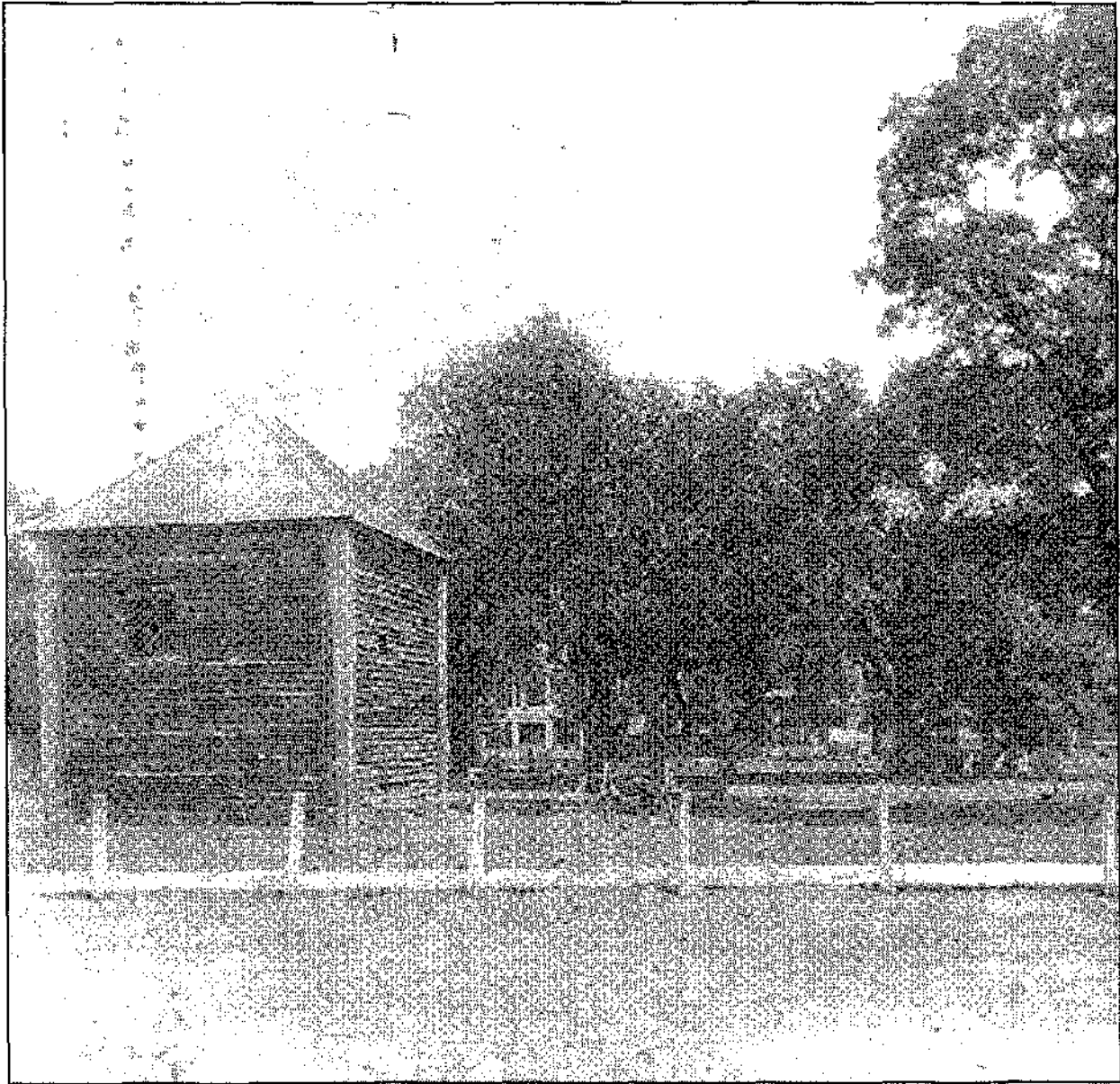
HS-17, Powder Magazine, reconstruction in progress (Northwest elevation). 1978. Note buildings, left to right, HS-9 (Post Guardhouse) and HS-8 (Post Hospital/Visitor Center).



