SABERS AND SADDLES: THE SECOND REGIMENT OF UNITED STATES DRAGOONS AT FORT WASHITA, 1842-1845

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Abstract: Several authors have written about the Second Dragoons, Fort Washita, or interpretation. But, very few if any writers have discussed all three together in detail. This thesis is written from a passion I have for the site and the men of the Second Dragoons who served there. It is to be a foundation for creating interpretive programs about the Second Dragoons stationed at the fort from 1841 to 1845. Through this study, an historian can learn about interpretive guidelines, such as choosing proper period clothing, in order to teach history to visitors of Fort Washita. But, it is also a history presenting what Second Dragoons soldiers were stationed there and what their lives were like. This includes commissioned officers and the positions they held such as post commander and acting assistant quartermaster. Also it looks into the lives of the enlisted men including daily routines and sickness. Some information presents what happened at Fort Washita, but due to lack of information some is a general view of what life was like at the post based on histories of basic military and dragoon life.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A young boy gazed about the site and watched as men and women in nineteenth century clothing wandered around. The boy was me, and the site was Fort Washita located in south central Oklahoma. My family used to take me to the post and watch living history events which included fur trade rendezvous and candlelight tours. These events pertained to the mountain man era, Mexican-American War, and American Civil War. I was intrigued by the history and clothing of the eras, which has made history all the more enjoyable to study. While a volunteer at the site, I began learning about the dragoons who were stationed at Fort Washita during its early years. This has led me to create a history of the Second Dragoons stationed at Fort Washita from 1842 to 1845 so that the information obtained can be used to create interpretive programs directly for the post and perhaps other sites.

This study serves as a background for the interpreter discussing Second Dragoons at Fort Washita. It allows an interpreter to understand the dragoon's duties in a post setting. While it may not be completely detailed information, as new information can always be discovered or old information expanded upon, it outlines the military positions, regimental ranks, and other people whom interpreters may decide to discuss with the public. Also, the sources cited allow the interpreter to research further when he or she decides what areas to focus on.

The interpreter must be aware of guidelines and ideas for interpreting history to the public. According to Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable in *Interpreting for the 21st Century: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture*, "For our purposes interpretation is to give meaning to a 'foreign' landscape or event from the past or present. What is being translated. . . may well be 'foreign' to substantial numbers of visitors."[1] Writers such as Beck, Cable, and Freeman Tilden have written guidelines for interpretation which contain ideas such as revealing truth, interaction with children, and passion. The interpreter is not merely a person who relays facts about ideas, items, and sites, but provides meaning and life to those things. A historical interpreter is not just a reenactor, but a person who does the best of his or her abilities to properly and accurately teach history to the public.

The historian must not only understand how to properly interpret the story of the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita, but must know the role which members of the regiment had at Fort Washita during its early years. Visitors should learn that while the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita had routine lives, the men had important roles in the post's history. The officers held positions such as that of post commander, adjutant, and acting assistant quartermaster, and at least one of these men became famous. These men oversaw the fort and made sure it was supplied. The regiment had the most companies of any unit stationed at the post between 1842 and 1845. Also, the regimental headquarters was briefly at Fort Washita. But, though the names of commissioned officers are easily found and remembered, the enlisted soldiers, hospital personnel, and women's names are harder to find. Yet, these were real people who deserve to be remembered for serving their country and living at Fort Washita, even if they lived ordinary lives.

The interpreter discussing the Second Dragoons can also mention the history of various nations. Of course the unit was part of the United States military. Also, the soldiers had to

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[1] Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing, 1998), 2.

protect Native American nations as part of the United States government's promise to protect them after their removal from east of the Mississippi River. Some of the soldiers were foreigners with their own traditions and beliefs, and thus those nations' histories are entrenched in the history of the Second Dragoons.

The history of the Second Dragoons stationed at Fort Washita is part of state history. Though the area was Indian Territory when the Second Dragoons were stationed there, the land became the state of Oklahoma in 1907. Learning about the soldiers at Fort Washita provides visitors and students with insights into the history of Oklahoma and the people who lived there in the past.

CHAPTER II

CHOCTAWS AND CHICKASAWS

The story of the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita begins neither with the regiment or the fort, but rather with the story of two groups of people the government removed from their homes which members of the Second Dragoons were later ordered to protect. These people were the related Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. Anglo Americans wanted these Native Americans' land east of the Mississippi River in the early nineteenth century. Through several treaties and agreements, the two Native American groups eventually and reluctantly ceded their lands and moved westward.

The federal government first moved the Choctaw west of the Mississippi River. The 1830 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was the agreement which moved the Choctaw Nation.[2] According to the agreement, the Choctaws agreed to give up their land because "WHEREAS the General Assembly of the State of Mississippi has extended the laws of said State to persons and property within the chartered limits of the same, and the President of the United States has said that he cannot protect the Choctaw People from the operation of these laws."[3] The government

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[2] Marlynn Ann Fleck-O'Keefe, *Fort Towson Indian Territory: A Link to the West* (Wolfe City, TX: Henington Publishing Company, 1997), 15.

[3] "Treaty with the Choctaw, 1830," September 27, 1830, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Compiled amd edited by Charles J. Kappler (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 310-311, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/cho0310.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).

decided it would trade western land for the land where the Choctaws already had homes and businesses. This new land was located to the southwest of Arkansas in Indian Territory. The United States agreed to help the Choctaws move west by providing transportation and food.[4] The military earlier created Fort Towson in the territory during the 1820s only to abandon it, but in order to protect the Choctaws from Plains Tribes and Anglo the fort was reoccupied.[5]

Not only did the government press the Choctaws to give up their land east of the mighty river, it also influenced the Chickasaws to give up their homelands. The Chickasaws originally lived in the region of Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama.[6] During the 1830s, a group of Chickasaws, along with the Choctaws, traveled west.[7] This trip was an opportunity for the Native Americans to locate a place where they could eventually settle west of the Mississippi River. As early as 1830, the government worked to get the Chickasaws to give up their land.[8] This led to an agreement reached on the 20 October, 1832 which is called the Pontotoc Creek Treaty.[9] The treaty stated that the reason the Chickasaws decided to give up their land was: "The Chickasaw Nation find themselves oppressed in their present situation; by being made subject to the laws of the States in which they reside. Being ignorant of the language and laws of the white men, they cannot understand or obey them. Rather than submit to this great evil, they prefer to seek a home in the West, where they may live and be governed by their own laws."[10] Of course, these were excuses for Anglos who wanted for themselves the Chickasaw's land. It was several years after the treaty before the Chickasaws were removed westward.

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[4] "Treaty with the Choctaw, 1830," September 27, 1830, *Indian Affairs*, 313.
[5] Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, Second Printing (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), 83.
[6] Chickasaw Nation, "Our History," http://www.chickasaw.net/history_culture/index_670.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).
[7] Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, 37.
[8] Franis Paul Prucha, *The Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier 1783-1846* (United States: The Macmillan Company, 1969), 261.
[9] "Mountain House," Chickasaw Nation, http://www.chickasaw.net/history_culture/index_654.htm (accessed March 18, 2013).
[10] "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1832," October 20, 1832, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Compiled amd edited by Charles J. Kappler (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 356, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/chi0356.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).

The October 20, 1832 treaty and others signed or discussed between the United States and Chickasaws were intended to provide for the welfare and removal of the Nation. In the 1832 treaty, the United States government agreed to survey the Chickasaw land. It would then be sold and the profits go to the Chickasaws. The Chickasaws would receive the money, however, only after funds were subtracted to pay for the "surveying and selling the land, including every expense attending the same."[11] Also, the land sales were to defray the cost of the Chickasaws journey westward.

The Chickasaws and the United States discussed the use of an agent. The 1832 treaty stated the Chickasaws fear that "the Government of the United States may withdraw from them, the agent under whose instructions they have lived so long and happy—They therefore request that the agent may be continued with them, while here, and wherever they may remove to and settle."[12] In an 1834 treaty, the United States government allowed the Chickasaws to "continue some discreet person as agent, such as they now have, to whom they can look for redress of wrongs and injuries which may be attempted against them."[13] This agent served as the intermediary between the tribe and government. Also, he oversaw trading and finances meant for the tribe. During the years the Second Dragoons were at Fort Washita, the agent was A. M. M. Upshaw.[14]

The government did not think highly of Native Americans and doubted they could care for themselves. In the 1834 treaty, the United States assumed not all Chickasaws were competent enough to oversee their own lands and so "it is therefore agreed that the reservations hereinafter admitted, shall not be permitted to be sold, leased, or disposed of unless it appear by the

[11] "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1832," October 20, 1832, *Indian Affairs*, 357.
[12] "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1832," October 20, 1832, *Indian Affairs*, 359.
[13] "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1834," May 24, 1834, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Compiled amd edited by Charles J. Kappler (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 418, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/chi0418.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).
[14] Note: Sources generally just name the agent as A. M. M. Upshaw instead of his full name.

certificate of at least two of the following persons, to wit."[15] Though the Chickasaws had previously owned land and businesses, many Anglos did not think of Native Americans as equals.

The Chickasaw eventually moved west of the Mississippi River. The land they settled belonged to the Choctaws, and on January 17, 1837, a treaty designated the boundaries of the Chickasaw's land:

> beginning on the north bank of the Red River, at the mouth of Island Bayou, about eight or ten miles below the mouth of the False Wachitta; thence running north along the main channel of said bayou to its source; thence along the dividing ridge between the Wachitta and Low Blue Rivers to the road leading from Fort Gibson to Fort Wachitta; thence along said road to the line dividing Musha-la-tubbee and Push-meta-haw districts; thence eastwardly along said district line to the source of Brushy Creek; thence down said creek to where it flows into the Canadian River, ten or twelve miles above the mouth of the south fork of the Canadian; thence west along the main Canadian River to its source, if in the limits of the United States, or to those limits; and thence due south to Red River, and down Red River to the beginning.[16]

Oddly the treaty mentions a Fort Wachitta when the instillation had not yet been constructed in the area. In *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, Martha Royce Blaine quotes this same part of the treaty and she states that the fort mentioned was a temporary Camp Washita from an 1834 military expedition.[17]

The Chickasaws were supposed to enjoy some self-government under the Choctaws, although the Chickasaws were not pleased with this arrangement. The Choctaws agreed to let the newcomers move onto the land "to be called the Chickasaw district of the Choctaw Nation; and to have an equal representation in their general council, and to be placed in an equal footing in every other respect with any of the other districts of said nation."[18] In *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of of Mission Life*, visitor to the territory Reverand William H. Good wrote that the Chickasaws

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[15] "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1834," May 24, 1834, *Indian Affairs*, 418-419.
[16] "Treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw, 1837," January 17, 1837, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Compiled amd edited by Charles J. Kappler (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 487, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/chi0486.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).
[17] Martha Royce Blaine, "The Establishment of Fort Washita, and the Years Before, and an Historical Background," in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 16.
[18] "Treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw, 1837," January 17, 1837, *Indian Affairs*, 486.

were "'an integral part of the Choctaw Nation, and being represented in their National Council, and, for all general purpose, subject to their laws and regulations. The compact secures to the Chickasaws the right of settling. . . in any part of the Choctaw country. They retain, also, in their own hands, the management of their own fiscal concerns, school regulations, ect."[19] The Chickasaws had problems with the idea and though the United States "government endeavored to induce this tribe to share lands in the West with the Choctaws, but the Chickasaws refused, since they were outnumbered three to one by the powerful tribe."[20] Not only did the Chickasaws not want to be under Choctaw rule, they did not want "their women to marry into the Choctaw tribe. The Chickasaws were a wealthier tribe and wanted to control their own assets."[21] Even though the Chickasaws enjoyed some autonomy, they resented being under Choctaw control since the former probably wanted to oversee its own future, just as most people preferred to do.

There were dangers the Chickasaws faced and from which they needed protection in the territory. In the 1834 treaty, the government agreed to protect the Chickasaws "against the inroads of any other tribe of Indians, and from the whites; and agree to keep them without the limits of any State or Territory."[22] So, the United States promised to protect the people it was moving to a territory unknown to them which had members of the Plains Tribes who passed through the area. In order to fulfill this promise, the government sent soldiers, which included members of the Second Dragoons, to construct Fort Washita. This post allowed the soldiers a station where they could watch out for threats to the Chickasaws.

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[19] William H. Goode, "Chickasaw Mission, December 5, 1844," quoted in *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of Mission Life* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 206. http://books.google.com/books?id=tB4RAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 5, 2013).
[20] Prucha, *The Sword of the Republic*, 261.
[21] Fleck-O'Keefe, *Fort Towson Indian Territory*, 8.
[22] "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1834," May 24, 1834, *Indian Affairs*, 418.

CHAPTER III

UNITED STATES MOUNTED FORCES AND THE SECOND DRAGOONS

Mounted forces and troops have ridden throughout the history of the United States, including riders under notable leaders such as Philip Sheridan and George Custer. Yet, the country did not always have regular mounted soldiers in its ranks. Famous regiments such as the Seventh Cavalry came about thanks to such units as the Second Regiment of United States Dragoons which evolved during the 1830s.

Mounted troops have fought in the various wars of the United States, although not without opposition. Politicians often thought mounted units cost too much. Not only did the men need to be paid, fed, clothed, and housed, but the horses also had to be fed and housed, along with saddle equipment issued. The army already had infantry, so some thought it a waste of money to pay for mounted troops as well. It was "Not until the Act of April 12, 1808, were there any mounted regulars in the United States service. . . 1 regiment of light dragoons—all to be enlisted for 5 years."[23] The government officially discontinued the use of the mounted soldier or "the cavalry arm in 1821."[24] But, according to Mary Lee Stubbs and Stanley Russell Connor, "the Regiment of Light Dragoons. . . was disbanded on 15 June 1815, and for seventeen years

[23] Randy Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, vol. 1 of *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943: The United States Cavalryman: His Uniforms, Arms, Accoutrements, and Equipment* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 43.
[24] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 84.

the Regular establishment again had no cavalry."[25] So, while there had been a mounted unit during the War of 1812, the government decided it was unnecessary and too expensive to maintain.

The United States eventually realized a mounted soldier was important for a variety of reasons. An infantryman could go anywhere on foot, but was much slower in open territory than a man on a horse. Native Americans, such as members of the Plains Tribes, were excellent horsemen which infantry had little or no chance of catching. A mounted soldier, however could effectively pursue a mounted warrior. Native Americans were not the only opponents a mounted United States soldier faced, as he also encountered Texans, Mexican troops, and guerillas.

In July 1832, the government created a mounted unit. The main role of this force was to monitor Native Americans. The unit was known as the United States Mounted Ranger Battalion, and its officers included Henry Dodge and Nathan Boone.[26] It consisted of six hundred men.[27] This was not a splendidly dressed unit such as those of the earlier mounted United States light dragoons, nor mounted soldiers in Europe, but rather it was a ragtag group of men who rode with little or no military discipline. In *A Tour on the Prairies*, Washington Irving described some members of the mounted rangers as "a raw, undisciplined band, levied among the wild youngsters of the frontier, who had enlisted, some for the sake of roving adventure, and some for the purpose of getting a knowledge of the country."[28] The government thought rangers would be cheaper than a regular mounted unit, even though "Pay for enlisted rangers was $I.00 per day, but included allowances for clothing, weapons, equipment, horses, and forage for horses."[29] Even at a dollar a day, a ranger earned a lot more than the average soldier's salary of less than ten dollars a month.

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[25] Mary Lee Stubbs and Stanley Russell Connor, *Armor-Cavalry Part I: Regular Army Reserve* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History United States Army, 1969), 7, http://www.history.army.mil/books/Lineage/arcav/arcav.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).
[26] Nathan Boone was the son of the famous frontiersman Daniel Boone.
[27] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 84.
[28] Washington Irving, *A Tour on the Prairies*, Annotations by Joseph B. Thoburn and George C. Wells (Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing Company, 1955), 39-40.
[29] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 84.

A regiment of regulars proved to be cheaper than the rangers with the former being "less expensive by $153,932."[30]

In 1833, the United States government allowed the creation of a regiment of dragoons. This new regiment was known as the United States Regiment of Dragoons. Stubbs and Connor explain the different types of mounted forces:

> At the time of the American Revolution, the term *cavalry* was applied to that branch of the military service whose members served and fought on horseback; the word *horse* was used about as often and meant essentially the same thing. By the eighteenth century specialization had developed sufficiently in cavalry to bring forth three distinctive types of mounted commands, varying in mission, armament, and weight of horses: the heavy cavalry, used primarily for shock effect in battle; the light cavalry, designed for reconnaissance, screening missions, and messenger service; and the dragoons, trained to fight both on foot and on horse. In actual practice, these distinctions were far from precise, and they tended to decrease in importance in the nineteenth century. In North America, the traditional cavalryman has ever been the light dragoon-a soldier trained and equipped to fight mounted or dismounted, to perform screening and reconnaissance, and to act as a scout or messenger. True heavy and light horse have been rare.[31]

So, the dragoon was trained to fight on horseback, or ride wherever needed and then dismount. The name of this soldier "came from the nickname for their weapon, the carbine or short musket, called 'the dragon', which referred to the fire that emits forth out of the gun, hence the term 'dragon' or dragoon soldiers."[32] The regiment's colonel was Dodge of the rangers, and other officers over the years included Jefferson Davis and Stephen W. Kearny.[33]

An early expedition that members of the U.S. Regiment of Dragoons participated in was into Indian Territory. Undertaken in 1834, this assignment enabled the United States to meet and try to make peace with Plains Tribes in the region. General Henry Leavenworth commanded the expedition, which included dragoons and infantry who set out from Fort Gibson in northeastern

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[30] Louis Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley: An Account of Marches and Activities of the First Regiment United States Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley Between the Years 1833 and 1850* (Iowa City, IA: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1917), 13.
[31] Stubbs and Connor, *Armor-Cavalry Part I*, 3.
[32] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Historical Background," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon5.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).
[33] Major General John K. Herr and Edward S. Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry 1775-1942* (October, 1953; repr. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953), 25.

Indian Territory. He died during it. The expedition members, whose ranks included Dodge, traveled down to the vicinity of where the False Washita River flowed into the Red River. There, the men created a Camp Washita. Not quite ten years later, more dragoons would construct a fort located northeast of where Camp Washita had been located.

In 1836, the United States formed another dragoon regiment, designated the Second Regiment of United States Dragoons. The government expended $300,000 towards its creation.[34] Of this amount, $85,000 was allotted to mount the unit, and an additional $40,000 was in order to remount and stable horses for both dragoon regiments.[35] The government created the Second Dragoons to fight Seminoles in Florida. In *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, Theophilus F. Rodenbough describes the regiment's commander, Colonel David E. Twiggs, as "at this time about forty-six years of age, having commenced his military career in the war of 1812 as an officer of infantry, in which corps he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel when promoted to the Second Dragoons. A martinet of the old type—arbitrary and capricious at times—he moulded [sic] the new organization with an iron hand."[36]

As the military worked to form the Second Dragoons, both officers and enlisted men filled its ranks. Rodebough presents a list of officers which included some of the men who served at Fort Washita. He also writes how "Recruits for the new regiment were easily obtained, and

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[34] Gregory J. W. Urwin, *The United States Cavalry: An Illustrated History*, Illustrations by Ernest Lisle Reedstrom (Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press, 1983), 65.

[35]T. Cross in *Con*gress, House, "Army Estimates for the Year 1837," 24th Cong., 2d sess., December 21, 1836, Doc. No. 32, 14, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=J5DE5AEXMTM2MDEwMTI2OC41MzU0MzE6MToxNDoxMzkuNzguMjM4LjE1Mw&p_action=doc&p_docnum=186&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-102AE205C1E9D670@2392000-@0 (accessed February 5, 2013).

[36] Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 19.

from the numerous applicants in a popular arm of the service an excellent selection was made."[37] In *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry*, Major Joseph I. Lambert writes that Company G was formed in New York while "Companies A and I began recruiting and assembling recruits in the vicinity of Fort Monroe, Virginia."[38] The latter two companies also drew recruits from Pennsylvania.[39] Enlisted men also came from throughout the world. These foreign born soldiers made up about twenty-seven percent of the regiment, and "every country of Europe [was] represented, led by the Irish, Germans and English."[40] So, when Companies A, G, and I were stationed at Fort Washita, there is a good chance that soldiers from New York and Pennsylvania worked and drilled alongside men from Virginia or Ireland.

Regiments tended to have distinct personalities. The Second Dragoons "had a tradition as 'followers of Bacchus' and. . . considered a gay outfit in contrast to the more staid 1st Dragoons."[41] Samuel Chamberlain, a member of the First Dragoons, remembered that during the Mexican-American War a "patrol was ordered to fill their canteens and help themselves to what tobacco, wine, Brandy and muscal they wished, and such is the discipline of the Second Dragoons that the men obeyed without a murmur!"[42] The Second Dragoons thus contained men who were known to enjoy life to its fullest, even through the use of alcohol. Though some of the men were drunks, the Second Dragoons "attained a reputation for their 'dash.'"[43] Though in *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier* Robert Wooster focuses mainly on Texas before and after the American Civil War, he presented the idea that while sometimes men in the same regiment did not get along, they would band together against those from other

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37 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 21.
38 Major Joseph I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (The Capper Printing Company, 1939), 9-10.
39 *The Dragoons' Story: A History of the 2D Armored Cavalry Regiment*, Foreward by Lieutenant General Chas. E. Hart, Introduction by Colonel James W. Duncan, 2.
40 *The Dragoons' Story*, 4.
41 Herr and Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry*, 31.
42 Samuel E. Chamberlain, *My Confession* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 74.
43 John Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, Men-At-Arms Series 281, Illustrated by Bill Younghead (London: Osprey, 1995), 14.

regiments.[44] Though the Second Dragoons was known for its wildness and dash, the regiment's soldiers no doubt stuck together when the time called for it.