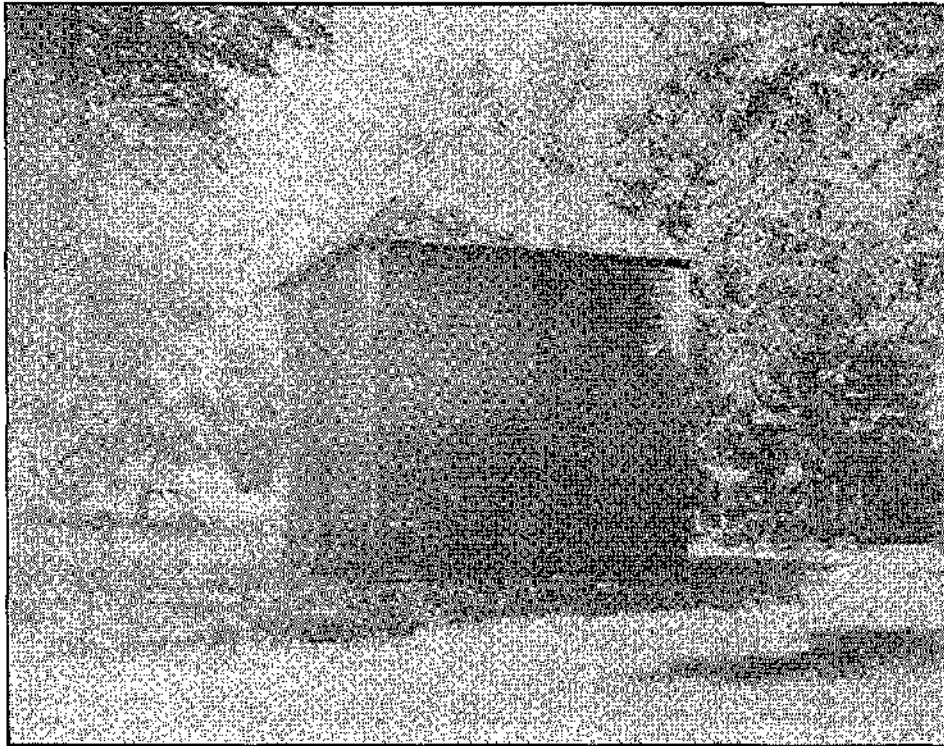
HS-17, Powder Magazine, reconstruction in progress (South elevation). 1978. Note buildings, left to right, HS-1 and HS-2 (Officers Quarters) and HS-15 (Well Canopy).



HS-17, reconstructed Powder Magazine (South elevation). 1979. Note buildings, left to right, HS-1 and HS-2 (Officers Quarters) and HS-15 (Well Canopy).



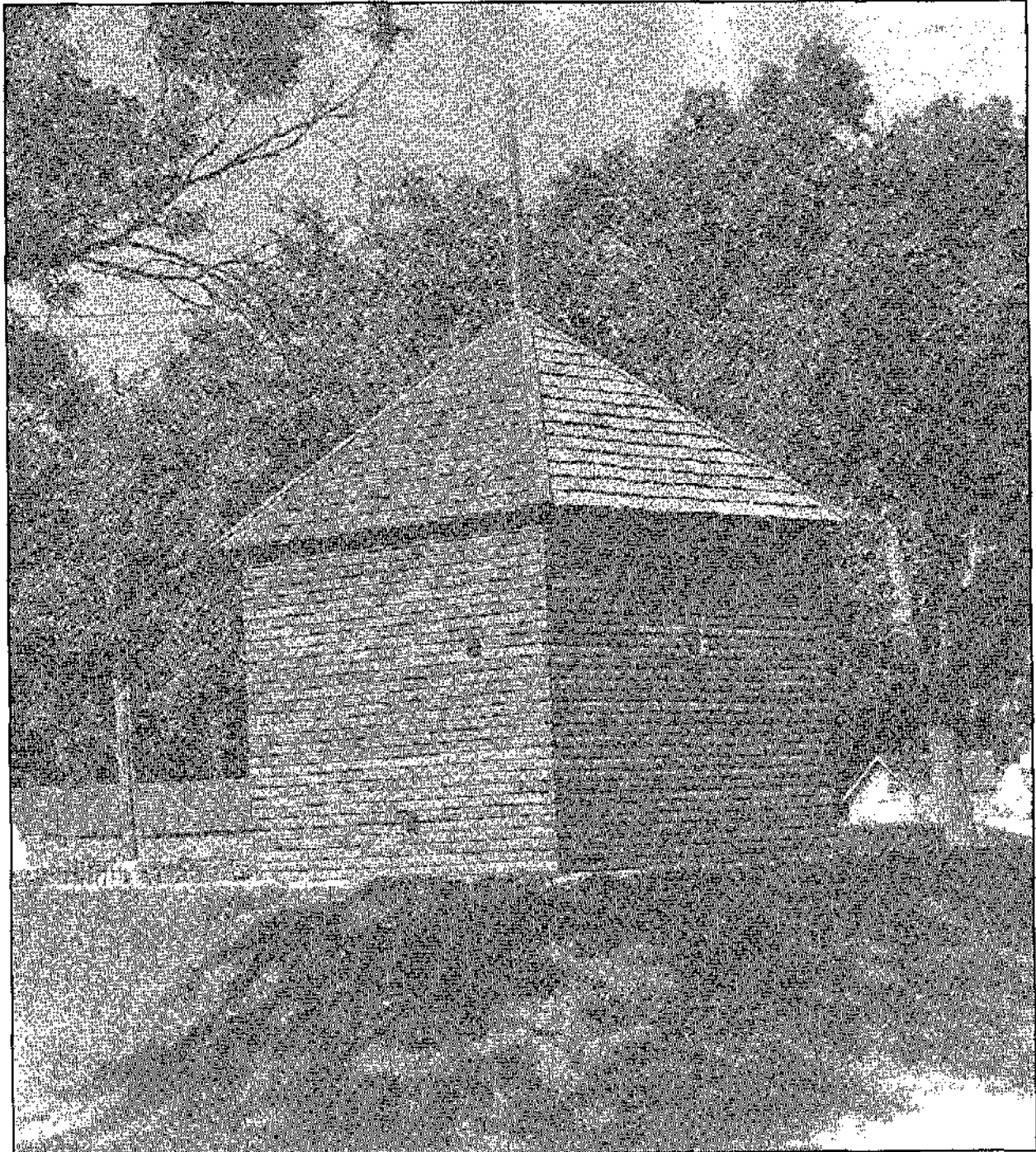
HS-19, Lunette Blair, the relocated Civil War blockhouse (South elevation). Circa 1920s. Formerly located on Carroll Plaza (Parade Ground) between the present reconstructed Powder Magazine and the Post Hospital/ Visitor Center.



HS-19, Lunette Blair (South elevation), relocated to the northeast corner of Carroll Plaza. Circa 1930s. Note buildings, left to right, HS-2 (Officers Quarters staircase) and HS-4 (Officers Quarters).