A regiment's size depended on the number of officers and enlisted men in the unit. At times, the government changed the number of soldiers in a unit. This could be accomplished by shrinking a regiment to save money or expanding its ranks during warfare. In April 1842, the Second Dragoons officer corps consisted of a colonel, lieutenant colonel, major, adjutant, surgeon, ten captains and twenty-one first and second lieutenants. This meant there were the regimental commanders and each of the ten companies generally had a captain and both a first and second lieutenant. In December 1836, the Second Dragoons had "all available recruits—about three hundred and sixty men—[divided] into companies of sixty each."[45] This totaled six companies. Though the number of privates fluctuated in a unit, in 1838 a dragoon regiment could have up to sixty privates per company.[46] In *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861*, William B. Skelton writes that at least for the general military "In August 1842, Congress cut the enlisted strength of the line companies to the pre-1838 levels."[47] On August 10, 1842, the *Jeffersonian Republican* reported that one of the dragoon regiment's, probably the First Dragoons, company manpower was "reduced from 50 to 42."[48] No matter the size of the company, the maximum number was often not achieved. In April 1844, the total privates on duty for Companies A, G, and I were respectively thirty-three, twenty-four, and thirty-

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[44] Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 184.
[45] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 21.
[46] N. Towson in *Con*gress, House, "Cavalry and Infantry," 25th Cong., 2d sess., March 19, 1838, Doc. No. 250, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=J5DE5AEXMTM2MDEwMTI2OC41MzU0MzE6MToxNDoxMzkuNzguMjM4LjE1Mw&p_action=doc&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-103624455AC944F0@-13F1F59BEFF563B8@1 (accessed February 5, 2013).
[47] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 134.
[48] "Washington News," *Jeffersonian Republican*, August 10, 1842, http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86053954/1842-08-10/ed-1/seq-2/;words=dragoons+second?date1=1842&rows=20&searchType=basic&state=&date2=1846&proxtext=second+dragoon&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&index=5 (accessed February 5, 2013).

nine.[49] These numbers fluctuated and in July of 1843, Companies A, G, and I then had eighteen, twenty, and seventeen privates present for duty.[50] So, due to the government changing the number of privates in a company, deaths, desertions, and lack of recruits, a unit was often not at full strength.

During 1832, Colonel Twiggs set up a regimental headquarters and a place for recruits to train, Jefferson Barracks, Missouri.[51] The new location "was peculiarly adapted to the organization of mounted troops, being provided with good and extensive stabling and fine ground for drill exercise. . . As fast as the 'green' horses were received they were introduced to their future proprietors—equally verdant."[52] The Second Dragoons' recruits were soon drilling to become mounted soldiers.

Eventually, the soldiers began making their way to Florida to confront the Seminoles. Their ranks included Companies G and I. On February 8, 1837, members of Company G were wounded while fighting the Native Americans.[53] The military eventually ordered Colonel Twiggs to move the rest of his men from Jefferson Barracks to Florida. These troops arrived in Florida by the end of October 1837.[54] Serving in Florida proved hard on the Second Dragoons who "to their natural disgust, spent most of their time dismounted, in wading through swamps and in poling canoes through the everglades."[55] Some of the dragoons were surprised by a Seminole attack in which several of them were killed. By the time the regiment left Florida, it had lost "six

[49] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, April of 1842.
[50] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," July of 1843.
[51] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 22.
[52] Rodebough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 22.
[53] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 24.
[54] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 28.
[55] Herr and Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry 1775-1942*, 30.

officers and 212 enlisted men, mostly from disease, during their miserable five years in Florida."[56]

The Second Dragoons regiment's headquarters and companies continued to move around to different locations. In 1839, a number of companies--including A, G, and I--"were ordered to proceed to Garey's Ferry to be dismounted and then placed *en route* for Fort Columbus, New York Harbor, and there to await further orders."[57] The regiment recruited new men from different cities, and in New Jersey there was created a "camp of instruction. . . called Camp Washington."[58]

Eventually the Second Dragoons received orders to head west. The regiment was "ordered to Arkansas and Fort Jesup, Louisiana, in the autumn of 1841."[59] Thus began a pause from fighting that lasted for three years.[60] In 1841, a letter from the Adjutant General's Office informed Brigadier General Zachary Taylor "that in the month of October, six companies of the 2.d Regiment, under its Colonel, will be ordered to report to you."[61] Some of the regiment's companies became stationed in Indian Territory. Rodenbough states that in October of what is probably 1842, Company G was at Fort Towson and "Companies 'H' and 'I' were stationed at Fort Washita."[62] He was correct about Company G being at Fort Towson, but it was Companies A and I that were at the time stationed at Fort Washita.

Though mounted troops were needed to patrol Indian Territory and the rest of the Great Plains, Congress decided to dismount the Second Dragoons. It seems that:

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56 Herr and Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry 1775-1942*, 30-31.
57 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 40.
58 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 41.
59 Herr and Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry 1775-1942*, 30.
60 Herr and Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry 1775-1942*, 32.
61 Thomas to Zachary Taylor, August 14, 1841, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Volume 17, January 2, 1841 – February 7, 1842," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), 270.
62 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 83.

> followers of Andrew Jackson had used the legislation which proposed the outfit's creation as a springboard to attack the U.S. Military Academy. These politicians wanted to do away with West Point. . . When their move to close the Academy failed, the representative from Kentucky proposed that two-thirds of the new regiment's officers be taken from civilian applicants or from the ranks. When this proposal was also defeated in 1842, the House of Representatives called for the elimination of the Second Dragoons altogether.[63]

Congressional members had discussed completely disbanding the regiment, but the Committee on Military Affairs countered that "In regard to the second regiment of dragoons, by law authorizing its creation, the President may, whenever he thinks expedient, order it to be dismounted and to serve on the line, or as light infantry, and thus may, if the exigencies of the service require it, form it into a rifle regiment."[64] The unit survived but the soldier had to give up his horse and the dragoon's weapons, such as the carbine. On September 13, 1842, Brevet Second Liutenant Patrick Noble wrote to Adjutant General Jones, "A very late act of Congress, Converts the 2.d Regt Drags, after the 4th of March next, into a Rifle Corps."[65] That same month, Quartermaster General Thomas Jesup informed Colonel Twiggs "that your regiment is safe, though it is to be dismounted and converted into a rifle regiment on the 4th of March next."[66] Congress discussed that the dismount did not have to be exactly on March 4. But, the Second Dragoons had to get rid of their horses according to "General Order Number 22 of 13 March 1843."[67] Thus the Second Dragoons became the United States Regiment of Riflemen.

Now that the regiment was dismounted, it had horses to dispose of. On January 25, 1843, Colonel Twiggs wrote to Adjutant General Jones that Twiggs was unsure of what to do with the

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63 Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, 17-18.

64 Committee on Military Affairs, *Congress*, Senate, "In Senate of the United States," 27th Cong., 2d sess., June 21, 1842, report by Mr. Preston, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=J5DE5AEXMTM2MDEwMTI2OC41MzU0MzE6MToxNDoxMzkuNzguMjM4LjE1Mw&p_action=doc&p_docnum=375&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-104A86A9093EDDF8@2394008-@0 (accessed February 5, 1842).

65 Patrick Noble to R. Jones, September 13, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 256 N-R 82, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

66 Thomas Jesup to David Twiggs, September 19, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818-1870, Roll 17, Target 1, Volume 33, Mar. 11-Oct. 29, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publication, 1968), microfilm, 420.

67 Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, 18.

horses by March 4th.[68] Then in March, Twiggs wrote that the mounts at Fort Jesup had been "turned over to the Quarter Master."[69] Among the orders which concerned the dismount of the regiment was "General Order Number 22 of 13 March 1843 [which] required the Second Dragoons to turn over its horses to the First Dragoons, or to dispose of them in other ways. Morale sank."[70] The Second Dragoons had been reduced to foot soldiers. The government had taken away part of the unit's dash.

Some wanted the regiment remounted. In early 1843, the State of Louisiana asked that the regiment be kept as a mounted unit.[71] Missouri made the same request because "a regiment composed (as the second regiment of dragoon is) of men reared in the west, and expert in the use of horse and gun, officered by the same description of men, are the only description of troops that can afford any protection to the citizen and pioneer."[72] Missouri desired protection for Anglos from Native Americans or prevent the sale of alcohol to the latter.

The government and military considered the possible remount of the regiment. The Committee on Military Affairs discussed how Anglos needed protection from Native Americans,

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[68] David Twiggs to R. Jones, January 25, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225-T 236, 1843," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publication, 1964), microfilm.

[69] David Twiggs to the Adjutant General, March 24, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225-T 236, 1843," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publication, 1964), microfilm.

[70] Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, 18.

[71] Legislature of the State of Louisiana, *Congress*, House, "Second Regiment of Dragoons. Resolution of the Legislature of Louisiana, in Relation to the Second Regiment of Dragoons," 27th Cong., 2d sess., February 18, 1843, Doc. No. 156, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T59Q56BTMTM2MDEwNDM3MC45MzU1NToxOjE0OjEzOS43OC4yMzguMTUz&p_action=doc&p_docnum=4&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-104A8F78ADFB7FE8@2394250-@0 (accessed February 5, 2013).

[72] General Assembly of Missouri, *Congress*, House, "Second Regiment Dragoons. Memorial of the General Assembly of Missouri, Against disbanding the second regiment of dragoons," 28th Cong., 1st sess., December 22, 1843, Doc. No. 25, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T59Q56BTMTM2MDEwNDM3MC45MzU1NToxOjE0OjEzOS43OC4yMzguMTUz&p_action=doc&p_docnum=5&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-104A8F82A34DB458@2394557-@0 (accessed February 5, 2013).

including those removed from east of the Mississippi River.[73] The committee assumed that only mounted units were capable of pursuing mounted warriors.[74] Quartermaster General Jesup compared the importance of the dragoons to chase Native Americans to ships chasing pirates.[75]

The government eventually took action to reactivate the Second Dragoons. On March 29, 1844, the *Vermont Phoenix* reported that "The House, in committee took up the bill to remount the second regiment of dragoons."[76] According to Rodenbough, a remount bill "was introduced by Mr. Jameson to bring about the desired result. On the 4th of March, 1844, the same bill was ordered to be engrossed, and the 7th was passed in the Senate."[77] Lambert wrote that the unit was again designated as dragoons in early 1843.[78] Another source stated that the government passed the bill for remount "on November 7, 1844."[79] The post returns report the unit as riflemen from the time of dismount until May of 1844, when the Fort Washita return had the unit again named the Second Dragoons. So, the 1843 date is incorrect as that was when the regiment was dismounted; by late 1844 the regiment had already been officially remounted for six months. The government's reacceptance of the regiment as dragoons was a happy time for the soldiers, some of whom became festive with the help of alcohol.

Though the regiment was once again a mounted unit, truly being one proved elusive. On April 25, 1844, Quartermaster General Jesup wrote to the regiment's lieutenant colonel that

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[73] Committee on Military Affairs, *Congress*, House, "Remounting the Second Regiment Dragoons," 28th Cong., 1st sess., January 27, 1844, Rep. No. 77, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T59Q56BTMTM2MDEwNDM3MC45MzU1NToxOjE0OjEzOS43OC4yMzguMTUz&p_action=doc&p_docnum=6&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-104A8F8A5B0AA350@2394593-@0 (accessed February 5, 2013).
[74] Committee on Military Affairs, *Congress*, House, "Remounting the Second Regiment Dragoons," 2.
[75] Thomas S. Jesup in Committee on Military Affairs, *Congress*, House, "Remounting the Second Regiment Dragoons," 10-11.
[76] "Congress," *Vermont Phoenix*, March 29, 1844, http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn98060050/1844-03-29/ed-1/seq-2/;words=dragoons+second?date1=1836&sort=date&sort=date&sort=date&sort=date&date2=1922&searchType=advanced&language=&proxdistance=5&state=Vermont&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetext=&andtext=second+dragoons&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=2&page=4&page=5&index=3 (accessed February 5, 2013).
[77] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 85.
[78] Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry*, 25.
[79] *The Dragoons' Story*, 15.

"Your regiment has been reconverted into a regiment of dragoons; but Congress not having made any appropriation for horses or equipments I have not been able to adopt any measures yet except for your clothing."[80] In June 1844, Colonel George Croghan wrote that the Second Dragoons stationed at Fort Washita still had no horses.[81] As of July 29, 1844, Jesup reported to Colonel Twiggs that "No purchases of horses for your Regiment have been made by my authority; but I have proposals for the whole number required, to be delivered to Jefferson Barracks, at seventy dollars each, and to be such as the Dragoon officers shall themselves approve."[82] During September 1844, Jesup again wrote to Twiggs, concerning the possible remount of some Second Dragoons by use of First Dragoons' horses at "Washita and Fort Gibson. . . as a measure by which several thousand dollars would be saved. . . and. . . your whole Corps could in a short time be remounted."[83] That December, the Adjutant General's Officer wrote to General Matthew Arbuckle, then in command of the Second Military Department, that "The General in Chief directs that an officer with a suitable number of men be selected from the three companies of the 2.d Regiment of Dragoons at Fort Washita, and ordered to Jefferson Barracks to take charge of the horses purchased by the Quarter Master's Department for mounting said regiment."[84] Though the regiment had been remounted on paper, it took time for the dragoons to get horses. Soldiers probably got disgruntled that they had to wait so long to once again be on horseback.

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[80] Thomas Jesup to William Harney, April 25, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General (Main Series) 1818-1870, Roll 18, Volume 35, July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publication, 1968), microfilm, 503.
[81] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 102.
[82] Thomas Jesup to David Twiggs, July 29, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General (Main Series) 1818-1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 108.
[83] Thomas Jesup to David Twiggs, September 6, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General (Main Series) 1818-1870, Roll 19, Volume 36; June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 164-165.
[84] L.(?) Thomas to Matthew Arbuckle, December 4, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volume 19-20; November 22, 1842-December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

Part of a regiment was its silk flags. These banners were important for various reasons: marking where the troops were supposed to be and allowing them to follow when they could not see the officers. Soldiers took pride in their flags and would risk their lives in order to save them from an enemy. A dragoon regiment had at least two different type of flags. The dragoon regiment "would have been issued one standard and one guidon per company when raised in 1836."[85] In *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* appears a black and white photograph of the remains of the Second Dragoons' 1836 flag. It consisted of a dark blue field with several rows of stars along the top, an eagle about center, and the name of the regiment in a red banner under the eagle. Each company also had a swallow tail flag which had a red top half with the initials "US" and letter of the company in white. The bottom half was white with the regiment's name in red. A swallowtail flag has a "V" shape wedge cut out of the banner on the end farthest from the hoist. The latter flag would have been according to "1834 regulations. . . silk, 27 by 41 inches, with a swallowtail. From the hoist to the fork of the swallowtail was 15 inches."[86] But, this measurement may not be correct as it was probably the length of the swallow tail cut that was fifteen inches and not the distance from the hoist to the fork.[87]

Some of the Second Dragoons officers held brevet ranks. Such a rank essentially was an honorary title. Officers obtained brevets "for heroism or other distinguished service and thus provided officers with performance incentives. . . Until 1870 a brevet officer could be assigned a command at his brevet rank and pay scale, and in some cases, brevet officers were given commands over higher-ranking regular officers."[88] This could confuse and lead to bickering over who was supposed to be in command. But, at least two Second Dragoon officers who

[85] Joe McMillan, "Army—2nd Cavalry Regiment (U.S.)," Flags of the World, http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/us%5E2cv.html (accessed February 5, 2013).
[86] Joe McMillan, "Army—2nd Cavalry Regiment (U.S.)."
[87] "Historical Flags," 9th Memorial Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers, http://www.9thcavalry.com/index2.htm (accessed February 5, 2013).
[88] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 88.

commanded Fort Washita had such a rank, and there were other officers present with brevet second lieutenancies and no documents seem to hint at any major problems between the officers.

This information does not need to stand as its own interpretive program, but rather as background information for the historian. The interpreter telling about the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita needs to know the basic history of the unit. Also, knowing what made them different from other regiments, such as soldiers having long hair, allows the visitor to understand that a dragoon was a unique soldier.

CHAPTER IV

ESTABLISHMENT OF FORT WASHITA

Since the Choctaws and Chickasaws needed possible protection from Plains Indians and Second Dragoons companies were headed west, the establishment of a new military fort in Indian Territory was on the verge. However, the creation of a fort proved no simple task. The government and military tasks for erecting a post included deciding why the fort was needed, its location, and the actual construction of its buildings.

Most forts were built for protection, and Fort Washita proved no different. The United States created the post to keep its promise to protect the Choctaws and Chickasaws who had been removed into Indian Territory. Plains Tribes roamed the region, including the Delaware, Osage, and Kickapoo, "The Osage stole some horses from the Kickapoo who pursued and killed two robbers. These disorders with the presence of outlaw whites. . . filled the Chickasaw with anxiety and fear."[89] The area was dangerous enough to have been "recognized as part of 'Scalp-Alley.'"[90] In a 1927 article for *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, W. B. Morrison wrote that Fort Washita "was placed near enough to the Texas border to serve as a bulwark against any

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[89] Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, Second Printing (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), 94.

[90] Alvin O. Turner, "Murray County," *Oklahoma Historical Society's Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History & Culture*, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/M/MU011.html (accessed February 11, 2013).

disturbances that might arise from that quarter."[91] Texans were known to make "no distinction between civilized and wild Indians. In retaliation for frequent raids by war parties that crossed the Chickasaw District to get into Texas, the people of that republic often exercised their wrath on the peaceful Chickasaws. . . All in all, the Chickasaws lived in anxiety and fear."[92] Even after the fort was established in the early 1840s, the local Indian Agent told the visiting Reverend Goode that it was too dangerous to continue his journey to meet the Chickasaw council because of "repeated murders and robberies on the route at late."[93] So, with the possibility of violence in the area, the government deemed a fort necessary as a place to station troops which could protect the newly arrived Native Americans.

Once the government or military decided a fort was needed, somebody had to choose a location for the new fort. According to Blaine, during April 1841 a Captain B. D. Moore rode across Chickasaw land and "searched for a site as directed by General Arbuckle."[94] In August 1841, the Adjutant General's Office sent to Brigadier General Zachary Taylor, a future Mexican-American War hero and president, a letter which informed him that "having been determined to establish a Post near the mouth of the False Washita river, the General, as a preparatory measure, desires you to make a reconnaissance of that section of the country, with a view of selecting a site for it, regard being had to. . . conditions of defense, & c."[95] Blaine related how the general had "re-examined both sides of the Washita from the mouth up to a distance of fifteen to twenty

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[91] W. B. Morrison, "Fort Washita," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, No. 2 (June 1927), 251, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Chronicles/v005/v005p251.html (accessed February 11, 2013).
[92] Department of the Interior, United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma: Special Report for National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings* (Santa Fe: 1965), 2.
[93] William H. Goode, "Chickasaw Mission, December 5, 1844," quoted in *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of Mission Life* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 206, http://books.google.com/books?id=tB4RAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 5, 2013).
[94] Martha Royce Blaine, "The Establishment of Fort Washita, and the Years Before, and an Historical Background," in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 18.
[95] Thomas to Zachary Taylor, August 14, 1841, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 12, Volumes 17-18; January 2, 1841-November 21, 1842," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 270.

miles. He finally decided that the site suggested by Moore was the best for all purposes: the military vantage point; the availability of building materials; including both timber and stone; and, the navigability of the nearby river."[96] Though he was addressed as a general, Taylor held the position as a brevet rank.[97] Adjutant General Jones wrote to Taylor:

> In acknowledging your letter of the 14th of October on the subject of the selection of a military site on the False Washita, I am instructed by the Major General Commanding the Army to say; that you will at the proper time proceed to establish the new Post proposed in the manner suggested; and that your views upon the subject are concurred in.[98]

So, Moore and Taylor were both involved in the decision of where a fort would be built so as to provide the desired protection for the Choctaws and Chickasaws. The *Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States, Compiled from The Records of the Surgeon General's Office; Embracing A Period of Sixteen Years, From January, 1839, To January,* 1855, which was arranged by General Thomas Lawson and Richard H. Coolidge, M.D., characterized the site as "beautifully situated in a small grove, on the border of an extensive prairie."[99]

The exact political location of Fort Washita remains unclear. Its post returns have the initials "CN" next to the fort's name. Later maps show the fort was on Chickasaw land, so the initials could stand for Chickasaw Nation. But, the government wanted to place the Chickasaws on Choctaw land and the boundaries did change between the two groups. While at Fort Washita, one officer did have Fort Washita placed in the Choctaw Nation when he wrote, "There being no magistrate within the limits of the

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96 Blaine, *From Past to Present*, 18.
97 Michael Hogan, *The Irish Soldiers of Mexico* (Guadalajara, Mexico: Fondo Editorial Universitario, 1993), 34.
98 R. Jones to Zachary Taylor, ""Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 12, Volumes 17-18; January 2, 1841-November 21, 1842," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 416.
99 General Thomas Lawson and Richard H. Coolidge, M.D., prepared under, *Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States, Compiled from The Records of the Surgeon General's Office; Embracing A Period of Sixteen Years, From January, 1839, To January,* 1855, copies of found in files located at Fort Washita Historic Site (Washington, D.C.: A.O.P Nicholson, 1856), 271.

Choctaw Nation."[100] For a letter Quartermaster General Jesup wrote in 1843, the location is listed as Choctaw Nation.[101] Some soldiers even wrote "Arka." for Arkansas. On at least one occasion in 1843, Adjutant General R. Jones in a report to Congress also had the location as Arkansas.[102] It seems that nobody really knew what to call the territory in which Fort Washita was located.

Once the site was chosen, troops moved into the area. The first soldiers stationed there were Captain George A. H. Blake and his Co. A of the Second Dragoons. Blake reported in the April 1842 post return that "The Company arrived at an Established Camp at the Site Selected for New Post near the False Washita April 23, 1842. 1 Mile from Chickasaw-Agency. . . 80 miles West of Fort Towson Post Office."[103] So, there were now troops stationed at the site for the fort, and they were present there until the Second Dragoons stationed there left in September of 1845.

Man power was needed to construct buildings, and the men needed quarters in which to live. In February of 1842, Assistant Adjutant General Thomas wrote to Taylor that he was to "give the necessary instructions for the erection of such temporary huts for the troops. . . until the erection of Barracks shall be ordered."[104] That May, Taylor

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[100] Benjamin Beall to R. Jones, April 3, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 265, B 1-296, 1843," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[101] Thomas Jesup to J. Merrell, May 29, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818-1870, Roll 17, Volumes 33-34, Mar. 11, 1842-July 14, 1843," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 478.
[102] Roger Jones, "Rep. No. 220. B," in Committee on Military Affairs, U.S. Congress, House, "Reduction of the Commissioned Officers of the Army," 27th Cong., 2d sess., February 22, 1843, report by Mr. Stanley, 8, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=A51M48WFMTM2MDYyOTk0MS44NjU5MTI6MToxMzoxMzkuNzguNTAuMTU1&p_action=doc&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=6&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-104A8F7AD892F460@2394254-@0 (accessed February 11, 2013).
[103] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, April of 1842.
[104] L. Thomas to Zachary Taylor, February 19, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series), January 1841 – November 1842, Reel 12, Volume 18," (Washingt, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications), microfilm, 25.

wrote, "The company stationed on the False Washita (Captain Blake's, 2nd Dragoons) is putting itself in comfortable summer quarters. In the autumn I propose to reinforce it by another company, and erect a permanent post for two companies of Dragoons."[105] So, the first troops at the post had within a month began construction of their quarters, though these were supposed to have been temporary.