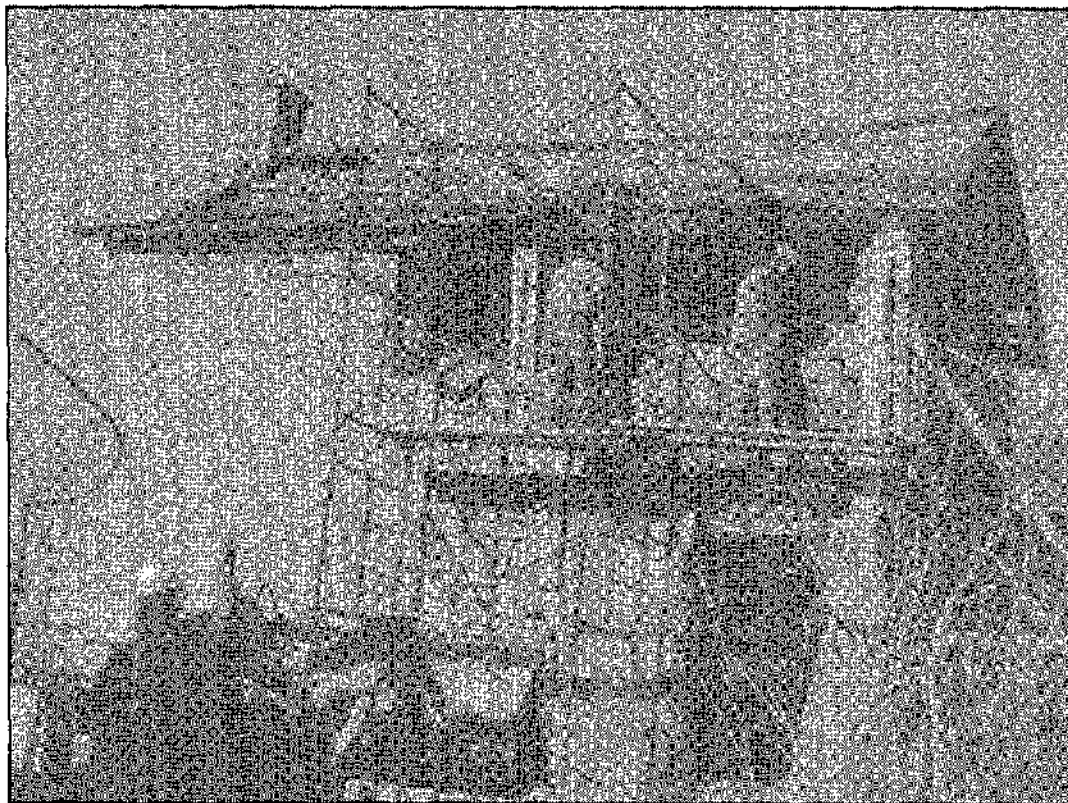
HS-19, Lunette Blair (East elevation). Moved to northeast corner of Carroll Plaza in front of the site of the former Infantry Barracks (present HS-6 reconstructed). Circa 1950s.



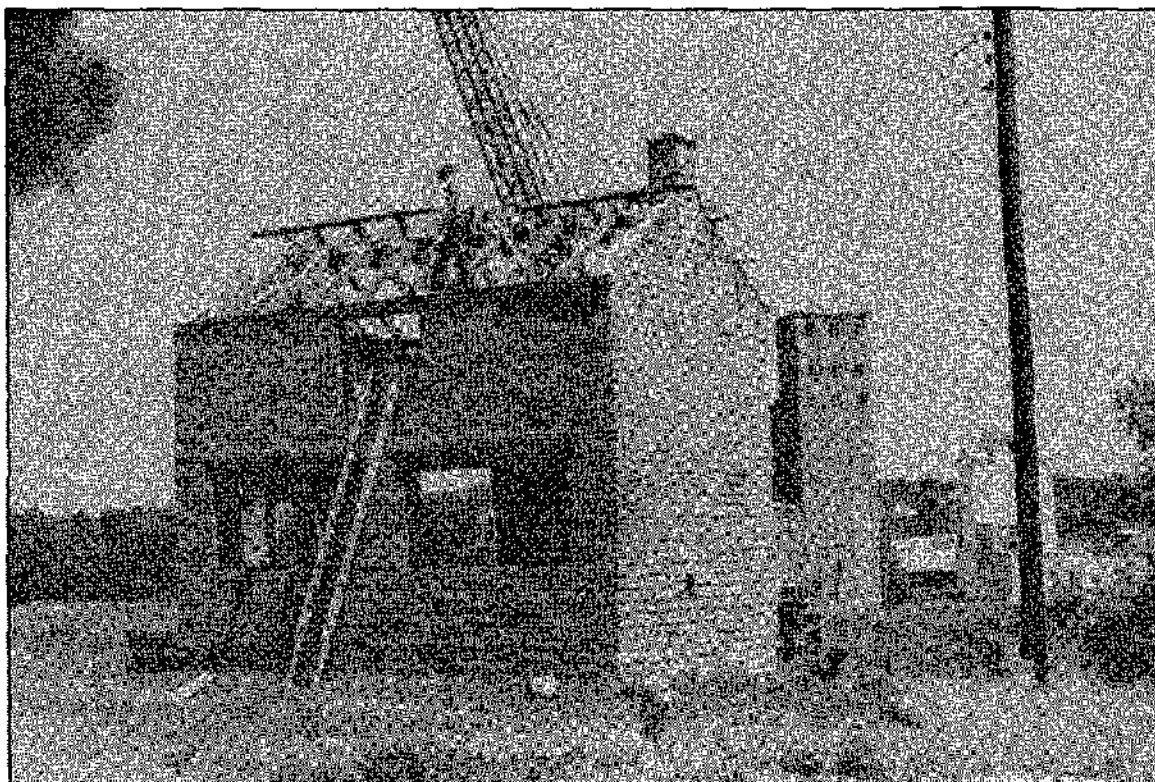
HS-19, restored Lunette Blair (Northeast elevation) in Blair Park from 1967 to 1977. Blair Park was established during the Fort Scott Urban Renewal Project, and was behind Officers Row immediately northeast of HS-31 (Carriage House). Note buildings, left to right, HS-36 and HS-35 (original Storage Buildings) and HS-31.



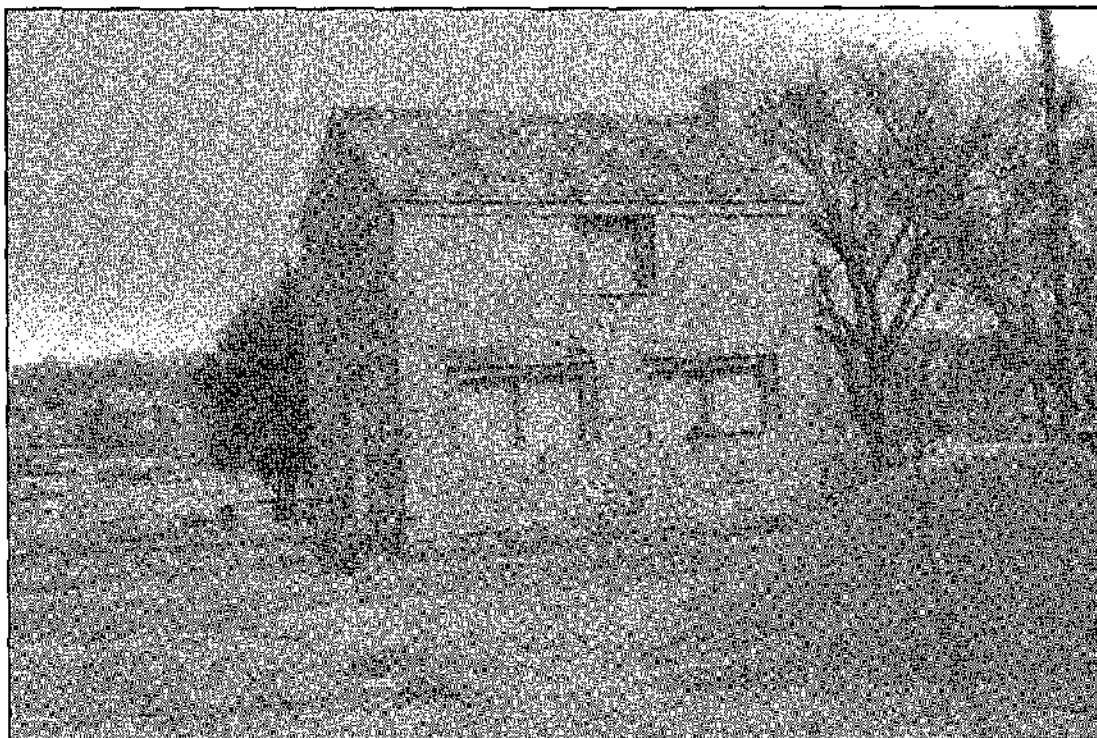
HS-30, Quartersmaster Building (West elevation). Historic Building Survey, 1966.



HS-30, Quartersmaster Building (East elevation). Exterior restoration in progress, 1976.



HS-30, Quartersmaster Building (Southwest elevation). Exterior restoration in progress, 1976.



HS-30, Quartersmaster Building (Northwest elevation). Exterior restoration completed, December 1976



HS-31, Stone Carriage House (South elevation), located behind HS-1. Pre-restoration, during Historic Building Survey, 1966.