Of course the government must officially accept a site for it to become a military post. In *A History of the State of Oklahoma*, Luther B. Hall stated that Fort Washita "was established April 23, 1842."[106] In his 1927 article, Morrison stats that "The actual establishment of Fort Washita dates from April 23, 1843, though most histories of Oklahoma give the date as 1842, possibly confusing the selection of the site with the occupation and erection of the post."[107] Yet, in a 1929 article, he wrote that the fort was not built until 1844. Then, Morrison repeated at least part of his 1927 article almost word for word in a 1936 book titled *Military Posts and Camps in Oklahoma* in which he wrote, "The actual establishment of Fort Washita dates from April 23, 1842."[108] But, Blaine stated that "War Department Orders No. 17, Second Military Department, October 8, 1842, designated the fort as an army post."[109] The *Fort Washita, Oklahoma: Special Report for National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings* has the same date as Blaine for when the fort became an official United States military post. The earlier dates mentioned are for when Co. A arrived on the site, and not when the government accepted

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[105] Zachary Taylor to the Adjutant General, May 31, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[106] Luther B. Hill, *A History of the State of Oklahoma*, vol. 1 (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910), 47, http://archive.org/stream/ahistorystateok00hillgoog#page/n76/mode/2up/search/%22fort+washita%22 (accessed February 11, 2013).
[107] W. B. Morrison, "Fort Washita," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, No. 2 (June 1927), 252, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Chronicles/v005/v005p251.html (accessed February 11, 2013).
[108] William Brown Morrison, *Military Posts and Camps in Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing Corporation, 1936), 82.
[109] Blaine, *From Past to Present*, 20.

the location as an actual fort. But, Fort Washita was nevertheless an official post located in the Second Military District, or Department, then under the command of General Taylor.

Once the government and military created a fort, it needed a name. Before the government deemed the site an official military post, it was referred to as Camp Washita. According to Morrison, Taylor named the fort. This appears correct because on May 21, 1842, Taylor wrote to the Adjutant General, proposing "to call the new post 'Fort Washita,' if it meet the approbation of the Major General Commanding."[110] Reverend Goode wrote how the fort "'takes its name from the 'Faux Ouachita' or False Washita River, near which it stands, [so called to distinguish it from another tributary of Red River, lower down, known as Washita River.].'"[111] While the fort's name did come from nearby river, perhaps Taylor also chose the name to honor the Camp Washita which Leavenworth and Dodge created in 1834.

The size of the post consisted of land beyond where buildings were erected. During August 1843, Taylor wrote to the Adjutant General that the commanders of the post were supposed to discuss with the Chickasaw agent the size of the post's reserve, but the commanders and agent were unable to agree on anything. Taylor also related that he recommended "a reserve, say five. . . miles square be established, bringing Fort Washita as near the center as practicable, and including the agency. The persons settled within it are but few, and could be suffered to remain or bought out as deemed most

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110 Zachary Taylor to the Adjutant General, May 31, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

111 William H. Goode, "Chickasaw Mission, December 5, 1844," quoted in *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of Mission Life* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 203, http://books.google.com/books?id=tB4RAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 5, 2013).

expedient."[112] Taylor feared that if the reserve was too small, non-military settlers would live too close to the fort and cause problems by such actions as the sale of alcohol to soldiers or fights among them. That October, Adjutant General Jones wrote to Taylor stating, "Your letter. . . recommending that a reserve be made around Fort Washita, was duly received and submitted to the General in Chief and Secretary of War. . . and the Secretary authorizes a reserve of <u>four</u> miles square to be set apart for military purposes. Fort Washita being as near the center as practicable."[113] Morrison agreed with this size, but he stated that a later adjutant general said the fort eventually became "about five miles long and two miles wide."[114] But, for the first few years, its size was undetermined before it became four square miles, which was a good size post for the small garrison it held.

Within a year of its establishment the government and military discussed the abandonment of Fort Washita. On February 3, 1843, Adjutant General Jones sent Taylor a letter stating, "The Secretary of War directs that further progress of the new work at the False Washita be suspended until further orders. Such building materials and supplies as may have been collected at the post will be carefully preserved."[115] Then in March, the Adjutant General's office sent a letter to Taylor which was prone towards desertion of the fort, though the final decision was left to the brigadier general.[116] On March 29, 1843, Taylor wrote a letter defending keeping

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[112] Zachary Taylor to the Adjutant General, August 29, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225 – T 236, 1843," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[113] R. Jones to Zachary Taylor, October 4, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 491.
[114] W. B. Morrison, "Fort Washita," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, No. 2 (June 1927), 251-252, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Chronicles/v005/v005p251.html (accessed February 11, 2013).
[115] R. Jones to Zachary Taylor, February 3, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20; November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 105.
[116] L. Thomas to Zachary Taylor, March 9, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 158.

the fort for reasons including protection of the Chickasaws from Plains Indians, as a station from which the government could reach out to Plains Indians in hope of making treaties, and a place to maintain troops who could keep Native Americans from raiding into Texas. Also, Taylor wanted to replace a company of Infantry at Fort Washita with another company of Riflemen, but he warned "not to mingle the two corps."[117] Indian Agent Upshaw was also against abandonment of the fort.[118] So, it was decided to keep the post, and Fort Washita was temporarily safe from abandonment.

The number of soldiers at the fort changed between the years of 1842 and 1845. Of course, Captain Blake's company was first on site. In October of 1842, a company of the Sixth Infantry and Co. I of the Second Dragoons were stationed at the fort. Company I "arrived at Camp Washita C.N. on the 20th of October 1842."[119] Company G of the Second Dragoons, though known at the time as the Regiment of Riflemen, arrived at Fort Washita during June 1843. That same month, members of the United States Dragoons, also known as the First Dragoons, were present at Fort Washita. Eventually, the Sixth Infantry company left Fort Washita and went to Fort Towson. In December 1843, there were about 250 soldiers at Fort Washita, while in December 1844 there were less than 200. The small contingent of troops at Fort Washita was not unlike other military posts because "In 1835, only two of the fifty-three army posts contained more than 500 officers and enlisted men, and nearly half the regulars served at garrisons of fewer than 200."[120] Though the Second Dragoons was not the only regiment to have men stationed at the post from 1842 to 1845, it had the most companies at the post. In September 1845, the three Second Dragoons companies left Fort Washita and headed to south Texas in order to prepare for the upcoming war with Mexico.

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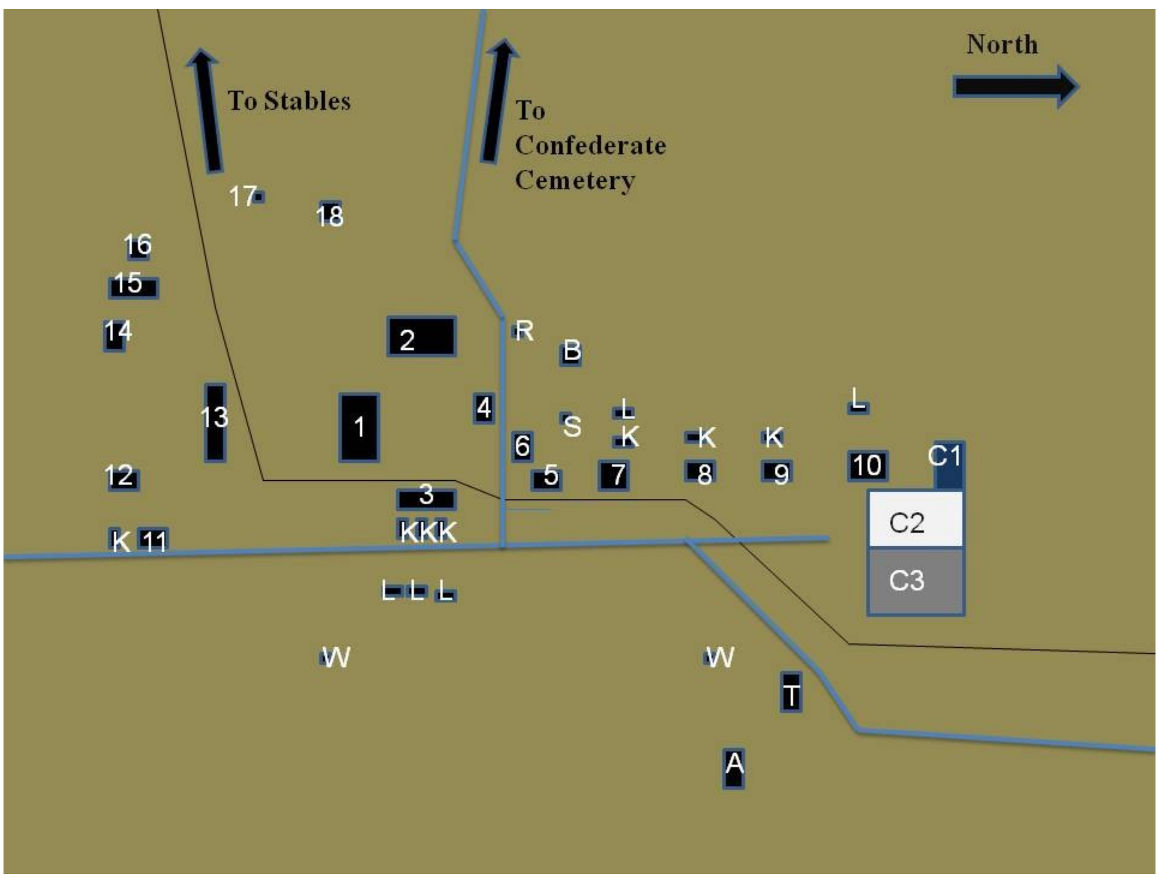
[117] Zachary Taylor to the Adjutant General, March 29, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225 – T 236, 1843," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[118] United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma*, 3.
[119] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," October of 1842.
[120] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 184.

Though it had an uneasy beginning, Fort Washita became an official military post. It had a name, a reserve of land, and by the end of 1842 some structures built. Of course, men were stationed there, even some from different regiments. The military had almost abandoned the site, but thanks to Taylor and Upshaw it remained in existence.

As with the previous chapter, this information is not necessarily intended to be its own interpretive program. But, it allows the historian to know how the post was established and when necessary inform the public about the post's history. This is important as members of the Second Dragoons were the first military men on site and provides context about the site and the units stationed there.



Key to Map: 1. South Barracks, 2. West Barracks, 3. Bachelor Officer's Quarters, 4. Original Barracks/Adjutant's Office, Schoolhouse, 5. Chaplain's Quarters, 6. Cooper Cabin, 7. Commanding Officer's Quarters, 8. Officer's Quarters, 9. Surgeon's Quarters, 10. New Hospital, 11. Old Hospital, 12. Guardhouse, 13. Commissary, 14. Bake Oven, 15. Reproduction Blacksmith Shop, 16. Blacksmith Shop, 17. Lime Kiln, 18. Laundry.

K. Kitchens, L. Latrines, W. Well, S. Springhouse, T. California Trail Interpretive Stop, A. Artillery Stop, C1. Old Post Cemetery, C2. Modern Cemetery, C3. Native American Burial Ground.

CHAPTER V

POST COMMANDERS

The officers who commanded Camp or Fort Washita in its early years were from the Second Dragoons. Each had their own lives and character. Their story, and what the post was probably like for them, help provide an understanding of the post commander's life at the site.

The first officer in command was G. A. H. Blake of Company A. In the *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, Francis B. Heitman gave Blake's full name as George Alexander Hamilton Blake. He was born in Pennsylvania.[121] According to Rodenbough, who gives short biographical information about officers based on official records and circulars, Blake in June of 1836 became a first lieutenant in the Second Dragoons. He reached the rank of captain on December 3, 1839.[122] This was the rank he held while in command of Camp Washita. According to Rodenbough, Blake saw combat in Florida, Texas, and even Indian Territory.[123]

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[121] Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, From its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 223, http://books.google.com/books?id=DqLcgTjCR_wC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q=blake&f=false (accessed February 11, 2013).

[122] Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 450.

[123] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 450. Though it does not seem that the Second Dragoons were ever involved in any battles or conflicts in the territory.

Some of the regimental reports present Blake as only in command of his company in April and May 1842 and not of Camp Washita. Yet, from June through September he was listed as in command of the camp. He would have been the commander of the camp that April and May as he was the highest ranked officer present and the post returns listed him as the site's commander. Blake was not always a fair officer. In May of 1843, P. Kearny wrote to Zachary Taylor that:

> "The following is an extract from a letter dated May 20, I just received by Major General Scott. . . : 'a letter has been received from Richard Perry, a private in Company A, U. S. Riflemen, late 2.d Dragoons. He charged the orderly sergeant with beating & bruising him in a brutal manner without any provocation. He also charged Captain Blake, of the said company of co-couraging the orderly sergeant in doing the same. Perry enlisted about four [years] since on Governor's Island, at that time he indulged occasionally in intoxicating liquors, but he was perfectly honest. . . We have now every reason to believe him a reformed man. He challenges Capt Blake to bring any charge against him, as a soldier or as a man. . . Perry has been sick for some time past. I think his illness was in a great measure caused by this outrage upon him. He now asks that the case may be investigated."[124]

Though there was no mention in the post or regimental returns of Blake being charged with anything, but this letter illustrates out how the captain may not have always been a respectable officer.

The next commander was Major Fauntleroy of the Second Dragoons. This would have been Thomas T. Fauntleroy. According to Rodenbough, Fauntleroy was a Virginian by birth and attained the rank of major in the Second Dragoons on June 8, 1836.[125] He did not rise any higher in rank until after he was no longer stationed at Fort Washita, which he commanded from October to November 1842. The regimental returns indicate Fauntleroy commanded Fort Towson that November, though he signed the Fort Washita return that same month. If the post return is correct, Fauntleroy was commander of the site when the government officially designated it a military post. Fauntleroy also was the commander who supposedly discussed with the Chickasaw agent the size of the reserve.

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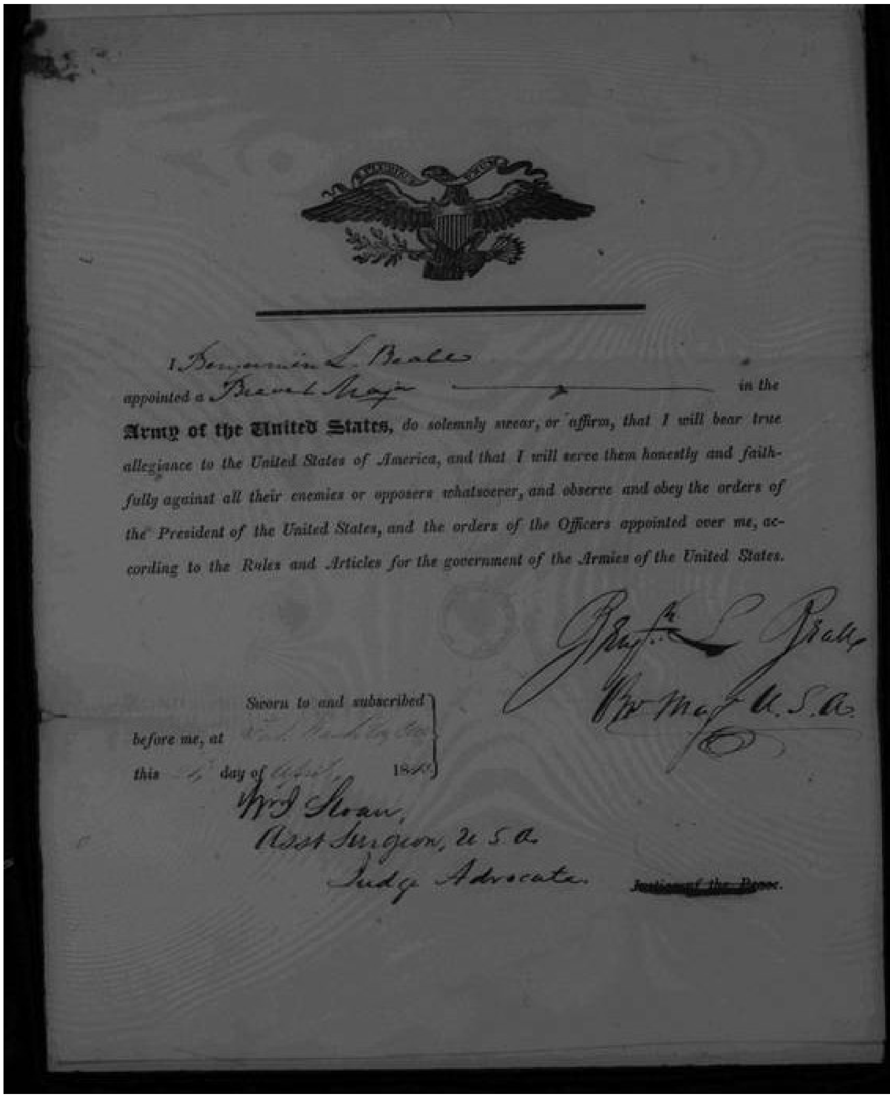
[124] Winfield Scott to P. Kearny, May 20, 1843: quoted in P. Kearny to Zachary Taylor, May 22, 1843, "Letters sent by the Headquarters of the Army (Main series), 1828-1903," Center for Research Libraries, 287-288.
[125] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 439.

Another officer who assumed command of the fort at various times was Benjamin Lloyd Beall. Originally from the District of Columbia, he became a captain in the Second Dragoons in 1836 and was later made a brevet major for his actions in Florida.[126] He commanded Company I. While at Fort Washita, he signed the oath for his brevet rank.[127]



I, Benjamin L. Beall appointed a Brevet Major in the **Army of the United States**, *do solemnly swear, or affirm, that I will bear true allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers whatsoever, and observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the Officers appointed over me, according to the Rules and Articles for the government of the Armies of the United States.*

Benj. L. Beall
Bvt Maj U.S.A.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, at [illegible] *this* [illegible] *day of* [illegible] 184[illegible]

Wm J Sloan,
Asst Surgeon, U.S.A.
Judge Advocate. ~~*Justice of the Peace.*~~

Captain Benjamin L. Beall's oath as a brevet major in the United States Regiment of Second Dragoons. It seems he signed the document while stationed at Fort Washita, C.N.

Benjamin Beall and William Sloan, April 21, 1843, "Letters Received of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 265, B 1-296, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964),

[126] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 449.
[127] Benjamin Beall and William Sloan, April 21, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 265, B 1-296, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

Beall seems to have had the characteristics of an officer, which he did not always effectively use. Rodenbough described him as, "a veritable *beau sabreur* ; born to the saddle, a superb swordsman, and of a courage bordering in recklessness, he soon became the idol of his troop and a literal 'terror to his foes,' especially if they wore moccasins."[128] In 1844, Colonel Croghan wrote that "Brevet Major [Benjamin L.] Beall, who was in command until. . . a few days ago, has been indebted, I think mainly to the fine materials of which his command is composed for this happy state of things. I may be mistaken of the Major's powers, still I can not but think he would have failed under the circumstances with troops of a different temperament."[129] So, Beall supposedly possessed the skills of an officer about 1836, but as time went on his skills weakened.

Besides not being an effective officer, Beall may have also turned into a drunk, at least after he left Fort Washita. First Dragoon Samuel Chamberlain remembered that during the Mexican-American War:

> One evening there was to be a Mexican 'Fandago' at San Jose. Several of us obtained a pass until reveille from our company commander, and I took it to Major Benjamin L. Beall, 2nd Dragoons Officer of the Day, to be countersigned. He was a short red-faced-and-nosed man, and looked the Major all over; it was evident that nature intended him for that position and nothing else. He was known in the army as 'Old Brilliant,' and from his unusual appearance at this time I judged that the influence of old Rye had something to do with it. The jolly Major signed the pass.[130]

Chamberlain also described Beall as fat, and that he and his regimental band joined the men going to the dance. Beall got drunk and upon his return to camp was placed under arrest by the orders of another former Fort Washita commander. This was not the only instance Chamberlain mentioned involving Beall and alcohol.

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[128] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 20.
[129] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958),, 132.
[130] Samuel E. Chamberlain, *My Confession* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 44.

Beall commanded Fort Washita during various times between his arrival at the post and when his company left. Though his company entered Camp Washita during October 1842, he was "Absent without leave, his former leave having expired on the 1st Oct' 42. Detained at Baton Rouge in consequence of the lowness of Red River."[131] He remained absent in November, but eventually reached the fort and took command in December through May 1843. While a letter Beall wrote and the regimental return for June 1843 had him in command during that month, the post return listed the Second Dragoons' lieutenant colonel in command of Fort Washita. Also, the regimental return placed the lieutenant colonel in Baton Rouge during June. Beall again temporarily took command of Fort Washita from December 1843 until May 1844. For about one day at the end of August and the beginning of September, 1844, Beall was again in command of the post.[132] In February 1845, Beall once again took command of the post and held the position until the Second Dragoon companies left the fort during September 1845.

Life for Beall at Fort Washita was not always easy. According to the February to March 1843 post returns, Beall commanded Fort Washita when his regiment was officially dismounted. The Second Dragoons at Fort Washita were probably unhappy with the circumstances which would have caused morale to drop. Beall also experienced misfortune in his life about the time he was stationed at Fort Washita. His daughter married a lieutenant, but "She died the next year and is buried in the national cemetery at Fort Gibson."[133] Beall even applied to be a major in his regiment, but Adjutant General Jones replied:

> Your application of September 19th, to be assigned to act as Major of your regiment has been received and in reply I have to inform you, that. . . a second officer of the <u>same grade by brevet</u>, cannot consistently with the legal organization be assigned to duty as a <u>field officer</u>- that is, there cannot be <u>two</u>

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[131] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, October of 1843.
[132] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, August and September of 1844.
[133] Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, Second Printing (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933),, 66.

> field officers of the rank of Major serving as field officers of the Regiment at the same time.[134]

Beall definitely had low points in his life while he served at Fort Washita.

The Second Dragoons lieutenant colonel who served as post commander at Fort Washita was William Selby Harney. A Louisianan by birth, in 1818 Harney became a second lieutenant in the First Infantry.[135] The lieutenant colonel had red hair and "was arrogant and aggressive."[136] He became lieutenant colonel of the Second Dragoons on the 15th of August, 1836.[137] Harney took part in the Black Hawk War and he was of "fine physique and was a good horseman."[138] He fought against the Seminoles in Florida, and this is where he received his brevet rank of colonel. During the fighting, a group of Seminoles surprised and killed several Second Dragoons who were encamped with Harney, and:

> More than a year passed before the embittered Harney got his revenge. On 4 December 1840, he launched another one of his amphibious expeditions. . . Harney hanged whatever warriors he overtook on the spot. Coming across an island harboring a hostile village, Harney and his men paint and dressed themselves like Indians. Then he attacked, destroying the village and scattering its inhabitants.[139]

Reverend Goode wrote that when he visited Fort Washita, he wished to give a sermon to the troops. Harney gave permission for the event. But, Goode recalled that he also wanted to tell the garrison about the presidential election and when he looked for Harney in the room, "the Colonel was not there ; he had politely escorted me to the door, and then turned away."[140] Perhaps Harney was not a religious man, another character trait of the commander.