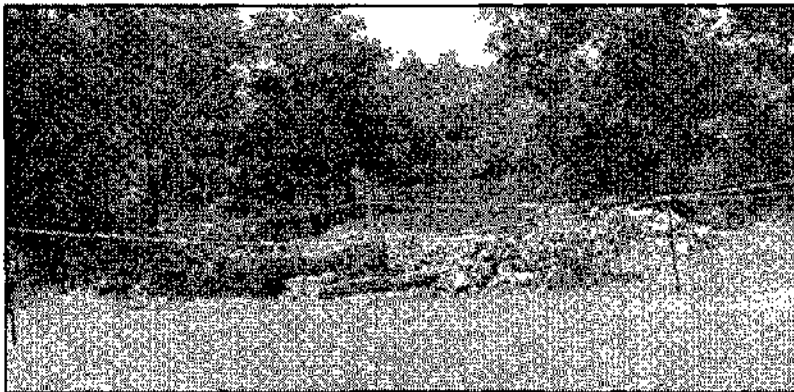
HS-32, Carriage House (South elevation), behind HS-4. Pre-restoration during Historic Building Survey, 1966.



Stone residence razed during Fort Scott's Urban Renewal Project from 1965 to 1970, because it was not part of the site's historic period from 1842 to 1873. Formerly located on Lincoln Avenue, across from and south of the razed city jail where the present Post Guardhouse (HS-9) is located. Circa 1970. Note: Research indicates that this building was mistaken for HS-33. HS-33 was a small frame building located directly across from the former City Jail and the present reconstructed Post Guardhouse on the east side of Lincoln Avenue. It was razed prior to the Fort Scott Urban Renewal Project.



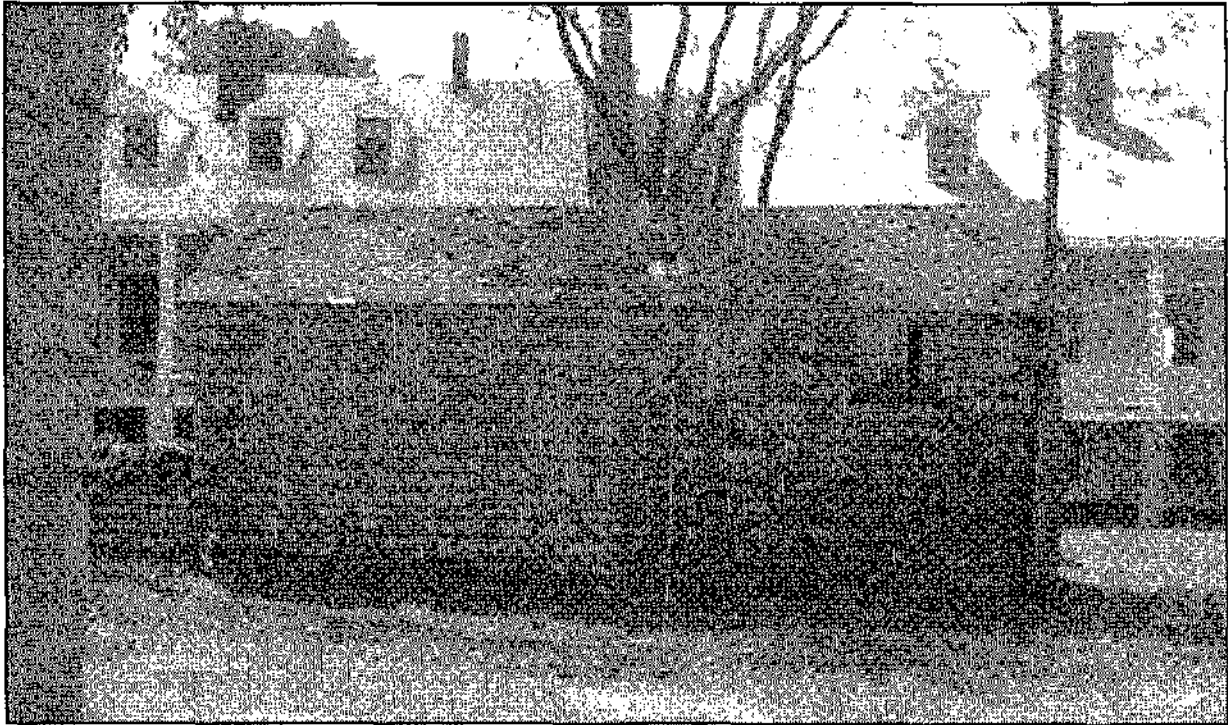
HS-34, building ruins (Northeast elevation), formerly located between the northwest corner of Post Headquarters and the service road. Circa 1970s.