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[134] R. Jones to Benjamin L. Beall, November 3, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 18.
[135] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 436.
[136] Michael Hogan, *The Irish Soldiers or Mexico* (Guadalajara, Mexico: Fondo Editorial Universitario, 1997), 50.
[137] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 436.
[138] Major Joseph I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (The Capper Printing Company, 1939), 9.
[139] Gregory J. W. Urwin, *The United States Cavalry: An Illustrated History*, Illustrations by Ernest Lisle Reedstrom (Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press, 1983), 40.
[140] William H. Goode, "Chickasaw Mission, December 5, 1844," quoted in *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of Mission Life* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 204,

Similar to Beall, Harney was physically in command of Fort Washita at various times. The lieutenant colonel "reached Fort Washita on June 11, 1843, and assumed command the next day."[141] Though reports are a bit confusing, Harney held this position through November 1843 when he was ordered to Fort Jesup. In a December 1843 letter, Beall wrote that though Harney was absent, he was "the permanent commander of the post."[142] In June 1844, Harney once again commanded Fort Washita, and he held the position until the next January. The returns however did not always line up exactly; for example, the January post return had Harney at Fort Washita while the regimental return had him at Fort Jesup.

Though Colonel Twiggs commanded the regiment, Harney took command of it upon the absence of its colonel. This led to an important event for the history of the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita. According to the October of 1843 regimental return, while Harney commanded the fort and regiment of the Second Dragoons "Head Quarters removed from Fort Jesup La Oct. 7th and [was] established at Fort Washita C.N. Oct 24th 1843."[143] A few of the regimental personnel such as Adjutant H. H. Sibley and the sergeant major were then located at Fort Washita. In December, "The Head Qrs of the Regiment Reestablished at Fort Jesup La. Dec. 30th '43_Left Fort Washita C.N. Dec. 5th '43 and arrived at Fort Jesup La. Dec. 29th '43."[144] The end of the year regimental report also stated that the regimental headquarters had been temporarily at Fort Washita. Though the headquarters was present at Fort Washita for only a brief time period, this event made the site part of the Second Dragoons regimental history as the power of the regiment was at the post.

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http://books.google.com/books?id=tB4RAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 5, 2013).

[141] Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier 1830-1860*, 102.

[142] Benjamin L. Beall to W. Bliss, December 20, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

[143] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," October of 1843.

[144] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," December of 1843.

Commanders had duties to oversee, including being prepared for any dangerous situations that could arise. Though newspapers were often filled with gossip, the *Arkansas Intelligencer* on April 5, 1845, reported that "There is a rumor in this city that the Kichee Indians have crossed the Red river in large numbers, for the purpose of depredation, and that Maj. Beall, commanding Fort Washita, had sent an express to Fort Towson for troops to be in readiness to march for purpose of checking any outbreak."[145] Even if it was only a rumor, this article clearly indicated that a commander had to be ready for any problem on the frontier, especially if it meant violence.

A commander had other duties besides preparation for defense. The post commander decided what time the soldiers woke up.[146] A commander likely taught proper regulations to his subordinate officers and was supposed to "set a good example for his junior officers."[147] Colonel Croghan reported how at Fort Washita:

> It is impossible to form a positive opinion as to the state of its discipline from actual observation. The general reputation of the commandant as a disciplinarian and the appearance and demeanor of the men constitute the best, if not the only true test whereby a judgment may be formed. In the present case, I must declare the discipline proper, as after two weeks' sojourn I have remarked nothing indicative of a restless, insubordinate spirit among the soldiery or a disposition on the part of any officer to be either too lax or too exacting.[148]

At one point, some Cherokees brought into Fort Washita another Cherokee who was supposedly violent and had been shot "The officers in command advised them at once to hang him up, according to the provisions of the code so extensively practiced upon of late by our neighboring states, [and in which the gallant Colonel himself was not wholly unpracticed,]. . . the obstinate

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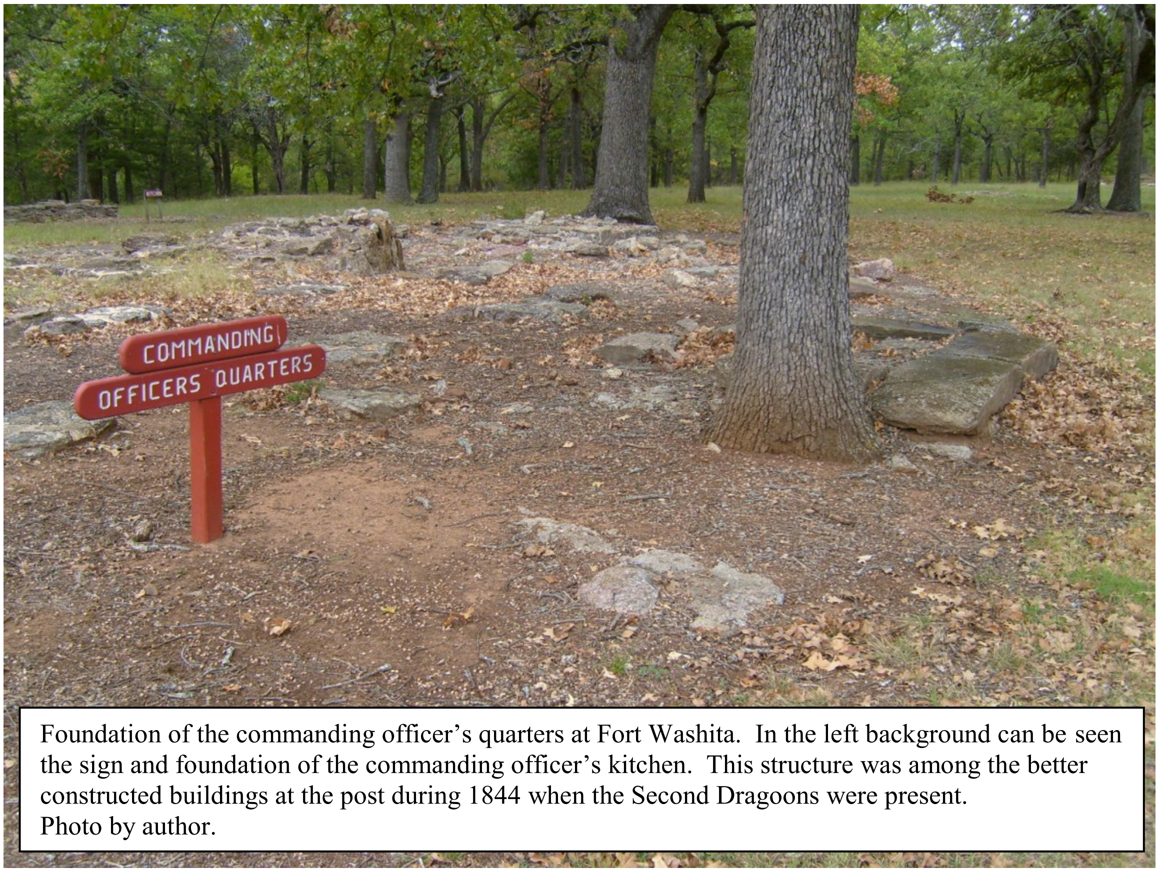
[145] *Arkansas Intelligencer*, April 5, 1845, "Newspaper Files, Van Buren, Arkansas Intelligencer, Begins March 11 1843, Vol 2 No 4," University of Arkansas (Little Rock, Arkansas: ARK Hist Comm), microfilm, April 5, 1845.
[146] Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 83.
[147] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 93, 97.
[148] *Army Life on the Western Frontier,* 132.

'*savages*' preferred to await the process of law."[149] But, a commander also had to be hospitable, and Harney allowed Reverend Goode to stay in the commander's quarters.[150]



Foundation of the commanding officer's quarters at Fort Washita. In the left background can be seen the sign and foundation of the commanding officer's kitchen. This structure was among the better constructed buildings at the post during 1844 when the Second Dragoons were present.
Photo by author.

A post commander needed quarters in which to live. According to the *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*, the "Officer's had the 'luxury' of private living quarters with the commanding officer receiving the best housing. The structure had four fireplaces and a detached kitchen. The Commanding Officer's wife often entertained the officers and their families."[151] Croghan reported on the condition of officer's quarters in 1844:

[149] Goode, "Chickasaw Mission, December 5, 1844," quoted in *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of Mission Life* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 203-204, http://books.google.com/books?id=tB4RAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 5, 2013).

[150] Goode, "Chickasaw Mission, December 5, 1844," quoted in *Outposts of Zion, with Limnings of Mission Life* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1864), 205, http://books.google.com/books?id=tB4RAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 5, 2013).

> All of the officers, whether of the staff or line, with the exceptions of Colonel [William S.] Harney, and the senior medical officer, Major [Benjamin L.] Beall, and the adjutant, live in temporary huts of round logs, placed without regard to order. These gentlemen occupy the only two sets of quarters that are called permanent, and they are so designated, not that they are built of durable materials, but because some pains have been taken in the manner of their erection and that they are larger than the other buildings, being of one story with four rooms, besides a hall and front porch, each of ten feet width.[152]

So, the commanding officer was blessed with descent quarters to live in, unlike other officers and enlisted men.

Second Dragoons commanders at Fort Washita varied in a number of ways, but they faced the same basic duties. Blake was a captain, while Harney a lieutenant colonel. Fauntleroy was only in command for a few months while Beall spent a number of months in charge of the post. Blake was perhaps guilty of allowing a soldier to be abused while Beall may have been known as a drunk, at least a few years later. Yet, these were Second Dragoons who commanded the post, and while Harney commanded Fort Washita his regimental headquarters was moved to the site.

This information will allow the interpreter to understand and inform the public about the Second Dragoons' role to post commanders at Fort Washita. From 1842 until the Second Dragoons' companies left the post, it was members of the regiment who commanded Fort Washita. Some of these men, for example Harney, would become famous, but at Fort Washita had daily routines to see about and set for the men.

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[151] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services). Fort Washita visitors can pick up a copy of this map in the museum, and the map has information pertaining to the ruins and exhibits at the fort.
[152] *Army Life on the Western Frontier,* 51.

CHAPTER VI

NON-POST COMMANDER OFFICERS

The officer corps at Fort Washita consisted of more than post commanders. Other Second Dragoons officers at the post included captains down to the rank of brevet second lieutenants. These men haled from different parts of the United States, had various duties to oversee, a number of uniforms to wear, and a variety of quarters in which to live.

A number of Second Dragoons officers stationed at Fort Washita attended West Point. Because of the academy, "Like physicians, lawyers, civil engineers, and scientists, commissioned personnel were developing a sense of group identity and consciousness, molded by common experiences at West Point."[153] These officers, while cadets, pursued the same academic studies and often faced similar hardships, which led to camaraderie among these men. Of course, this was not always true, but West Point-trained officers tended to look down on their non-West Point peers. But, not all officers attended West Point and just a few years after Fort Washita was established, "The Military Academy, however, was a comparatively minor source of officers."[154] These men entered West Point and the military for a number of reasons which included "dreams of martial glory. . . the romantic appeal of military life. . . However. . . the career motivation

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[153] Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 103.
[154] Col. John Elting, *American Army Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982), 85.

most frequently mentioned in applications for military appointments is economic hardship."[155] At West Point, the cadets studied such curriculum as French, drawing, and military strategy.[156] These academic curriculums affected the officers who served the Second Dragoons, and sometimes their education was put to use while they served at Fort Washita.

In Company A was John H. Hill. He was from Pennsylvania, attended West Point, and in 1841 rose to his Fort Washita rank of first lieutenant.[157] Hill was not present when his company originally arrived at Camp Washita as he did not reach the post until December 1842. He had been on a leave of absence for eighteen months due to health reasons. Adjutant General Jones wrote about Hill that "The Returns show that he joined his company at Fort Jesup December 11th, 1842."[158] The post and regimental returns also indicate that Hill rejoined his company, but Company A at this time was at Fort Washita and not Fort Jesup.

Company G officers were also part of the ranks at Fort Washita. Marshall Saxe Howe was a native of Maine, attended West Point, and rose to the rank of captain in 1839.[159] During the Seminole War, Beall praised a Lieutenant Howe, and this could be the same man.[160] Before Howe was stationed at Fort Washita, he was tried for manslaughter.[161] In June 1843 while his company was at Fort Washita, he was not present. The Adjutant General wrote to Howe that he was "surpized to see, that you are still lingering in this City instead of proceeding to join your

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155 William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 163-165.
156 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms,* 167-168.
157 Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 473.
158 R. Jones to Winfield Scott, March 2, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20; November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 146.
159 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 440.
160 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 34.
161 J. H. Bronson to R. Jones, January 15, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 245, A – B 86, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

Company, as it is your duty to do, and from which you are now absent without authority. . . you are hereby required to proceed without delay to join your company, at Fort Washita."[162] Howe did eventually reach the post. In 1844, while inspecting Fort Washita, Colonel Croghan reported how "The officers of this command (unless in a single case, that of Captain [Marshalll S.] Howe, whom none speak to unless on duty) harmonize well together."[163] While at Fort Washita, Howe managed to get arrested a couple of times and faced a court martial. Due to his earlier manslaughter case, Croghan's remark, and his arrests, Howe was probably not well liked by the other officers.

Hamilton W. Merrill was another officer in Company G. He was originally from New York, graduated from West Point, and in 1840 became a first lieutenant.[164] Two letters from November 1842 place Merrill as a member of the First Dragoons.[165] This is incorrect since the January and even November 1842 Second Dragoons returns had him as one of that regiment's officers. While at Fort Towson, prior to being stationed at Fort Washita, Merrill spent most of his time in command of Company G as Howe was suspended. But, in late 1843, Merrill went absent without leave. While in Arkansas on the last day of October, Merrill wrote to the Adjutant General that he was "on my way to join my Company and that I have been necessarily delayed several days on account of high water."[166] His leave of absence had expired in August, and high water should not have delayed him for that long. However, he continued to inform the Adjutant

[162] R. Jones to Marshall S. Howe, June 19th, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20; November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 341.
[163] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 132.
[164] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 452.
[165] A. R. Hetzel to Third Auditer, November 16, 1842; A. R. Hetzel to Hamilton W. Merrill, November 16, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818-1870, Roll 17, Volumes 33-34; Mar. 11, 1842-July 14, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 88-89.
[166] Hamilton W. Merrill to R.(?) Jones, October 31, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 274, M 265 – P 90, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

general of his location, which was probably better than what some other officers did. Though the Second Dragoons return had him a part of Company G in April 1843, as of that May he was transferred to Company I. Merrill did not desire this transfer. On January 23, 1844, Adjutant General Jones wrote to him, "Your letter of Nov. 11th, 1843, relative to your transfer from Company G to I, and asking a revocation of the order directing the same, has been received, and you are informed that your request cannot be complied with."[167] Therefore, Merrill remained with Company I.

There were two other officers in Company G. One was Patrick Calhoun who came from the District of Columbia, and in 1841 graduated from West Point becoming a second lieutenant.[168] In January 1844, he was transferred to Company E.[169] Second Lieutenant Elias Kent Kane replaced Calhoun in Company G.

Also present at Fort Washita were officers of Company I. Among these men was Merrill who was transferred from Company G. Another was Washington Irving Newton, who was born in the District of Columbia and attained the rank of first lieutenant in 1841.[170] Before he arrived at Fort Washita, Newton spent some time "On Special duty in Europe."[171] The regimental return for May 1843 had him transferred from Company I to G, though he was still on his way to the

[167] R. Jones to Hamilton W. Merrill, January 23, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20; November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 122.
[168] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 455.
[169] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, January of 1844.
[170] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 442.
[171] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," February of 1842.

fort.[172] It took him some time to reach the post due to health problems and slowness of river travel.[173]

Among the Second Dragoons of Company A stationed at Fort Washita were officers with the rank of brevet second lieutenant. Thomas C. Hammond first appeared in the August 1842 regimental returns, but did not reach the post until February 1843. However, he did not appear in the next month's return, and Rodenbough's book indicates Hammond was transferred to the First Dragoons that March.[174] Also in Company A was George Stevens, a native of Vermont.[175] Stevens was not listed on the regimental returns until August 1843, and as he joined Stevens who also was on leave.[176] On August 7, 1843, Stevens wrote to Adjutant General Jones that he needed his leave lengthened, partially to have more time to reach Fort Washita.[177] But, the October of 1843 Fort Washita return showed that Stevens was transferred to another company, and as he had been on leave was probably never present at Fort Washita.

The ranks of Company I also included several brevet second lieutenants. One was Lewis Neill a Virginia native who attended West Point.[178] He first appeared among Company I's officers in the regimental return for August 1843, though like Stevens, Neill was also on leave at the time.[179] That same month he wrote the Adjutant General for an extended leave because he

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172 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," May of 1843.
173 Washington I. Newton to Elias K. Kane, December 10, 1844, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 286, G 142 – H 325, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964," microfilm.
174 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 491.
175 George Stevens and John Shaw, July 19, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 276, R 122 – S 224, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications: 1964), microfilm.
176 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," August of 1843.
177 George Stevens to Roger Jones, August 7, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 276, R 122 – S 224, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications: 1964), microfilm.
178 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 474.
179 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," August of 1843.

knew it would take some time to reach Fort Washita from Virginia.[180] However, according to the Fort Washita returns, Neill remained on leave before being transferred to Co. B in April of 1844.[181] Present at the post for only July 1844, as a possible Second Dragoon, was R.H. Anderson who had been previously listed as a First Dragoon. He could have been the Richard H. Anderson who was born in South Carolina, attended West Point, and in 1843 and 1844 had supposedly been among the First Dragoons at Fort Washita before trasnferring to the Second Dragoons.[182] Then there was John Bicknell, a Tennessean who attended West Point.[183] Bicknell reached Fort Washita in October of 1844.[184]

The Second Dragoons officer wore a dress uniform for special occasions, such as the visit of an important person. An 1833 dragoon officer's dress coat was dark blue with double breasted buttons, with the front cut to the waist, while the back had coattails. Also, "Gold lace slashes on the coat cuffs indicated rank: 4 for field grades, 3 for captains, and 2 for subalterns."[185] On the shoulder were epaulettes designating an officer's rank.[186] The officer's dress hat was a black shako which had on it "cords and plaited three-strand bands of the officer cap were of metallic-gilt cord, as were the oval-shaped plaited forms above the tassels and the tassels themselves. On the officer's cap the base of the white horse hair plume is trimmed in a distinctive manner."[187] These dress uniforms would have looked fancy compared to the non-dress uniforms.

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[180] Lewis Neill to Roger Jones, August 31, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 274, M 265 – P 90, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications: 1964), microfilm.
[181] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," May of 1844.
[182] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 455.
[183] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 484.
[184] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, October of 1844.
[185] Randy Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, vol. 1 of *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943: The United States Cavalryman: His Uniforms, Arms, Accoutrements, and Equipment* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), from a caption for an illustration by Steffen, 93.
[186] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 94.
[187] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 95.

Though this reproduction is based on the enlisted man's model, it provides an example of what the officer's dress shako would have looked like. According to an author, "Officer caps are identical in pattern, but metal ornaments are gilt instead of brass; cords, bands, tassels, and flat-braided ornaments are gold instead of worsted.

Quote from: Randy Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier: 1776-1850*, 90.

Photo by author.

An officer had different variations of the non-dress uniform. In winter, it consisted either of a dark blue frock coat or shell jacket, the latter reaching to the waist while the former hung lower. These would have had either epaulettes or shoulder boards to indicate the officer's rank. In summer, the shell jacket would have been white.[188] The hat was a dark blue cap which the army began issuing in 1839. In *Don Troiani's Soldiers in America: 1754-1865*, the writers

[188] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, from a caption for an illustration by Steffen, 101.

describe it as having “a round, flat crown of 10 ½-inch diameter that tapered down 2 inches into a nearly perpendicular 2 ½-inch-wide, patents leather visor.[189]

Both the dress and non-dress uniforms, included a sash and pants. An officer wore an orange sash. Suspenders held trousers with “a regular button fly. Double layers of cloth formed a *reinforce* down both legs on the seat, and in the crotch.”[190] The trouser’s color depended on rank, and “Trousers for wear with the undress, or field, uniform were like those for the dress uniform but *without stripes*! That is, field officers and adjutant would be wearing dark blue trousers, while company officers would wear blue-grey ones.”[191] Summer pants would have been white. The stripes for the dress trousers consisted of “gold lace for field grade officers and yellow cloth for company officers.”[192]

Along with a uniform, an officer also needed weapons and other equipment. Dragoons carried single shot flintlock pistols, although a percussion pistol was “designated by the Ordnance Department as the Model 1842 percussion pistol, [but] actual manufacture was not started until 1845.”[193] The pistols would have most likely been kept in holsters that hung over the front of the saddle. Though a single shot, these weapons proved deadly to not only an enemy but the wielder as well. In 1834, one United States Dragoons officer attempted to replace his handgun in its saddle holster when the hammer got caught and it discharged hitting the officer, who died later that day.[194] Another weapon an officer carried was a saber, and the First Dragoons originally carried “the Model 1833 dragoon sabre. . . The guards on most officers’ sabers are gilt.”[195] The Second Dragoons could have carried this saber. The military may have also issued to the

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[189] Earl J. Coates and James L. Kochan, *Don Troiani’s Soldiers in America 1754-1865*, Art by Don Troiani, Foreword by Brian Pohanka; Additional Contributors: Rene Chartrand, Charles Cureton, Fred Gaede, Erik Goldstein (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998).
[190] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 94-95.
[191] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 99.
[192] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, from a caption for an illustration by Steffen, 93.
[193] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 126.
[194] Hildreth, Camp Jackson, A.T., 1834, *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, 98.
[195] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 120.

regiment sabers based on the French 1822 saber.[196] From the saber hung a "knot. . . of gold cord with the acorn end."[197] The officer could wrap the cord around his wrist, so if he accidentally dropped the saber in the heat of battle he would not lose it or have to dismount to retrieve the weapon. The saber hung from a black belt with a square buckle. But, even the saber was on one occasion deadly to its wielder. While in Florida fighting Seminoles, one Second Dragoons captain died when he stabbed himself in the head with his saber, which could have either been suicide or an accident.[198] So, weapons used in defense from an enemy were also dangerous to the dragoon who wielded them.

An officer had various duties to perform in his regiment. A captain was generally in charge of a company, though this was not always the case. In June of 1842, while still stationed at Fort Towson, Second Lieutenant Calhoun took command of Company I as all of its officers were absent.[199] Two years later, Brevet Second Lieutenant Bicknell commanded Company I when all of the other officers were away or assigned to other duties.[200] It seems who was in command of a company depended on the officer as:

> Personal involvement of officers in their company's daily affairs was not required, and the lack of incentives for excellence quickly challenged an officer's resolve to do a good job. . . More conscientious officers made sure that their noncommissioned subalterns carried out directives as ordered. Personal visits and inspections of the men's rations and living conditions by company officers could be effective morale boosters; their involvement in work details, drills. . . increased the unit's efficiency.[201]

At Fort Washita, Colonel Croghan thought that almost everyone worked well together. Also, "Boards of survey helped the post commissary and quartermaster officers count supplies on hand and condemn those that had spoiled. A receiving board inspected newly arrived supplies. By

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196 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 122, 125. Note: Steffen seems to believe that the dragoons had been sufficiently armed with some sort of 1840 wristbreaker saber based on the French saber by the early 1840s, yet this is probably not the case.
197 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 126.
198 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 23.
199 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," June of 1842.
200 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," November of 1844.
201 Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 92-93.

custom junior officers, acting as recorders and secretaries, did most of the work by on such boards."[202] It was junior officers who "supervised the daily routine of the garrison. . . and kept the administrative records of the companies."[203] Officers did not always fill out paperwork on time or properly, and this caused corrections to be made and slowness in sending reports to Washington, D.C.

An officer's duties sometimes took him away from Fort Washita. In June 1842, a lieutenant left to search for deserters.[204] It seems that "Wherever posts existed near Indian territory, enforcement of the trade and intercourse laws demanded regulars' attention; officers endeavored to halt unauthorized settlement on Indian lands and to suppress the liquor trade."[205] In March 1845, a Second Dragoons second lieutenant reported to a First Dragoons first lieutenant who was about to leave on an expedition to substantiate possible Native American trouble.[206] There were times when an officer had to leave the territory, such as in January 1845 when Brevet Second Lieutenant Bicknell went to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, to "take charge of horses."[207] These animals were likely part of the military's effort to remount the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita. Bicknell did not rejoin his company until that August, right before the Second Dragoons left Fort Washita. At military posts, "Expeditions were the exception rather than the norm, for garrison life inevitably entailed a seemingly endless round of fixed duties combined with long periods of inactivity."[208] Although officers stationed at Fort Washita did not get many chances to lead troops on missions, it did occasionally happen whether it was searching for deserters or getting horses.

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202 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 93.
203 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 184.
204 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," June of 1842.
205 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 186.
206 Elias(?) K. Kane, "Orders No 38," Copy of a letter from West Point located in the Fort Washita Historic Site files.
207 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," January of 1845.
208 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 186-187.

An officer needed living quarters. In June 1844, Colonel Croghan reported that only a few officers lived in fairly permanent structures. Croghan also wrote, “The frame of a very large house for officers’ quarters has been erected, and every effort will be made to finish the building by the close of autumn.”[209] According to Blaine, “Lt. Rogers reported on Oct. 1, 1844 that. . . The Officer’s quarters were being built.”[210] These remarks possibly referred to what is known as the Bachelor Officers’ Quarters. This structure, built about 1842 according to one source, was directly to the east of the parade ground and contained twelve rooms.[211] The officers in this building had the use of three separated kitchens east of the quarters; a little further east were three latrines. At Fort Washita today rests the foundation remains for these structures. Other possible officers’ quarters appear as a lone chimney northwest of the parade ground and foundation remains north, of the post commander’s quarters.[212]

Foundation of Bachelor Officer’s Quarters at Fort Washita. This structure was most likely constructed about 1844. Directly behind can be seen the foundation of one of three kitchens to the quarters.

Photo by author.

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[209] *Army Life on the Western Frontier,* 52.
[210] Blaine, *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 21.
[211] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[212] Though these other foundations may not date to when the Second Dragoons companies were present at Fort Washita.

Being an officer did not always mean having comfortable quarters or a private room. At least in 1870s Texas, officers' quarters often had leaking roofs.[213] Fort Washita would not have been any different, especially since a number of the buildings were made of lumber and even logs. It seems that "Single officers were entitled to private rooms, though junior officers had to share quarters in an overcrowded post."[214] By 1860, if an officer wanted quarters inhabited by a lower ranking officer, the former could take the quarters, and "Such a situation could have a ripple effect on officer's housing throughout the post."[215]

An officer needed pay on which to sustain himself. The estimated annual salaries for commissioned officers in 1838 were: lieutenant colonel $900; major $720; captain $600; and both first and second lieutenants $400.[216] This meant that Lieutenant Colonel Harney would have made about $75 per month, unless he drew pay for his brevet rank, while Hill would have received roughly $33 per month. While this may not seem like a large sum of money, officers also received additional sums that included payment for servants.[217] These salaries followed a table which the paymaster general's office sent to Adjutant General Jones in 1842.[218] At times,

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[213] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 93.
[214] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[215] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 107.
[216] N. Towson in *Congress*, House, "Cavalry and Infantry: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting a Comparitive Statement of the Expense of Enlistment, Equipment, Mainetance, &c., of Cavalry or Mounted Men and Infantry, &c.," 25th Cong., 2d sess., March 19, 1838, Doc. No. 250, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T58X4FJMMTM2MDYzMzkwNS4yMDM4MzY6MToxMzoxMzkuNzguNTAuMTU1&p_action=doc&p_docnum=10&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-103624455AC944F0@2392453-@0 (accessed February 11, 2013).
[217] N. Towson in *Congress*, House, "Cavalry and Infantry: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting a Comparitive Statement of the Expense of Enlistment, Equipment, Mainetance, &c., of Cavalry or Mounted Men and Infantry, &c.," 25th Cong., 2d sess., March 19, 1838, Doc. No. 250, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T58X4FJMMTM2MDYzMzkwNS4yMDM4MzY6MToxMzoxMzkuNzguNTAuMTU1&p_action=doc&p_docnum=10&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-103624455AC944F0@2392453-@0 (accessed February 11, 2013).
[218] XX Towson to Roger Jones, November 1, 1842, contained "Table: Of Pay, Subsistence, Forage, &c., allowed to Officers of the U. S. Army, &c., per Acts of the 5th and 7th July, 1838," in ""Letters Received by

there was a mistake with an officer's pay. On October 22, 1844, Hill wrote that "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Head Quarters of the Army, stating, that I had drawn my pay for the month of July 1843 twice, which fact I was not aware of, until now."[219] Other letters written by the Adjutant General, Paymaster General's office, and Hill show that two different paymasters had paid the lieutenant for July of 1843, yet it took over a year to try and figure out the problem.

An officer had a horse which needed ridden, cared for, and fed. The officer used the mount for transportation across land. Lieutenant Colonel Harney was a good horseman. Quartermaster General Jesup wrote, "An officer who is not a good horseman is not worth for any Military purpose the powder sufficient to shoot him."[220] An officer's horse might have been cared for by a noncommissioned officer, but "most officers gave their steeds individual attention."[221] In 1844, Jesup wrote to Colonel Twiggs that "All officers have by law eight dollars per month for each horse he actually keeps in service not exceeding the number to which he is limited by law. . . At most of the frontier posts, however, I know from the price paid by the Quarter Master's Department for forage that the horses can be kept for much less than eight dollars a month."[222] In the 1838 regulations, under "Forage," a lieutenant colonel was allowed five horses and a major four.[223] Though the amount per horse was eight dollars a month for

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the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

[219] John H. Hill to Roger Jones, October 22, 1844, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 286, G 142 – H 325, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

[220] Thomas Jesup to James A Black, February 20, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 393.

[221] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 84.

[222] Thomas Jesup to David E. Twiggs, August 29, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818-1870, Roll 19, Volume 26; June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 155.

[223] Towson to Roger Jones, November 1, 1842, contained "Table: Of Pay, Subsistence, Forage, &c., allowed to Officers of the U. S. Army, &c., per Acts of the 5th and 7th July, 1838," in ""Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

forage, the 1838 total estimated cost for forage was $384 for a lieutenant colonel or major, $288 for a captain, $192 for a first or second lieutenant, and the "ration of forage consists of 8 quarts of corn or 12 quarts of oats and 14 pounds of hay or fodder per day, the cost of which depends on the time when and the place where it is issued."[224]

Officers desired entertainment and relaxation from the monotony of post life. Sometimes an officer went on a leave of absence to visit home, friends, or perhaps a nearby town. The post-Civil War officer's entertainment was probably not much different than those in the early-1840s. They would have been "torn between the camaraderie often associated with military life and the nagging divisions that beset the frontier garrisons. To save money or to fight loneliness, bachelor officers pooled their money to hire cooks and form mess groups. They also attended 'hops' and dinners given by their peers."[225] Officers also hunted and read books. Colonel A. T. Lee wrote that, while in Florida, he enjoyed horseracing and billiards.[226] Beall would have also gotten to enjoy billiards at Fort Washita because in 1844, Colonel Croghan wrote, "Mr.-----with permission of Colonel Harney is fitting up a house, in which are to be a billiard table, ninepin alleys, and a refreshment room furnished with every variety of liquors, and open to all officers."[227] This means Fort Washita had an officer's club, thought at times it was open to certain enlisted men. Some officers might have partook in activities which Eastern society looked down upon such as getting drunk or chasing women, what few were around.

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[224] N. Towson in *Congress*, House, "Cavalry and Infantry: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting a Comparitive Statement of the Expense of Enlistment, Equipment, Mainetance, &c., of Cavalry or Mounted Men and Infantry, &c.," 25th Cong., 2d sess., March 19, 1838, Doc. No. 250, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T58X4FJMMTM2MDYzMzkwNS4yMDM4MzY6MToxMzoxMzkuNzguNTAuMTU1&p_action=doc&p_docnum=10&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-103624455AC944F0@2392453-@0 (accessed February 11, 2013).

[225] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 189.

[226] A. T. Lee, "Personal Recollections—A Scout with Ben Beall," in *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 47. There was another Beall in the Second Dragoons, but as Lee later discusses Benjamin Beall, this is probably who he mentioned on this page.

[227] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 133.

The interpreter should know about the various non-post commander officers at Fort Washita and what their lives were like. These men had to oversee their companies. An interpreter wanting to do living history needs to know how to properly uniform himself and various other items such as the amount of pay an officer received.

CHAPTER VII

GUARDHOUSE AND PUNISHMENT

Sometimes trouble happened around a post or soldiers got out of line. Two items that helped assure post life stayed quiet included a guardhouse and forms of punishment. The guardhouse served as an office and holding area for a troublesome soldier waiting for his punishment.

Fort Washita's guardhouse was located on the south side of the area, where the main structures stood. It was "Here that the Officer of the Day monitored the coming and going of soldiers and civilians. The Sergeant of the Guard detailed men to guard duty and assigned them to their posts. He inspected the guard on a regular basis."[228] Soldiers nicknamed the guardhouse "Company Q."[229] People entering or leaving the post had to report to the guardhouse so the officers knew who was on the site. So, the guardhouse served as the eyes and ears of the post.

According to Wooster, it was the officer of the day's duty to "put the new guard through the manual of arms and then dismiss the old guard."[230] The changing of the guard came in the morning and was announced by the call of guard mounting.[231] The officer of the day signed

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[228] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[229] "Company 'Q,'" handout from Fort Washita historic site.
[230] Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 89.
[231] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).

passes for soldiers to leave the post.[232] Junior officers “served in rotation as officer of the day and officer of the guard. The latter commanded the post guard, and one of his duties was control of the enlisted prisoners, often a tense and difficult task.”[233]

Foundation of the guardhouse with view looking north towards the 1849 barrack ruins on which the other side is the heart of the post, the parade ground.
Photo by author.

The guardhouse was also where sentries reported. In the 1870s, and probably not much different than the 1840s, “The sentries were changed every two hours, and the men who were relieved returned to the guardhouse. While he was not allowed to remove any part of his uniform, a soldier could at least rest on a rude bench or chair in the guardroom. The oppressive summer heat and the bitter winter northers took their toll on members of the guard. . . Discipline was often lax among the sentries.”[234] After coming off of a two hour shift of guard duty, a soldier rested for four hours.[235] While on duty a guard had to perform a variety of tasks, and “Some escorted the prisoners to their work details. Sentry duty claimed others, who observed

[232] Samuel E. Chamberlain, *My Confessions* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 92.
[233] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 185.
[234] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 91.
[235] National Park Service, “Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life,” Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).

activities on and off the military reservation from the established posts or on patrol."[236] If a sentry ever discharged his weapon, that shot "alerted the guard to possible intrusions."[237] In a reserve that was at least four square miles, a gunshot was a much quicker way to signal a possible threat than merely a man on foot or even a rider. The guard had to look smart, salute officers, and he had better not have fallen asleep or leave his position because punishment would be severe.[238] It was up to the guards to make sure that life at the fort was calm or at least signal if there was possible danger.

Though not always, the guardhouse could be used as a sort of jail. The guardhouse at Fort Washita was used as a temporary holding place for soldiers awaiting punishment.[239] But, it was more of an office than a jail compared to the guardhouses of the 1870s which were actually considered jails.[240]

Sometimes an officer got into trouble and had to face punishment through a courts-martial. A courts-martial "dealt with violations of the Articles of War (most commonly desertion, theft, and problems related to alcohol abuse) and, in the absence of local officials, civil cases. To deal with the more serious and complicated charges officers from various posts convened in general courts-martial."[241] Sometimes officers used the courts-martial as a time to catch up on news and socialize with each other.[242] At least after the American Civil War, these types of trials were "similar to civilian trials. . . The accused was informed of the charges against him, he could request a court counsel, and he entered a plea. Both sides usually called witnesses, and the proceedings were recorded. The main difference was the absence of a jury—all testimony and

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236 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 89.
237 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 91.
238 Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 146.
239 *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.
240 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 39.
241 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 94.
242 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 97.

evidence was presented to a panel of officers. . . courts were convened as needed."[243] An officer could face two types of courts-martial, and the type of violation decided which one was implemented. A Special Court, with about three officers presiding, consisted of cases where punishment for a soldier might be confinement for no more than a year, a "bread and water diet, solitary confinement, hard labor, ball and chain, significant fines, and dishonorable discharges. In cases involving officers or NCOs, penalties could also include reduction in rank or dismissal."[244] An officer could also stand before a General Court, which needed five officers on the board and "could be convened by a department commander or the president himself. The General Court heard capital cases and cases that could warrant long-term confinement in a regional or federal penitentiary, such as murder or espionage. A death penalty was usually carried out by hanging, though sometimes a firing squad was used."[245] The military dishonorably discharged soldiers who received a long term sentence.

Captain Howe faced different punishments from the military. Before being posted at Fort Washita, Howe was suspended from his rank and pay. While at Fort Washita in August 1844, he was arrested and in November stood trial before a courts-martial at Fort Towson.[246] A couple of officers in the First and Second Dragoons attended as members or witnesses.[247] Howe returned to Fort Washita, but was again under arrest on Christmas Eve.[248] The next August he was once again under arrest. But, the reports do not present why Howe had been arrested or whether he stood before a courts-martial.

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[243] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 156.
[244] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 157.
[245] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 158.
[246] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, August and November of 1844.
[247] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," November of 1844.
[248] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," December of 1844.

Though he was not then at Fort Washita, Lieutenant Colonel Harney also faced a courts-martial. In February 1845, Harney received permission to take twenty days leave.[249] He later received additional days for his leave.[250] But, on April 10, 1845, Adjutant General Jones sent a letter to General Arbuckle at Fort Smith that he was to oversee a courts-martial for Harney, and Arbuckle was to "place that officer in arrest."[251] The Adjutant General also wrote to the officer who acted as judge advocate that First Dragoons First Lieutenant A. R. Johnston had pressed charges. The judge was to strike out certain charges, the trial was to have been in June, and "The accused will be duly furnished with a copy of the Charges and Specifications upon which he may be arraigned."[252] In May 1845, Harney was to have been present at Fort Smith.[253] The June Fort Washita return had Harney listed under the heading of "Absent without leave" while the July and August returns had him as "Absent awaiting Sentence." On June 19, 1845, the *Arkansas Intelligencer* reported that "The charge against Col. Harney was that he had flogged a soldier."[254] About the outcome of the trial, the newspaper reported, "We understand that the Court closed their proceedings. . . of the 17th inst., and have dispersed to their respective stations. We are also gratified. . . that nothing is contained in the charges against Col. Harney calculated to reflect upon the honor of this distinguished officer."[255]

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[249] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," March of 1845.
[250] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1845.
[251] Roger Jones to Matthew Arbuckle, April 10, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 14, Volumes 21-22; January 2, 1845 – September 5, 1846," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964," microfilm, 109.
[252] Roger Jones to H. Prentiss, April 10, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 14, Volumes 21-22; January 2, 1845 – September 5, 1846," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964," microfilm, 109.
[253] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," May of 1845.
[254] *Arkansas Intelligencer*, June 19, 1845, "Newspaper Files, Van Buren, Arkansas Intelligencer, Begins March 11 1843, Vol 2 No 4," University of Arkansas (Little Rock, Arkansas: ARK Hist Comm), microfilm, June 19, 1845. There is more to the manner of flogging that Harney gave, but it is unreadable. Most likely he ordered excessive or flogging for somebody that did not deserve it.
[255] *Arkansas Intelligencer*, June 19, 1845, "Newspaper Files, Van Buren, Arkansas Intelligencer, Begins March 11 1843, Vol 2 No 4," University of Arkansas (Little Rock, Arkansas: ARK Hist Comm), microfilm, June 19, 1845.

An enlisted man could also be arrested or confined. When Company A formed Camp Washita, the unit had two privates listed as "IN ARREST, OR CONFINEMENT."[256] Under arrest or confined for that October, Company A had one soldier in the noncommissioned category and three privates while the newly arrived Company I had one private. In April 1843, Company A had only one private under arrest or confined while Company I had one noncommissioned officer and two privates. Arrested or confined during October 1843 for Company A was one private, Company I had five privates, and Company G had nobody. During April 1844, all three companies had a combined total of three privates who were arrested or confined. But, the three companies had a combined total of one captain and three privates in arrest or confined for October 1844. The next April, there was nobody under arrest or confined.[257] In December 1845, Private Francis Adolph was confined at Fort Washita though his Company G was on its way to south Texas.[258] Though the returns present the number of troops under arrest, they do not always provide information as to why the soldiers were arrested.

Enlisted men also could be tried by courts-martial. General Orders, No. 53 ordered that a soldier who was guilty of "insolent words, addressed to a superior, let the soldier be ordered into confinement. This, of itself, if followed by prompt repentance and apology, may often be found a sufficient punishment. If not, a court can readily authorize the final remedy."[259] Along with the types of courts-martial an officer faced, the average soldier could be tried in a Garrison Court. Only one officer presided over this court, and he "heard minor offenses against enlisted men and inflicted lesser punishments, such a reprimands, limited fines or pay reductions, and short term confinements (up to thirty days). Among the offenses. . . tried. . . were drunkenness,

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[256] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1842. Of course it might be possible that these men listed were not present at Fort Washita but were confined or under arrest elsewhere.
[257] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1842, 1843, 1844, and 1845; and October of 1842, 1843, and 1844.
[258] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," December of 1845.
[259] Headquarters of the Army, August 20, 1842, "General Orders. No. 53," in "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225 – T 236, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications), microfilm, 1.

disorderly conduct, gambling, unauthorized absence, stealing, and other relatively petty transgressions."[260]

A soldier could have received a variety of punishments, beyond confinement and hard labor. If soldiers fought among one another, the aggressors could be tied together for a day. Or if a soldier mistreated a horse, he had to carry "full saddle and accoutrements. . . around the parade grounds."[261] They also could be fined, or even flogged, though the military eventually did away with such a harsh punishment by the time of the Civil War.[262] The person who was flogged suffered great pain. First Dragoon Chamberlain remembered that during the Mexican-American War, an ex-volunteer soldier upon being flogged "begged of his tormentor to shoot him and finish his misery at once."[263] A soldier could also have been hung by his thumbs or tied to the ground and left to the mercy of the elements.[264] Another painful punishment involved the buck and gag "which required the soldier to sit on the ground with his hands tied over his knees and a stick thrust between his elbows and knee. He would then be gagged either with a rag, stick or bar of soap."[265] Chamberlain was bucked to a tent pole with six other men, and his gag consisted of a tent stake.[266] These types of punishments could have, and did, injure soldiers who would then need to visit the hospital for treatment.

Though an officer had the right to punish a soldier, he was not supposed to be abusive. General Order No. 53 stated:

> 1. . . . Intimations, through many channels, received at General Head Quarters, lead to more than a suspicion that blows, kicks, cuffs and lashes, against law, the good of the service and the faith of government, have, in many instances, down to a late period, been inflicted upon private soldiers of the army by their officers and non-commissioned officers.

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260 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 157.
261 "Company 'Q,'" handout from Fort Washita historic site.
262 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 153-154.
263 Chamberlain, My Confession, 193.
264 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 154.
265 "Company 'Q,'" handout from Fort Washita historic site.
266 Chamberlain, My Confession, 195.

2. . . It is due to the line, generally, to add, that those intimations refer almost exclusively to the Second Dragoons and 3d Infantry.
3. . . Inquiries into the reported abuses are in progress, with instructions, if probable evidence of guilt be found, to bring the offenders to trial.
4. . . It is well known to every vigilant officer that discipline *can* be maintained (--and it *shall* be so maintained--) *by legal means*. Other reports are, in the end, always destructive of good order and subordination.[267]

So, the government very clearly ordered that soldiers were not to be abused, but of course some officers did abuse their men and got away with it. For instance, Captain Blake possibly allowed a soldier to be beaten, and Harney improperly had a soldier flogged. Some officers believed "that violations deserved some inflictions of humiliation and/ or bodily pain—believing brutality would instill fear and fear would result in subservient behavior."[268]

Though punishment was not supposed to be abusive, discipline was important in the military. A soldier needed to obey his superiors and be able to "respond to orders instantly and without hesitation during campaigns and in combat, discipline was critical."[269] Also, if officers or enlisted men had been able to get away with all crimes, than the military would have been an armed mob.

Through knowledge of the guardhouse, the interpreter can inform people about post security and discipline. Security was important so as soldier would not be surprised by a possible attack, and sentries made sure this did not happen. When dealing with discipline, perhaps the interpreter could have visitors take part in a mock court martial.

[267] Headquarters of the Army, August 20, 1842, "General Orders. No. 53," in "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225 – T 236, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications), microfilm, 1.

[268] "Company 'Q,'" handout from Fort Washita historic site.
[269] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 151.

CHAPTER VIII

POST ADJUTANT

Some officers served basically as a secretary at Fort Washita. The title of this position was post adjutant. Several Second Dragoons held this position, and they oversaw the post's paperwork. They also required an office and quarters.