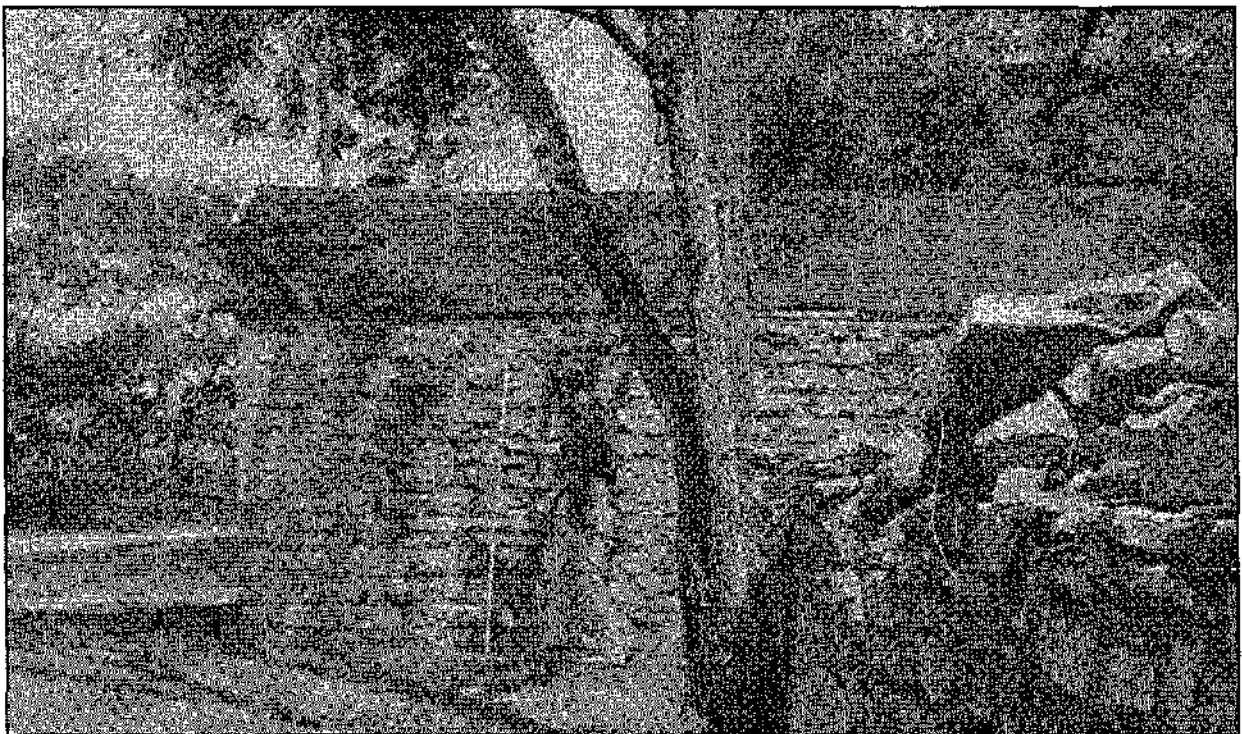
HS-34 (Southeast elevation). NPS Midwest Archeology center field investigation, 1986. Results determined that the ruins were of an early twentieth-century structure. Therefore the above-ground ruins were removed and the subsurface foundation was left in situ.