One Second Dragoon officer who served as post adjutant was Phillip W. McDonald of Company A. Born in Pennsylvania, he attended West Point and in 1842 became a Second Lieutenant.[270] This was not the first time he had been a post adjutant, as he earlier filled that position at Fort Towson.[271] It was at Fort Towson that McDonald signed his oath as an officer.[272] Rodenbough listed McDonald as becoming a second lieutenant the previous October.[273] McDonald served as post adjutant from December 1842 to September 1843, and again from

[270] Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 473-474. Though, in Rodenbough's list and biography of Second Dragoons written from official reports, ect., he misspelled McDonald as MacDonald.

[271] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, February of 1842.

[272] Phillip W. McDonald and William I. Sloan, April 11, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 255, M 132-472, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications), microfilm.

[273] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 474.

December 1843 to February 1844.[274] Sometimes, he held other positions. During March 1843, for instance, McDonald commanded his company.[275] For some reason, in the regimental return for April 1843, the words "post adjutant" were crossed out, yet the next month he was again listed as adjutant.

Another Second Dragoon officer who served in this position was Second Lieutenant Elias Kent Kane. He was originally from Illinois and attended West Point.[276] The post and regimental returns listed him as a full second lieutenant while Rodenbough had him as only a brevet for quite some time. Before assigned to Fort Washita, he was for a brief time the regimental adjutant. On April 16, 1842, Colonel Twiggs wrote, "I have the honor to report that Lieut H H Sibley has this day tendered his resignation as adjutant, and that Lieut E K Kane has been appointed Adjutant 2nd Dragoons."[277] The Adjutant General's Office replied that a first lieutenant needed to be the regimental adjutant, thus "the appointment of a 2.d Lieutenant, or Brevet 2.d Lieut, was illegal, as such appointment would render it necessary to muster <u>two first</u> in one of the Companies."[278] Each company was supposed to have a first and second lieutenant, but with Sibley no longer adjutant he needed to join a company which meant one of the companies would have had two first lieutenants instead of a first and second lieutenant. In September, Twiggs wrote that Sibley was again adjutant, and Kane was "temporarily attached to H Comp y."[279] In January of 1844,

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[274] Though the post and regimental returns might possibly not always list the complete period that an officer served in a position.
[275] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," March of 1843.
[276] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 474.
[277] David E. Twiggs to the Adjutant General, April 16, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Research for Center Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[278] L. Thomas to David E. Twiggs, August 24, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 12, Volumes 17-18, January 2, 1841 – November 21, 1842," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964, microfilm, 324-325.
[279] David E. Twiggs to the Adjutant General, September 17, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Research for Center Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

Kane was transferred to Company G located at Fort Washita.[280] But, the next month he was "On temporary duty with company E. at Fort Jesup La."[281] As of March, Kane was headed back towards Fort Washita. He arrived at the post in April 1844 and took over as post adjutant.[282] In August, while Kane was post adjutant, he commanded Company G.[283] He held both positions until the next month, and then in November went on leave. Yet, by December he was back in command of his company.[284] The beginning of the next year had him once again only in the position of post adjutant, which he held through April 1845. During that May, he was gone on special duty until the next month when he returned to the position of post adjutant. At some point he requested a transfer, because on December 28, 1844 the Adjutant General's office wrote to Kane, "Your joint application of October. . . for an exchange of regiments, was duly submitted to the General in Chief, and I am directed to say that the request cannot be complied with."[285] Kane held the post adjutant's position in April 1844, June to October, January to March of 1845, and then from June until his company left Fort Washita at the end of that summer.

Henry H. Sibley was another Second Dragoon who was adjutant of Fort Washita. Originally from Louisiana, he attended West Point, and in 1840 became a first lieutenant in his regiment.[286] He was one of the Second Dragoons regimental adjutants, and in 1838 this allowed him to receive in pay about $520 per year or $43.33 per month.[287] Sibley served as regimental adjutant before and after the short time that Kane held the position. Sibley accompanied the

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[280] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, January of 1844.
[281] Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," February of 1842.
[282] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1844.
[283] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," August of 1844.
[284] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," December of 1844.
[285] L. Thomas to Elias K. Kane, December 18, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 483.
[286] Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 453.
[287] Towson to Roger Jones, November 1, 1842, contained "Table: Of Pay, Subsistence, Forage, &c., allowed to Officers of the U. S. Army, &c., per Acts of the 5th and 7th July, 1838," in ""Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

regimental headquarters from Fort Jesup to Fort Washita in October 1843. In November, he was adjutant of the regiment and Fort Washita.[288] But, when the regimental headquarters returned to Fort Jesup in December, Sibley followed it.

The post adjutant had different duties at Fort Washita. It was his job to assemble "the reports delivered to him by the first sergeants of the respective companies."[289] Skelton wrote that "each regimental commander had the aid of a regimental adjutant, usually a first lieutenant on detached service from his company, and numerous subalterns served as post adjutants."[290] He also described part of the Adjutant General's office duties which probably fit the work of an adjutant, such as "copying letters dictated by their superiors, recording orders and outgoing correspondence in orderly books and letterbooks, processing and filing incoming correspondence, and compiling muster rolls and returns for transmittal to higher headquarters."[291]

An adjutant had to have quarters and an office. Colonel Croghan reported how the adjutant's quarters were among the nicer ones.[292] The adjutant at some point, though probably not between the years of 1842 and 1845, had an office on the north side of the parade ground. According to Blaine, documentation indicates the foundation in that location was "very likely one of the original sets of quarters erected at Fort Washita prior to 1844. It is also probable that this building was the one utilized as an adjutant's office and school house until about 1856 when it

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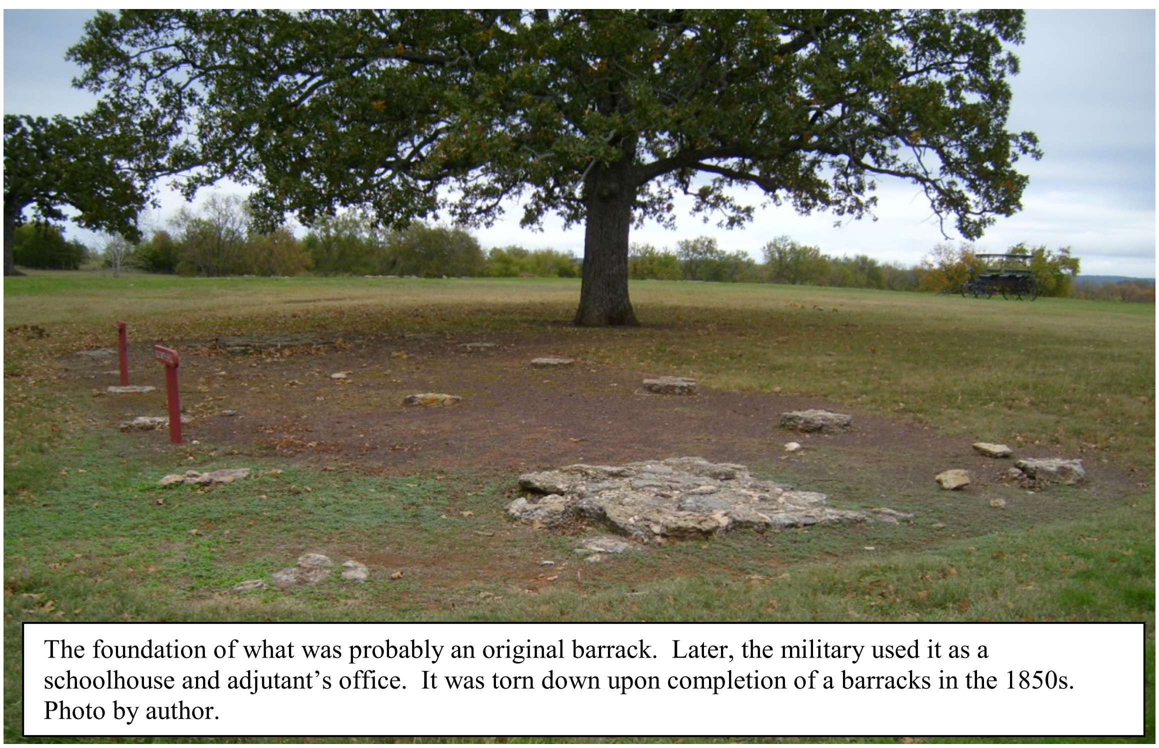
[288] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," November of 1843.
[289] Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 93.
[290] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 223.
[291] Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 223.
[292] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 51.

was deliberately razed to clear the area directly east of the newly-erected west barracks."[293] But, no matter where the office was located, it would have "served as the fort's headquarters."[294]

The adjutant played a major role in overseeing the post. He made sure paperwork was done and information was properly filed. Also, the adjutant's office was the headquarters of Fort Washita. An historian needs to make sure people understand just how important this position was since the government and military kept careful records.

Interpreting an adjutant allows visitors to understand the upkeep of records and reports. The historian can show people what kind of reports were filled out and what they were for. Perhaps, visitors can attempt to fill out reports based on information presented by the historian.



The foundation of what was probably an original barrack. Later, the military used it as a schoolhouse and adjutant's office. It was torn down upon completion of a barracks in the 1850s. Photo by author.

[293] Martha Royce Blaine, "The Establishment of Fort Washita, and the Years Before, and an Historical Background," in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 36.
[294] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).

CHAPTER IX

ACTING ASSISTANT COMMISSARY OF SUBSISTANCE

A soldier needed food to survive, and somebody had to oversee its distribution to the troops. At Fort Washita, a number of Second Dragoons officers administered rations. These rations varied only slightly in the history of the military, and from meal to meal, and post to post. The officer in charge of the commissary probably carried a few different titles. In the Fort Washita and Second Dragoons returns, he was known as the acting assistant commissary of subsistence. Another title was Post Commissary Officer.[295]

Second Lieutenant McDonald served as acting assistant commissary of subsistence at Fort Washita from April 1842 through that September.[296] He resumed that duty from August 1843 through April 1844.[297] In March 1845, he again oversaw the commissary, which he did until his company left the post in August 1845.[298] In November 1842, Quartermaster General Jones wrote to McDonald, who was addressed as acting assistant quartermaster though he was not during that month: "The amount paid for the Subsistence of soldiers on detached service is not a

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[295] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[296] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), April to September of 1842.
[297] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," August of 1843 to April of 1844.
[298] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," March to August of 1845.

proper charge against, nor should it have entered into your accounts with this department."[299] At times McDonald not only acted as assistant commissary of subsistence, but was post adjutant or commanded his company.

Another Second Dragoons officer who acted as assistant commissary of subsistence was Daniel G. Rogers of Company I. A Pennsylvanian by birth, he graduated from West Point in 1840 and became a second lieutenant in June 1841.[300] Rogers seems to have been a sickly man. In June 1842 while stationed at Fort Towson, Rogers received a sick leave.[301] A few months later, Rogers claimed health problems with his spleen, stomach, and liver.[302] During October 1842, Rogers wrote to Adjutant General Jones that he was still sick and "my attending physician thinks I should not return to the South for sometime or until my health is ristored. I must respectfully request that I may be put on duty at Carlisle until that time."[303] In December, Rogers reported that "I seldom have a chill now, but they have left me with a diseased liver. . . [and] rheumatism, from which I suffer severely every change of weather."[304] That same month, Jones responded:

> I have to state that the Regulation of July 30th 1841, does not authorize officers to remain absent from their corps, on the ground that if present they could render no

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[299] Thomas S. Jesup to Phillip W. McDonald, November 7, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 17, Volumes 33-34, Mar. 11, 1842-July 14, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 66.
[300] Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 473.
[301] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, June of 1842.
[302] Daniel G. Rogers to Roger Jones, September 14, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 257, R 83 – S 131, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[303] Daniel G. Rogers to Roger Jones, October 15, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 257, R 83 – S 131, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[304] Daniel G. Rogers to Roger Jones, December 24, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 257, R 83 – S 131, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

> service, but only on the Supposition that their health will not permit them to travel to their posts. If this be your condition, you of course are entitled to the benefit of the Regulation; but if you are able to undergo the fatiguis of the journey, it is expected that you will proceed to join your company, now at Fort Washita, without unnecessary delay.[305]

On February 2, 1843, Rogers again wrote that his health was not fully restored but he was on his way to rejoin his company.[306] The Second Dragoons return for March show that he had by then rejoined his company. That September Rogers was at Fort Towson standing in front of a court martial.[307] But, the next month he was back at Fort Washita. Rogers worked as the acting assistant commissary of subsistence in June and July 1843.[308] He again held the position in October 1844 and February 1845.[309]

Second Lieutenant Kane also served as acting assistant commissary of subsistence at Fort Washita. He filled the position from April to October of 1844.[310] He performed this duty even while he was post adjutant.

The acting assistant commissary of subsistence's main job entailed administering troops' rations. Skelton described the roles of both the Subsistence and Quartermaster Departments:

> The permanent staff of the Quartermaster and Subsistence departments, called assistant quartermasters and assistant commissaries of subsistence, handled the procurement, transportation, and distribution of supplies and equipment, as well as the construction of army buildings and military roads. They were supported by a large number of temporary and part-time staff officers at the regimental post level.[311]

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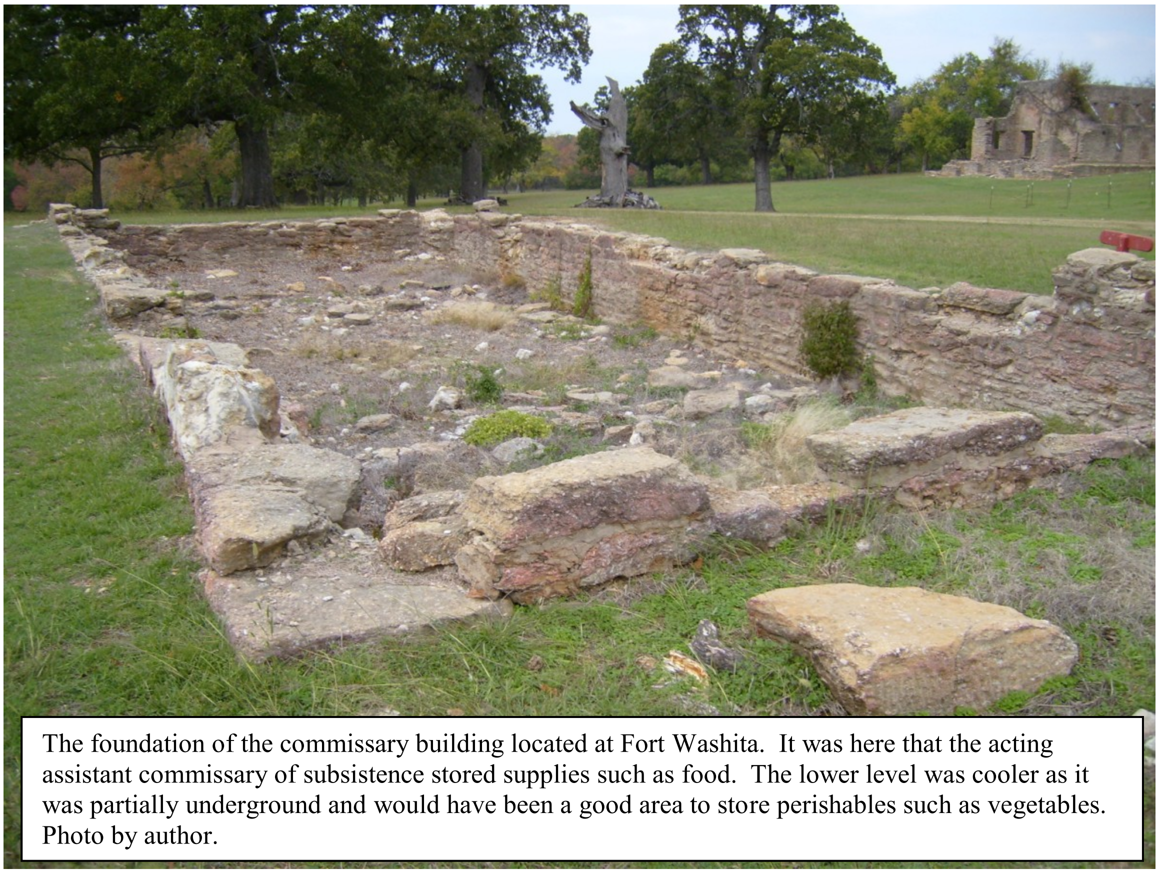
[305] Roger Jones to Daniel G. Rogers, December 28, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 56-57.
[306] Daniel G. Rogers to Roger Jones, February 2, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 275, P 91 – R 121, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[307] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," September of 1843.
[308] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," June and July of 1843.
[309] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," October of 1844 and February of 1845.
[310] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April to October of 1844.
[311] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 225.

At a post, the commissary officer "issued the rations to the commissary sergeant or NCO in charge of the men."[312] In the mid-to late nineteenth-century, the commissary of subsistence could have also sold extra supplies to non-military persons, and "money raised from these sales generally went into a company fund. The fund, administered by NCOs, was used to purchase food and supplies not provided by the commissary."[313]



The foundation of the commissary building located at Fort Washita. It was here that the acting assistant commissary of subsistence stored supplies such as food. The lower level was cooler as it was partially underground and would have been a good area to store perishables such as vegetables. Photo by author.

When he performed the duties of an acting assistant commissary of subsistence, an officer probably spent most of his time in the commissary building, when there was one. This structure was located south of the parade ground. Blaine discussed how in late 1844, when Rogers worked on construction of the post that, this structure "was twenty-eight by eighty feet in

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[312] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 84.
[313] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 127.

size."[314] The commissary "could hold 3,000 barrels and had underground rooms for perishables. Commissary supplies included all foodstuffs provided by the Army for men and officers."[315] Of course, food could spoil and so officers needed to check and make sure this did not happen.[316] At Fort Scott, Kansas, the commissary building was locked up in order to make sure nobody stole items out of it.[317]

A soldier's diet varied as the United States grew as a nation. In 1784, members of the First American Regiment had "rations. . . similar to those of the Continental Army: 1 pound of bread or flour, 1 pound of beef or ¾ pound of pork, 1 gill of 'common rum.' Every one hundred men were to receive 1 quart of salt, 2 quarts of vinegar, 2 pounds of soap, and 1 pound of candles."[318] In 1802, the diet changed and "a new ration gave each man 1 ¼ pounds of beef or ¾ pound of pork, 18 ounces of bread or flour, and 1 gill of whiskey, rum, or brandy; each one hundred men now received 2 quarts of salt, 4 quarts of vinegar, 4 pounds of soap, and 1 ½ pounds of candles."[319] Eventually the military got rid of the whiskey ration, though it was not always successful during its attempts to do so during the nineteenth century."[320] About 1818, rations changed again and there "was the increase in the vegetable component. Twice a week a half allowance of meat, with a suitable quantity of peas or beans, was issued. Rice was introduced into the ration."[321] The meat was stored in salt, and had to at times be saturated by water to

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314 Martha Royce Blaine, "The Establishment of Fort Washita, and the Years Before, and an Historical Background," in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 21.
315 *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.
316 Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 98.
317 National Park Service, "Quartermaster-Commissary Department," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/qmdcommissary.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
318 Col. John Elting, *American Army Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982), 58-59. Note: Elting does not specify how long the rations were supposed to last.
319 Elting, *American Army Life*, 60.
320 National Park Service, "Quartermaster-Commissary Department," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/qmdcommissary.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
321 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), 203.

become edible.[322] In 1818, soldiers received fresh meat two times per week.[323] While Fort Towson had cattle, the soldiers at Fort Washita ate mostly bison.[324] They also may have ate woodrats, though the men may not have realized it as "the cook could have added a little woodrat meat to the stew while it was being prepared in the kitchen."[325]

The food a soldier ate varied little from meal to meal. At least in the mid-to late eighteen-hundreds, breakfast "varied only slightly from day to day, bread, coffee, and bacon or beef constituting the usual meal. When they were available, onions or potatoes were mixed with the entrée to form an unappetizing hash."[326] They might also have had a stew for breakfast.[327] Lunch "varied somewhat. . . but usually included stringy range beef, some kind of sour soup or vegetable, and bread."[328] Supper would not have been much different than the previous meal.

As mentioned, vegetables lent variety to a soldier's diet. In 1844, Croghan reported that Fort Washita had a good garden, "and thus it happens that the fare is better at this than at most other posts, for as equal pains are taken throughout, the fare is better at one place than another only as it may have a greater abundance of vegetables."[329] Vegetables not only provided variety in the diet, but they helped the sodlier build an immune system against diseases, though "the importance of plant foods to health was not well understood or appreciated, especially in the early days, and fruit and vegetables were not always part of the daily army rations."[330] The War Department ordered soldiers to plant gardens and raise grain for animals in order to cut costs for

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[322] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 124.
[323] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 203.
[324] Kenneth E. Lewis, "Summary and Conclusions" in *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 275.
[325] John T. Penman, "Faunal Interpretation" in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 270-271.
[326] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 84.
[327] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 126.
[328] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 98.
[329] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 68.
[330] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 126.

the shipment of food to posts.[331] There were times when a commissary had vegetables shipped into a post that were not locally grown.[332]

The acting assistant commissary of substance's duty was vital to a soldier's life as he needed food to survive. The officer in this position supervised the commissary and the soldier's rations. Rations varied little over the years or from meal to meal, though at times a soldier at Fort Washita did have fresh meat or fresh vegetables.

Interpreting the acting assistant commissary of subsistence allows visitors to understand the blandness of the soldiers' food. Not only can the interpreter talk about food, but also show examples of the type of food eaten. Perhaps a garden could be planted as there was one at the post. For liability reasons, it will not be good for visitors to eat any of the food shown for examples.

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[331] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 203-204.
[332] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 126.

CHAPTER X

ACTING ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER

At Fort Washita, officers supervised tasks related to construction and upkeep of the fort. The acting assistant quartermaster filled this role. Whichever officer held this position found a great deal of work to do in obtaining materials for building structures, ordering supplies, arranging for transportation, dealing with non-military personnel, and entering into contracts.

Different officers of the Second Dragoons held the position of acting assistant quartermaster at Fort Washita. Second Lieutenant McDonald filled the position from April 1842 through that September, and again during September 1843.[333] A letter in November 1842 from the quartermaster general addressed McDonald as acting assistant quartermaster.[334] Second Lieutenant Rogers served in the position from June to August 1843, and then October and November of the same year.[335] Rogers again was acting assistant quartermaster for the whole of 1844, January to April 1845, and that June to August. The next month, "Rogers was relieved of

[333] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, April to September of 1842, and September of 1843.
[334] Thomas S. Jesup to Phillip W. McDonald, November 7, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 17, Volumes 33-34, Mar. 11, 1842-July 14, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 66.
[335] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, June to August of 1843, and October and November.

duty and Lt. Gardiner assumed his work on fort construction."[336]

Water is necessary for any human being to survive, so it needed to be supplied and stored. According to Agnew, the Commissary Department was charged with supplying water to posts.[337] At Fort Washita, soldiers obtained water from rain and creeks.[338] One such creek originates at Government Springs from which the men drew water. This was located between the main post buildings and the Washita River. However, the use of creeks "for washing, cooking, and watering animals quickly rendered sluggish waters unfit for human consumption. Then work parties dug wells to meet the garrison's needs."[339] At Fort Washita "All the wells, springs, and small streams in this vicinity are strongly impregnated with lime, making it desirable to collect rain for purposes of ablution."[340] According to Foreman, there was a year "The spring on which the garrison relied had been so badly damaged by floods that a large cistern was constructed to catch the rain water."[341] The acting assistant quartermaster had to order the supplies needed to dig a well. In September 1843, Rogers requested supplies for an artesian well, but, these supplies must have been inadequate.[342] In late-1844 or early-1845 Quartermaster General Jesup sent to Rogers "three hundred feet of drilling rods and three hundred of boring rods, with a screw plate to

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336 Martha Royce Blaine, "The Establishment of Fort Washita, and the Years Before, and an Historical Background," in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 22.
337 Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 84.
338 Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
339Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 85.
340 General Thomas Lawson and Richard H. Coolidge, M.D., prepared under, *Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States, Compiled from The Records of the Surgeon General's Office; Embracing A Period of Sixteen Years, From January, 1839, To January,* 1855, copies of document found in files located at Fort Washita Historic Site (Washington, D.C.: A.O.P Nicholson, 1856), 271.
341 George Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier: 1830-1860* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), 103.
342 Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, January 11, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 326.

suite."[343] On 10 June 1845, Assistant Quartermaster General Henry Stanton wrote to Rogers about the latter's request "for 300 additional feet of. . . tubes for the Artesian Well now being sunk at your post. . . I desire that you will report the progress already made on the work, together with your opinion as to the probability of ultimate success in obtaining water."[344] From the information in these letters, the post quartermaster obviously had a hard time trying to find substantial well water to supply Fort Washita. Yet, today, there are still two well sites, Government Springs, and the remains of a springhouse at Fort Washita.


From left, clockwise, well, springhouse, covered well, and part of covered well's base. Water was important as a soldier needed it to survive.

Photos by author.

[343] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, January 21, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 343.

[344] Henry Stanton to Daniel G. Rogers, June 10, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 562.

Another duty of the acting assistant quartermaster involved overseeing the Fort Washita buildings. This quartermaster officer supervised construction of post buildings, including the creation of plans for the structures.[345] At West Point, cadets took courses on math, engineering, and drawing, which aided in the discharge of this duty.[346] This knowledge helped the acting assistant quartermaster as he had to be able to draw up plans. Though officials in Washington provided approval of the plans, the officer at the post could create them himself.[347] The Quartermaster Department was responsible for not only barracks and officer's quarters, but also "for the construction and repair to all storehouses and sheds necessary to secure and preserve public property at fortifications."[348] The acting assistant quartermaster also maintained the buildings, though in June 1845, Assistant Quartermaster General Stanton ordered Second Lieutenant Rogers only to do repairs that were absolutely necessary.[349]

Of course for soldiers or civilians, the construction of buildings required materials. The quartermaster provided the posts with needed supplies such as nails.[350] In the construction of buildings, soldiers used lumber, whether logs or boards, as floors, walls, shingles, and doors. So, the acting assistant quartermaster needed to obtain wood. At Fort Washita, the wood used on the buildings was walnut as well as ash.[351] During June 1844, Colonel Croghan wrote that "plank is sometimes brought up the Washita River, but has never been sold under $40, and such as the men have sawed has been hauled fifteen or more miles, there being no timber hereabouts suited to

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345 Leo E. Oliva, *Fort Scott: Courage and Conflict on the Border* (Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 1984), 18.
346 William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 167-168.
347 Blaine, *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 20.
348 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), 210.
349 Henry Stanton to Daniel G. Rogers, June 12, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 565-566.
350 Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 210.
351 Herbert M. Hart, *Old Forts of the Southwest*, drawing by Paul J. Hartle (New York: Bonanza Books, 1964), 14.

such a purpose."[352] Though, Croghan did not seem to mention how much wood could be obtained for $40. The lack of local timber was not unique to Fort Washita. Other posts struggled obtaining an adequate amount of wood for the construction of buildings. Stone, found locally, was used to construct Fort Washita, especially the foundations and chimneys. The commissary rooms below ground were lined with stone as well.

When the military obtained raw wood, it had to cut the lumber into boards. During July of 1843, Fort Washita's quartermaster was Second Lieutenant Rogers, the Fort Towson acting assistant quartermaster. He sent a letter to Quartermaster General Jesup ordering a sawmill sent to Fort Washita.[353] Jesup replied, "I have ordered a saw mill from Baltimore to New Orleans to be forwarded by Major MacRee."[354] At the end of July, the quartermaster general again sent to Fort Towson another letter, in which he stated, "Captain. . . has been directed to purchase and ship to New Orleans one. . . patent Saw Mill for the Post of Fort Washita and employ a suitable person to go there and put it up to whom he has been authorized to allow a per diem of $2.50 for his services, and his expenses going and returning. He will be directed to report to you for instructions."[355] In 1844, while Rogers supervised Fort Washita's construction, it seems the mill had only produced "1,300 pieces of planking thus far. . . The inventor wrote to suggest that it had not been put together properly because it was designed to cut 2,000 pieces of plank a day."[356] In July of 1844, Jesup wrote to Rogers:

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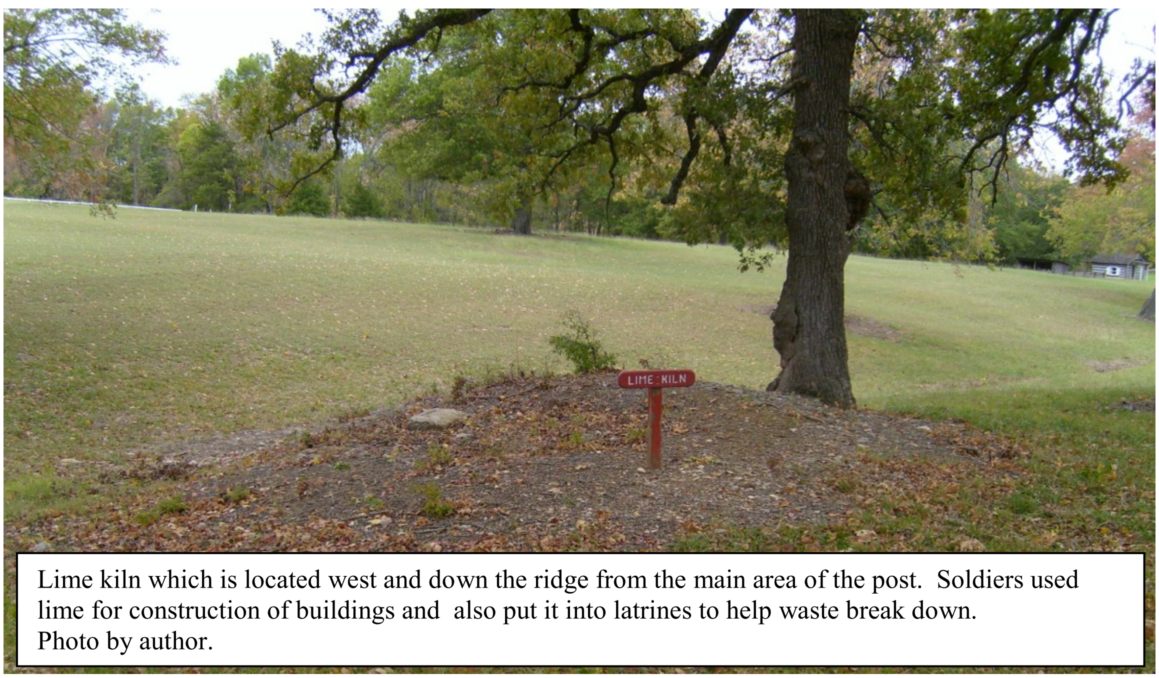
[352] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 52.
[353] Thomas S. Jesup to C. O. Collins, July 18, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm.
[354] Thomas S. Jesup to C. O. Collins, July 18, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm.
[355] Thomas S. Jesup to C. O. Collins, July 18, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 88.
[356] Blaine, *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 21.

The Mill if properly put up could not have failed to answer any reasonable expectation. Your description of its performance is the best-evidence that a bungler was employed. I do not say this as employing any censure upon you_ for I take it for granted you did the bets you could under the circumstances. . . I must send out a person qualified to put up the Mill properly and to instruct others to keep it in operation and repair.[357]

While a sawmill was used at Fort Washita during the post's early years, the machinery failed to produce an adequate amount of boards to construct the buildings.

Lime also was needed for construction and the soldier's daily life at the post. There was a lime kiln, where limestone was turned into powder, west of the parade ground and partially down the ridge on which Fort Washita sat. This powder was useful as "mortar or whitewash, or laid over waste in privies and garbage dumps to accelerate decomposition."[358] There may have been another lime kiln a mile or more from the main post.[359]



Lime kiln which is located west and down the ridge from the main area of the post. Soldiers used lime for construction of buildings and also put it into latrines to help waste break down. Photo by author.

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[357] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, July 31, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 110.

[358] *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.

[359] Thomas David Moore, interview by Jennie Selfridge, August 24, 1937, Interview ID 8302, transcript, University of Oklahoma Libraries Western History Collections, http://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/paper.asp?pID=4632&vID=64 (accessed April 16, 2013).

The Quartermaster Department oversaw the transportation of supplies to military posts. Sometimes, the department actually employed non military personnel to transport supplies.[360] On October 7, 1842, Adjutant General Jones wrote to General Taylor:

> I herewith enclose an extract of a letter from the Commissary General of this date, to the Secretary of War, reporting the reduced state of the supplies at Fort Towson and Camp Washita, in consequence of the unforeseen and unavoidable causes therein stated. This is the first intimation received at this office on the subject, but it is supported, however, that it must have been brought to your notice by the Commanding Officer of Fort Towson, and that adequate measures have already been taken by you to meet the emergency. Should this not be the case, the Secretary of War directs that you cause provisions to be transported from Fort Smith, or if otherwise more expedient or necessary, that the force on the Red River be, for the time being, reduced, by marching some of the companies to the depot of supplies.[361]

This letter shows supply problems that the quartermaster department probably dealt with as well. Frontier posts which were distant from supplies had a hard time getting needed provisions.

One form of transportation the military used to haul supplies was by waterways such as the Red and Washita Rivers. There were times when the rivers carried enough water for a steamboat to travel upon them. Yet, in order to trek up the Washita River, a boat needed a draft no deeper than three feet.[362] It may not have occurred while the Second Dragoons were at the post, but one man lost a steamship when he had corn delivered to Fort Washita.[363] The military also used keelboats for river transportation. In July 1842 when Quartermaster General Jesup wrote to Fort Towson about the saw mill, he also mentioned that "if you consider the keel boats necessary you will take measures to have them furnished. I take it for granted that they are necessary though there is nothing either in your communication or that of the Quarter Master at

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360 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 111.
361 Roger Jones to Zachary Taylor, October 7, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 12, Volumes 17-18, January 2, 1841 – November 21, 1842," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 418.
362 Hart, *Old Forts of the Southwest*, 14.
363 Penman, in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 270.

Fort Washita to show their necessity."[364] The rivers proved an inadquate way to ship supplies as "The officers complained that navigation of Red River was uncertain and that their supplies be shipped by way of the Arkansas and overland from Fort Smith."[365]

The military used wagons to haul supplies. In April 1843, a soldier from Co. G, still stationed at Fort Towson, was "on detached Service driving teams to Fort Washita Since 27_th April 1843."[366] This trip could have been to haul supplies, and during June another soldier was driving a wagon. Blaine wrote that most supplies were transported by wagon from Fort Towson where "a train of eight four horse wagons were kept and used to haul supplies to Fort Washita."[367] At Fort Washita, its own wagons hauled construction supplies about the post, but in mid-1843 these broke down and had to be combined together in order to make a single usable wagon.[368] Quartermaster General Jesup in his July 1843 letter mentioned not only the sawmill and keelboats, but also that he "ordered Wagons to be made in Philadelphia."[369] But, even wagon supply lines were probably never adequate means of transportation for Fort Washita because of distance needed to be coverd and weather. The supplies that did make it to:

> Fort Washita apparently travelled overland from centers in the east. Manufactured goods seem to have been shipped principally by two routes. The northern route originated in St. Louis, Missouri and stretched southwest through Fort Smith while the southern route went up the Mississippi and Red River from New Orleans and then overland from the Doaksville landing near Fort Towson.[370]

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[364] Thomas S. Jesup to C. O. Collins, July 18, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm.
[365] Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, Second Printing (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), 105.
[366] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," April of 1843.
[367] Blaine, *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 20.
[368] Blaine, *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 20.
[369] Thomas S. Jesup to C. O. Collins, July 18, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35; July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 88.
[370] Lewis, in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 275.

The Quartermaster Department also oversaw and transported uniforms. Agnew stated that at least after the American Civil War uniforms were provided by the quartermaster.[371] Previously, throughout the army the Purchasing Department had bought uniforms, but in 1821 it was reduced to only a few staff members and the Quartermaster took over keeping and transporting clothing.[372] In 1842, the Quartermaster Department assumed the responsibilities of the Purchasing Department.[373] During the 1820s, Quartermaster General Jesup created a system in which company commanders kept records of uniforms and equipment issued to soldiers.[374] The soldier had to take good care of his uniform and equipment, because if he "lost, damaged, or destroyed a piece of public property, he was required to pay for a replacement."[375] Soldiers received clothing twice a year "in May and September or April and October."[376] As with food, officers inspected clothing, and "reported on any damage or deficiency, filing a copy of the report with the Quartermaster General and the quartermaster who furnished the clothing, or the Commissary General of Purchases if it was supplied direct from the Philadelphia Depot."[377] If uniforms in storage became damaged, the officer who oversaw the items might have had to pay for them unless it was proved the damage was in no way his fault or if it could not have been prevented.[378]

Sometimes the acting assistant quartermaster dealt with non-military personnel. On October 9, 1843, Quartermaster General Jesup wrote to Second Lieutenant Rogers:

> I have received your letter of the 28th of August covering one from Mr. J.B. Earheart, Contracting for furnishing Corn at Fort Washita, on the subject of the threatened prohibition of the Indian Agent of the Chickasaws to his introducing Corn from Texas to fill his contract.

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[371] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 84.
[372] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 196.
[373] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 251.
[374] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 199.
[375] National Park Service, "Quartermaster-Historical Background," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/qmdhistory.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
[376] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 200.
[377] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 200.
[378] Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army*, 200.

> It was submitted to the Secretary of War, by whom I am informed, that 'the Department having, in accordance with the directions of the President, ordered the intercourse law to be enforced, it necessarily follows that the permission to Texians to bring corn into the Indian country cannot be granted.[379]

Texas at this time was a republic and had not become a member of the United States; thus it was a foreign nation which the federal government did not want trading with Native Americans. In January 1844, Jesup also ordered Rogers to pay Native Americans who had to move off their land when it was declared part of the Fort Washita reserve.[380]

At times, the acting assistant quartermasters entered into contracts. During 1842, Second Lieutenant McDonald contracted with Thomas F. and Sam Kennedy.[381] The next year, Second Lieutenant Rogers had contracts with Pierce Sullivan, J. B. Earheart, T. F. Kenneday, and Samuel Kenneday.[382] In 1845, Rogers had an agreement with Charles Johnson. These agreements most likely provided goods or transportation for Fort Washita, yet the reports do not state what the contracts involved. The acting assistant quartermaster needed to be careful upon the fulfillment of government contracts. Quartermaster General Jesup warned Rogers, "If a Contractor fails in his contract in any particular, we have a right to refuse to receive the article contracted for, but if we receive it we waive the question as to time, and all we receive we are bound to pay for. . . You will therefore pay according to the Contract for all the hay you have received."[383] So,

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[379] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, October 9, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35, July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 197-198.
[380] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, January 9, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35, July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 322.
[381] Thomas S. Jesup to A. K. Parry, October 7, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1970, Roll 17, Volumes 33-34, Mar. 11, 1842-July 14, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 478.
[382] A. R. Hetzel to A. K. Parris, November 8, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 18, Volume 35, July 14, 1843-June 10, 1844," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 35.
[383] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, October 2, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 201.

although the acting assistant quartermaster could enter into contracts for supplies, he had to assure the contracts were fulfilled on both sides.

Quartermasters were far from perfect and they did make mistakes. In March of 1845, Quartermaster General Jesup criticized Rogers for various mistakes which included "in paying Captain Blake his transportation from Fort Washita to Fort Towson you estimate the distance at 120 miles and in paying other officers at 80 miles. The discrepancy will have to be explained."[384] Another time Rogers ordered the wrong type of pump requiring it to be sent back and requesting a different one.[385]

A post quartermaster needed an office and a place to store his equipment and animals. At Fort Washita, the quartermaster's office seems to have been located in the commissary.[386] This would have made sense since the two departments often worked together. Supposedly, the quartermaster had his own stable at Fort Washita.[387] The horses in this stable were probably used to pull the supply wagons. At Fort Scott, the quartermaster had his own blacksmith shop.[388] Just a short distance west of the Fort Washita commissary foundation is another marked as the site of a blacksmith shop, and perhaps the quartermaster used this one.

The Second Dragoons officer who held the position was important to construction of the post. An officer who attended wet point studied curriculum, such as math, which enabled home to design structures and oversee obtaining supplies for them. The historian should inform the visitor how much work an acting assistant quartermaster had to do at a post, even when the

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[384] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, March 18, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 426.
[385] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, August 6, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 - 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 114.
[386] *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.
[387] Department of the Interior, United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma: Special Report for National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings* (Santa Fe: 1965), 4.
[388] National Park Service, "Quartermaster-Historical Background," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/qmdhistory.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).

government attempted to cut costs by not building new structures. Perhaps an interpreter, with period proper tools, can demonstrate how structures were designed.

CHAPTER XI

NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND BUGLERS

While Second Dragoons commissioned officers commanded companies and filled various staff positions at Fort Washita, other men commanded and oversaw the daily routines of the enlisted soldier. There were different ranks of noncommissioned officers at Fort Washita, and each had different duties to perform. Among them were buglers who used the instrument to alert commands to troops. These men had their own level of pay and uniforms.

The highest ranked noncommissioned officer in a regiment was the sergeant major. He was assigned to aid the adjutant.[389] During October 1843, a Second Dragoons sergeant major was present at Fort Washita. This man "Joined from F.t Jesup La. Oct. 24. '43. per Reg.t ord. . . dated Fort Washita C.N. Sept. 3.rd 1843."[390] He was probably present because the regimental headquarters was at the post at the time. In December of 1843, a Company A private acted as sergeant major.[391] The private held the position until at least January.

Other noncommissioned officer ranks existed among the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita. At least in Texas in the mid 1800s, "noncommissioned officers were slightly older than

[389] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 90.
[390] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, October of 1843.
[391] Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, December of 1843.

privates."[392] Officers chose noncommissioned officers from the enlisted men, and these were supposed to be soldiers that commanders could trust.[393] In 1838, a dragoon regiment was supposed to have had ten first sergeants and thirty sergeants.[394] However, according to the National Park Service website for Fort Scott, a dragoon company had "four corporals, four sergeants."[395] In April 1842, Company A included four sergeants and three corporals present for duty.[396] During April 1843, Company A's noncommissioned officers consisted of three sergeants and four corporals, while Company I had four sergeants and two corporals.[397] Present for duty in April 1844 for Companies A, G, and I combined were eight sergeants and two corporals.[398] Then in April 1845, all three companies combined had six sergeants and six corporals present for duty.[399] This variation of the number of noncommissioned officers indicates that a company often did not have full ranks.

The noncommissioned officer supervised a variety of duties. Commissioned officers did not make direct contact with the average soldier, so it was the noncommissioned officer who enforced regulations and oversaw the private's daily duties. The first sergeant generally commanded the company and oversaw such duties as "performing roll calls, organizing drills and dress parades,. . . and maintain discipline."[400] He "relied on the duty sergeants and corporals to

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[392] Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 59.
[393] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Command Structure," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon8.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
[394] N. Towson in *Congress*, House, "Cavalry and Infantry: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting a Comparitive Statement of the Expense of Enlistment, Equipment, Mainetance, &c., of Cavalry or Mounted Men and Infantry, &c.," 25th Cong., 2d sess., March 19, 1838, Doc. No. 250, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T58X4FJMMTM2MDYzMzkwNS4yMDM4MzY6MToxMzoxMzkuNzguNTAuMTU1&p_action=doc&p_docnum=10&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-103624455AC944F0@2392453-@0 (accessed February 11, 2013).
[395] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Command Structure," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon8.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
[396] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1842.
[397] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1843.
[398] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1844.
[399] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1845.
[400] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 90.

implement his orders."[401] The first sergeant, along with the sergeant major, prepared the men to go on guard duty through such actions as inspection of uniforms.[402] A first sergeant needed to be stout and fair with the men, though some overstepped their boundaries and were harsh to the soldiers.[403] Commissioned officers needed to not only choose noncommissioned officers based on their trustworthiness, but also because they could write.[404] Sergeants were expected to help with paperwork, and Colonel Croghan reported Fort Washita's books were:

> Correctly kept but not in every instance neatly. It sometimes happens that none of the noncommissioned officers of a company are competent to perform the duties of clerk, and regrets that it should be so are often expressed at many of our posts. There is no excuse in this. . . as the company commandants can require the assistance of subalterns, but such has not been the custom. Commandants of companies either keep the books themselves or intrust them to their orderly sergeants.[405]

The military could transfer a noncommissioned officer from one company to another. In September 1843, a Company I sergeant joined Company G while a Company G sergeant joined Company I.[406] Now the regimental reports do not state if these sergeants were present at Fort Washita, but that is where these companies were located.

Noncommissioned officers were not always of good character. Though it was before Company G was located at Fort Washita, one of its sergeants deserted on 31 May 1842.[407] This shows that noncommissioned officers obviously were not always trustworthy.

Another part of the Second Dragoons was the bugler. When the United States Dragoons was created, each company was to have two buglers.[408] This probably means that the Second

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401 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 90.
402 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 89.
403 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 90.
404 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Command Structure," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon8.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
405 *Army Life on the Western Frontier,* 79-80.
406 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," September of 1843.
407 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," May of 1842.
408 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).