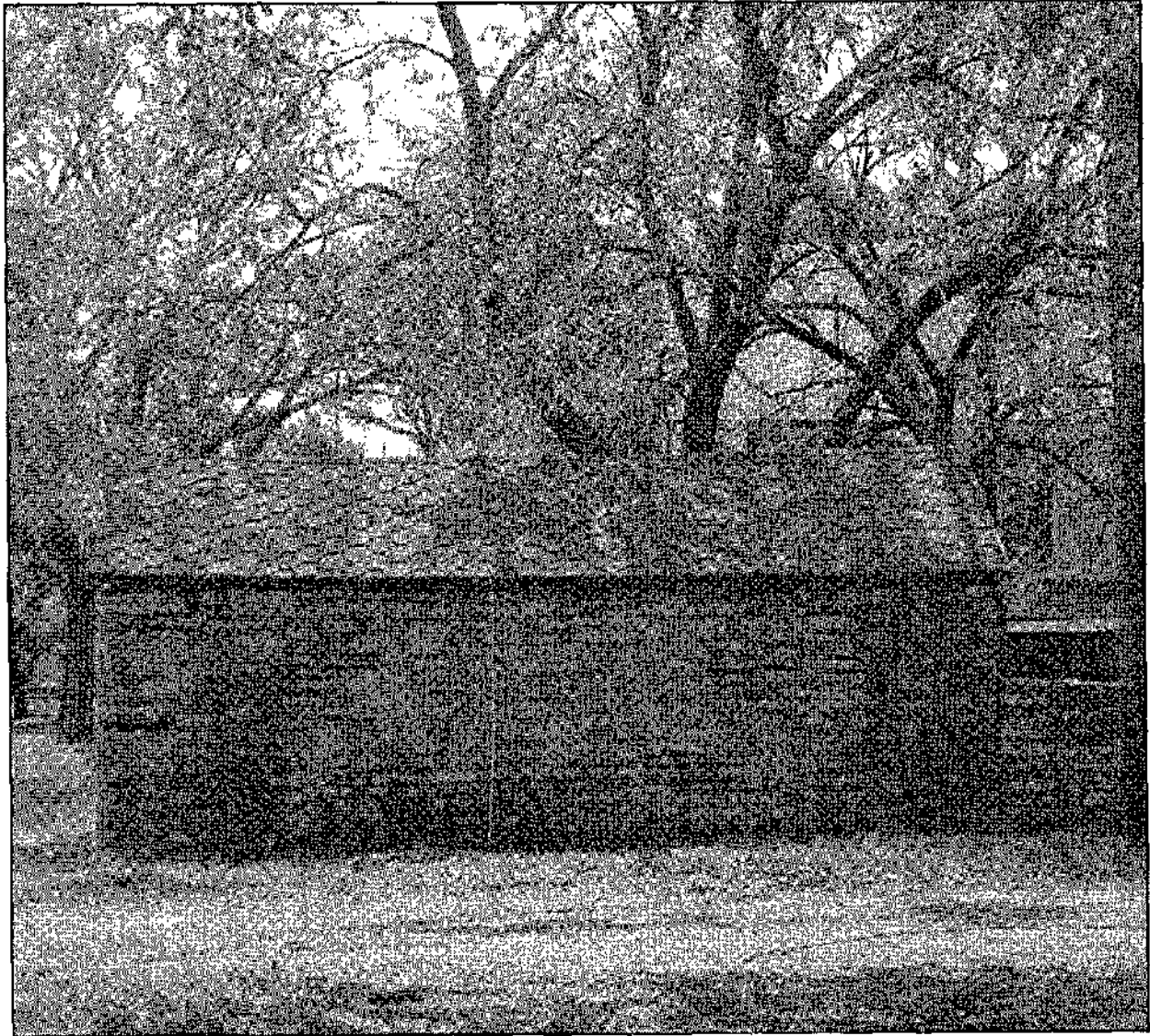
HS-34 (East elevation). NPS Archeologist Bob Nickel at archeological trench. 1986.



HS-35, Stone Outbuilding (North elevation). Original storage building behind HS-1 and HS-2, before restoration during Historic Building Survey, 1966.



HS-35 (South elevation) before restoration during Historic Building Survey, 1966.



HS-36, Stone Outbuilding (North elevation). Original storage building behind HS-2 before restoration during Historic Building Survey, 1966.

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MIDWEST REGION

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December 21, 2001

H22 (CRSP-CR)

Memorandum

To: Manager, Denver Service Center
Attention: Technical Information Center, Information
and Production Services Division

From: Chief, Cultural Resources, Midwest Region

Subject: Transmittal of "The Post on the Marmaton: A Historic
Resource Study of Fort Scott National Historic Site," by
Daniel J. Holder and Hal K. Rothman

We are pleased to provide you with a copy of the recently
completed subject report. If you have any questions please
contact Senior Historian Donald L. Stevens, Jr. at 402-514-9353.

Enclosure