Dragoons also had one or two buglers per company. Musicians often held the rank of a noncommissioned officer.[409] In August of 1845 there existed some general orders regarding privates as musicians.[410]

The bugler's main duty which stood him out from the other soldiers, was that he played an instrument. His performances on the bugle were actually commands, and when the men heard the tunes they knew what to do. A bugler's calls throughout the day included reveille, assembly, sick call, mess call, fatigue call, drill retreat, and tattoo.[411] Buglers might even have played as the soldiers lined up on the parade ground in the evening.[412]

The number of Second Dragoons buglers present for duty at Fort Washita fluctuated. In April 1842, Company A had two buglers present.[413] The next April found Companies A and I each having one bugler present for duty.[414] During April 1844, Companies A, G, and I had a combined five buglers.[415] But April 1845 the three companies had just three buglers present.[416]

Buglers were not exempt from deserting. On 28 June 1842, Company A Bugler Lewis Doty deserted.[417] While Doty may not have been stationed at Fort Washita, actually still Camp Washita, in the April of 1842 post returns there were two buglers present in Company A, while the returns for May and June each had one bugler present for duty.[418] The June 1842 post returns showed that Company A had three members desert, which was the same number for desertions of

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[409] Robert M. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian 1848-1865* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), 22.
[410] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," August of 1845.
[411] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
[412] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 98.
[413] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1842.
[414] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1843.
[415] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1844.
[416] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1845.
[417] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," June of 1842.
[418] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April to June of 1842.

that company in the regimental returns. On 3 July 1842, Doty returned to his regiment.[419] But, he may not have returned to his duty as bugler because it was not until November that Company A had again two buglers present for duty.[420]

Like other soldiers, the military could transfer buglers and they could take leave. In March 1843 the military transferred Bugler William A. Jones to Company A.[421] It may have been Jones who in December of that year was on the regimental returns as "1 Bug. On Furlough for 60 days."[422] During January 1844, a Company A bugler was "on Furlough for 60 days from 5th Dec."[423]

Noncommissioned officers and buglers received pay. During 1838, per month a sergeant major earned $17, a first sergeant $16, a sergeant $13, and a corporal $10.[424] A chief bugler earned $17 a month compared to a regular bugler's pay of $9.[425] A musician in the artillery or infantry only earned $8 per month, which meant a dragoon bugler's pay was significantly better. He was probably was paid more as he could play an instrument, which not everyone had the talent to do so. Though neither noncommissioned officers nor buglers' pay was generous, they earned more than a private.

A noncommissioned officer and bugler's uniform was not much different than an enlisted man's, except for a few items. The noncommissioned officer's coats, both dress and undress, would have had chevrons noting rank, such as two "V" for a corporal and three for a sergeant. A

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419 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," July of 1842.
420 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," November of 1842.
421 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," March of 1843.
422 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," December of 1843. Note: "Bug" means Bugler.
423 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," January of 1844.
424 Towson to Roger Jones, November 1, 1842, contained "Table: Of Pay, Subsistence, Forage, &c., allowed to Officers of the U. S. Army, &c., per Acts of the 5th and 7th July, 1838," in ""Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
425 Towson to Roger Jones, November 1, 1842, contained "Table: Of Pay, Subsistence, Forage, &c., allowed to Officers of the U. S. Army, &c., per Acts of the 5th and 7th July, 1838," in ""Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

sergeant's pants included two yellow stripes versus the private's single stripe.[426] Also, "In 1840, an effort was made to give the NCO Corps greater prestige by adopting a distinctive sword."[427] In 1847 and probably prior, at least the first sergeants wore a yellow sash with their dress uniform.[428] The bugler's dress coat was red instead of the dark blue worn by the various sergeants, corporals, and privates. There were also differences in decorations and trim between the sergeants and buglers versus the other enlisted men's coats, such as the sergeant's trim consisted of worsted lace.[429] Of course a bugler carried a bugle, the main tool he used to perform his duties.

While commissioned officers were better known by the public, noncommissioned officers were the backbone of the army. They commanded the troops and oversaw daily routines. The interpreter needs to present how important these ranks were to a military unit. Perhaps if historians are drilling or presenting a work detail, a interpreter in a noncommissioned officers uniform could oversee the program.

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426 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Tools of the Trade," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon3.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
427 "History: 1775-1840; Revolutionary War & Early United States," U.S. Army, http://www.army.mil/yearofthenco/history1.html (accessed February 11, 2013).
428 Randy Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, vol. 1 of *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943: The United States Cavalryman: His Uniforms, Arms, Accoutrements, and Equipment* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 119-120.
429 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 105-106.

CHAPTER XII

ENLISTED MEN

While Second Dragoons commissioned and noncommissioneded officers commanded the post and companies, the majority at any post consisted of the average enlisted men. There is not a lot of information about the Second Dragoons enlisted men who were at Fort Washita from 1842 through 1845, yet their story is just as important as that of the officers. The enlisted men had their own uniforms, routines, and lives at the post.

The Second Dragoons enlisted ranks had their own characters and personalities. In pre-Civil War Texas, a reasonably comparison to Fort Washita, a soldier was typically about twenty-six years old, with "most being between twenty-three and thirty-five years old."[430] The dragoons probably differed little in age to the Texas soldiers. In 1836, among the Second Dragoons recruits were "skilled laborers and artisans."[431] Names of Second Dragoons enlisted men stationed at Fort Washita included Francis Foster and William O. Donald in Company A, Samuel L. Beall and Michael Dyer in Company I, and David S. Jordan in Company G.[432] These names

[430] Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 59.
[431] *The Dragoons' Story: A History of the 2D Armored Cavalry Regiment*, Foreward by Lieutenant General Chas. E. Hart, Introduction by Colonel James W. Duncan, 4.
[432] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, February, April, September, and October of 1843, and March of 1844.

are listed in the regiment's monthly returns for reasons including discharge from the military. Men enlisted in the military for many reasons. Some did not want to work and joined the army.[433] These men were in for a surprise, however, since post life consisted of a great deal of work. Others joined for what they thought would be an adventure, but they too were often disappointed as military life was dull. Not all soldiers entered the service with good attitudes, and those who caused problems often found that the company would "take the law into its own hands if necessary. This was especially true in cases of petty thievery, since the barracks provided no areas in which personal possessions could be locked."[434]

New recruits were among the ranks. Generally a company did not recruit men until its number of privates reached down to about 27 men.[435] In June 1842, Company A needed nineteen recruits.[436] During March 1843, neither Company A nor I were in need of new recruits.[437] But, in December 1844, Company A, G, and I required a combined seventy-four recruits, more men than in a full company.[438] Commissioned officers such as Second Lieutenant Kane took part in the recruitment process.[439] It cost the military to recruit, and in February 1843 Harney reported that about one hundred dollars were necessary "for the Recruiting Service of the United States Regiment of Riflemen, at Fort Jesup Louisiana."[440]

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[433] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[434] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[435] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[436] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, June of 1842.
[437] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," March of 1843.
[438] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," December of 1844.
[439] William S. Harney to Thomas, April 4, 1844, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 286, G 142 – H 325, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[440] William S. Harney to Roger Jones, February 13, 1844, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 286, G 142 – H 325, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

When a soldier joined the military, he was supposed to have passed a physical test of sorts. These tests were supposed to reject men physically unfit for duty. At least in the First Dragoons, "As many as three-fourths of the men who sought to enlist were rejected for medical reasons. Varicose veins were one reason for rejection, along with build (*the average weight of American and foreign born troops in 1855 was a little less than 150 pounds*). . ., deafness, stammering, and old injuries."[441] It was important that a dragoon be of small stature because a horse had to carry a rider long distances, along with saddle and equipment. If officials decided a man was unfit to serve as a soldier, they filled out paperwork on which the reasons were stated.

Enlistment was only the beginning of a soldier's life in the military. Generally a recruit enlisted for three years in the service.[442] During 1842, a man wrote to a United States Representative asking for help in getting a discharge for his son who had joined the Second Dragoons and was at Carlisle Barracks, the "School of Practice for recruits."[443] Brevet Second Lieutenant Hammond spent time at Carlisle Barracks, and his duties included instruction, probably of new recruits.[444] As Hammond made his way to Fort Washita, he was accompanied by new recruits for Company A.[445] If recruits were from the east, especially large cities, they were probably in somewhat of a culture shock when they reached Fort Washita which easterners probably considered to be in the wilderness.

New recruits normally knew some basic drills and instructions before reaching his company. Recruits did not get to perform some drills immediately, such as those on horseback. They did, however, upon reaching the post learn "all the details of discipline, police, interior

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[441] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[442] *The Dragoons' Story*, 4.
[443] Thomas Buffom(?) to Joseph L. Tillinghast, April 28, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[444] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," October and November of 1842.
[445] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," December of 1842.

services his uniform, and grooming his horse."[446] Recruits usually drilled "twice a day for an hour and a half."[447] Of course with Fort Washita under construction, a new recruit may not have gotten to train often.

An enlisted man needed a uniform, one of which was for dress. The dress uniform consisted of a double breasted dark blue coat with a one piece coattail and epaulettes on the shoulders. He also wore a shako, a tall dress hat with a small brim on front, similar to that worn by an officer, except the enlisted version was not as good a quality of materials and the colors of the ornamentation differed.[448]

The enlisted man also had a couple of fatigue duty uniforms. His winter jacket was a dark blue shell jacket with yellow piping. His summer uniform jacket was white with no piping. *Cavalry Tactics* depicts the men wearing a stable jacket for certain duties such as drill.[449] This is probably what Steffen described as a "Stable frock, 1833 issue. This rough white over-garment changed little, except in minor details, in more than a hundred years."[450] The soldier also wore the 1839 dark blue wheel shaped cap. In *Don Troiani's Soldiers in America*, Earl J. Coates and James L. Kochan wrote that "To distinguish the various branches of service, colored bands were to be worn around the cap's headband by noncommissioned officers and private soldiers,

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[446] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Training,"-Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon7.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[447] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Training,"-Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon7.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[448] Randy Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, vol. 1 of *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943: The United States Cavalryman: His Uniforms, Arms, Accoutrements, and Equipment* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 95.
[449] Printed by order of the War Department, *Cavalry Tactics in Three Parts. School of the Trooper, of the Platoon, of the Squadron, and the Evolutions of a Regiment*. *Part I.........Dismounted. Part II……Mounted. Part III…….Evolutions of a Regiment* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 93, http://books.google.com/books?id=0DhGAAAAYAAJ&pg=PR2&lpg=PR2&dq=%22Cavalry+Tactics%22+1841&source=bl&ots=24nJNljDS9&sig=VVyS-G6czmfUlqE48jq5WWEopEk&hl=en&sa=X&ei=YbXfT5G9IaX42gX9jqmGCg&ved=0CFIQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22Cavalry%20Tactics%22%201841&f=false (accessed February 13, 2013). Note: There is little different between this 1864 copy and a hard copy of the 1841 manual.
[450] Steffen, photo cutline in *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 113.

although this seems to have been implemented by only a minority of regiments and corps."[451] The authors quote Rodenbough that the Second Dragoons trooper wore a yellow band on his cap. Steffen wrote that "It is true original specifications for the new caps called for colored bands, but no photographs or other documentary proof exists that would confirm the actual use of colored bands by any personnel *except* the band of the First Regiment of Dragoons, whose commanding officer had authorized *two bands* of yellow cloth around the cap."[452] Other sources mention the Second Dragoons with an orange band around the cap. Yet, in the Minnesota Historical Society's collection is a Second Dragoons Mexican-American War era cap with a yellow band on it.[453] Also, when members of the Second Dragoons discussed the uniform they wanted as riflemen, they wrote about the cap having the "present pattern. Yellow Cloth band. letter of the Company or black ground in front."[454]

A soldier also wore trousers that went with his coats. Trousers were also known as "*pantaloons* and *overalls*."[455] He wore grey-blue pants with his dress coat and dark blue fatigue jacket. These trousers eventually had a straight up and down fly, but they had "a drop front for the first few years."[456] An enlisted man used suspenders to hold up his pants, and these had two pockets in the front with none in the back.[457] The pants also had yellow stripes running down the outside seam of each leg.[458] For the summer uniform, the soldier wore white trousers.

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451 Earl J. Coates and James L. Kochan, *Don Troiani's Soldiers in America 1754-1865*, Art by Don Troiani, Foreword by Brian Pohanka; Additional Contributors: Rene Chartrand, Charles Cureton, Fred Gaede, Erik Goldstein (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books), 121.
452 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 115.
453 Minnesota Historical Society, "Wool Dragoon Uniform Forage Cap," http://collections.mnhs.org/cms/display.php?irn=10091636 (accessed February 13, 2013).
454 Various Second Dragoons officers to Roger Jones, December 30, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 255, M 132-472, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm. Note: "black ground" is how it is stated in the actual letter.
455 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 102.
456 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 94.
457 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 95.
458 Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 94.




Clockwise from bottom: 1839 cap, full winter fatigue uniform, close up of winter fatigue coat, and close up of grey-blue pants.

Photos by author of reproduction uniform at Fort Washita Historic Site.

When the Second Dragoons became riflemen, the regiment's uniform was supposed to have changed. The officer's new design for the uniform did not change much, except for a few items such as switching certain trim from yellow to black.[459] General Order No. 21, issued on 8 March 1843, stated," A uniform for the *Riflemen* will be prescribed in a few days. In the meantime and until the new one can be supplied, the regiment will continue to wear the dress of the late 2d Dragoons."[460] On 16 March, Quartermaster General Jesup wrote to Colonel Twiggs that "Funds cannot be furnished this year to change your uniform from the Dragoon to that of a Rifle Corps. Your regiment will therefore be compelled to wear the same uniform as heretofore until the materials in store be used, or an appropriation be obtained from Congress. By that time,

[459] Various Second Dragoons officers to Roger Jones, December 30, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 255, M 132-472, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[460]Thomas, March 8, 1843, "General Orders No. 21," found in "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 278, T 237 – W 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 2.

perhaps, you will be remounted, and any changes be unnecessary."[461] As Jesup predicted, the regiment was remounted and no change in uniforms was needed.

An enlisted man of course needed weapons to defend his country, the Choctaws and Chickasaws, and himself. The dragoon's pistol was a .54 caliber, and would have been "the S. North Model 1819 army flintlock pistol and the Johnston Model 1836 army flintlock pistol."[462] The military later issued percussion pistols to the dragoons. The enlisted dragoon would have carried a saber similar to that of an officer, though not as fancy. Up until 1839 "the only arm of the privates was the carbine, but General Wool recommended the sword and it was later adopted."[463] According to some modern illustrations, dragoons may have carried sabers prior to 1839. The dragoon's carbine was originally the Hall Carbine. This weapon was created by John Harris Hall who originally made it in rifle form.[464] Both the carbine and rifle were breechloader single shot weapons and had "a removable chamber embodying the lock. Although this permitted a tighter-fitting bullet and undoubtedly enhanced accuracy, gas leaked from the interface between the chamber and the bore and reduced the value of what was otherwise a creditable design."[465] Due to the gas leak, the carbine did not have the speed or penetration of other guns, yet the government and military bought or built Hall's design to be used by the First and Second Dragoons.[466] In 1836, the Hall Carbine became a percussion fired weapon instead of the less reliable flintlock ignition system.[467] The carbine's removable chamber proved small enough that First Dragoons Chamberlain was able to keep it in his pocket, and on one occasion he used it as a

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[461] Thomas S. Jesup to David E. Twiggs, March 16, 1843, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 17, Volumes 33-34, Mar. 11, 1842-July 14, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, ???.
[462] National Park Service, "Weapons-Dragoon Weapons," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoonweapons.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[463] Major Joseph I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (The Capper Printing Company, 1939), 16.
[464] John Walter, *The Guns that Won the West: Firearms on the American Frontier, 1848-1898* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1999), 26.
[465] Walter, *The Guns that Won the West*, 26.
[466] Walter, *The Guns that Won the West*, 26-27.
[467] National Park Service, "Weapons-Dragoon Weapons," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoonweapons.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).

very inaccurate pistol.[468] Supplies of arms and ammunition were generally kept in a magazine. Yet, as of June of 1844 there was no magazine at Fort Washita and so the dragoons stored ammunition in their "own store rooms."[469] During 1844, there were also two small cannons located at Fort Washita, though Colonel Croghan wrote that there was not enough ammunition so that "morning and evening guns can be fired. . . Recollect, this post is upon our extreme Indian frontier and that the wild Indians who sometimes visit it will be forcibly (favorably) struck by the sound of a big gun."[470]

The soldier also needed the necessary equipment to compliment his uniform and weapons. In the 1841 *Ordnance Manual for the Use of Officers of the United States Army*, the cavalry, or in this case dragoons, accoutrements included a buff saber belt with an oval buckle that had "US" on it, black colored carbine and pistol cartridge boxes, buff colored sword knot and carbine sling, black holsters and covers, and a black carbine bucket.[471] In the late 1830s, a shoulder belt was added to the belt so as to hold the latter up due to the weight of the accoutrements and sword.[472] A soldier also had supplies to clean his weapons. In June 1844, Colonel Croghan wrote that the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita "are still dismounted and, and their entire equipment (that is, their carbines and cartridge boxes) is worse than I have ever before seen in the course of military life. I trust that not many months will elapse before they are well mounted and fully armed and equipped, that they may assume at least a respectable standing among these frontier Indians, who if so disposed could cut them off at any moment."[473] Perhaps the poor condition of equipment resulted from the Second Dragoons expectations to become

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[468] Samuel E. Chamberlain, *My Confession* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 188-189.
[469] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 93.
[470] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 93-94.
[471] Jacques Noel Jacobsen, editor and compiler, *Accouterments of the Army of the United States: As Described in the Ordnance Manuals 1839, 1841, 1850 & 1861*, drawings by Mike McAfee (Staten Island, NY: Manor Publishing, 1968), 135-136.
[472] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 136-137.
[473] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 102-103.

riflemen with different equipment, and the men were busy trying to construct and upkeep Fort Washita.

When the Second Dragoons troopers became the Regiment of Riflemen, their equipment was to have changed. The troops were no longer mounted so they were supposed to have carried a rifle instead of a carbine. In March 1843, Colonel Twiggs wrote at Fort Jesup that "Estimates will be immediately made for Rifles, Rifle Equipments and ammunition. . . Knapsacks. . . The Pistols were taken from us by the Secretary of War some two years Since, and only two companies at this Post were furnished with Sabres, those. . . will be Sent to the Arsenal at Baton Rouge. "[474] Though this was what was going on at Fort Jesup, the troops at Fort Washita probably had their weapons taken away if they even had all of the equipment they were entitled to. The dismount proved short lived so the men once again needed mounted equipment.

A soldier's daily life began bright and early. The bugler would have sounded reveille which was the signal for a soldier to get out of bed. The post commander decided what time reveille occurred, which in the post-Civil War era was "between 5:00 and 6:00 A.M."[475]

Not long after a soldier heard reveille, he heard the call for assembly. This signaled the dragoon to make his way to the parade ground. This large open area was used for such proceedings as assembly and dress parades, and was supposed to be "the physical center for each post."[476] When the soldiers had assembled, roll call was taken in order to make sure everyone was present.

[474] David E. Twiggs to the Adjutant General, March 24, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225 – T 236, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[475] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 83.
[476] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 184.

While the average infantryman had no horse, a dragoon had to care for a mount. The bugler sounded stable call, which meant the dragoon went to care for his horse.[477] On 19 February 1842, Assistant Adjutant General Thomas wrote to Brigadier General Taylor that the soldiers were supposed to build sheds in which to keep the horses.[478] By 1844, there were stables at Fort Washita.[479] Today, there are ruins marked as stables, but these may not be the originals as these "stables were used by two companies of the 1st Cavalry between 1858 and 1861."[480] Each dragoon had to "care for his own horse. Having groomed their mounts, the riders watered and exercised the animals outside before returning the horses to the stables for feeding."[481] A mounted soldier groomed his horse "in a set pattern for twenty minutes."[482] A post-Civil War soldier looked after his horse's health which meant the soldier watched for "foot diseases. . . inspected their mount's hooves daily, watching for problems such as brittleness, chipping, or signs of fungus."[483] The 1840s dragoon probably had to be alert for the same problems. A dragoon was required to clean the stables.[484] He might have cared for his horse two to three times a day. Horses were very important to a dragoon as the animal was his form of transportation and what distinguished him from the infantryman.

After stable call, the dragoon heard sick call. The bugler blew this call probably about 7:10 A.M.[485] It was at this time that if any soldier felt sick he to reported to the assistant surgeon

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[477] Note: Of course when the Second Dragoons became Riflemen, the regiment's members did not have horses to take care of so their daily schedule would have changed at least slightly.
[478] Thomas to Zachary Taylor, February 19, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series), January 1841 – November 1842, Reel 12, Volume 18," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications), microfilm, 25.
[479] Department of the Interior, United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma: Special Report for National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings* (Santa Fe: 1965), 4.
[480] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[481] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 84.
[482] *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.
[483] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 149.
[484] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[485] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).

at the post. Sometimes soldiers acted sick as an effort to get out of work.[486] Yet, there were soldiers who were indeed sick and needed to be seen by a surgeon.

It was only after his horse ate that a dragoon got to eat. The mess call at Fort Scott was at about 7:30 A.M, and Fort Washita was probably very similar.[487] In 1844, Colonel Croghan reported about the mess conditions at Fort Washita, and he writes, "The kitchens and mess rooms are kept in good order, but having dirt floors, they can not be made to look very neatly. One of the companies, G, spreads its table under a shed, which I take for granted will be boarded up before the cold weather sets in."[488] The mess room would have been next to the barracks.[489] So, at Fort Washita a soldier did not eat where he slept, but rather in or under a separate structure no matter how inadequate it was.

Next, a soldier took part in fatigue duty. At Fort Scott, this at least consisted of "construction. . . , cutting timber, hauling wood, working at the sawmill, cleaning the post, loading and unloading supplies, building a road, tending the post gardens, and numerous other duties."[490] The dragoon's fatigue duty at Fort Washita would not have been much different, that is when the government and military allowed soldiers at the post to actually build and maintain structures. The military sometimes used civilians to construct posts, but the use of soldiers was cheaper. During November 1843, Company A had four privates working along the "Washita River, procuring building timber."[491] The next February, Company I members gathered wood.[492] Soldiers probably worked at the Fort Washita sawmill, at least when the machinery worked properly. There was also a garden at Fort Washita which Second Dragoons might have tended.

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486 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 84.
487 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
488 *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 68.
489 Department of the Interior, United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma*, 4.
490 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
491 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," November of 1843.
492 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," February of 1844.

In Texas, soldiers had to clean latrines which included putting lime into them.[493] Fort Washita did have latrines, at least for officers, and the soldier no doubt took care of the facilities. Cooking was another duty, and there was a bake oven at Fort Washita, "Built in the 1840s, the oven could bake 180 loaves at one time. Bakers were selected from the companies on a rotating basis."[494] The Second Dragoons returns listed soldiers as bakers. Though these types of duties were hard work, they did provide for the soldier "some relief from the mechanics of months of garrison life."[495] In July 1842, Company A had four privates on daily or extra duty.[496] A year later, Company A had twenty-four privates, Company G had sixteen privates, and Company I had twenty-four privates on daily or extra duty.[497] The three companies had a combined forty-seven privates on daily or extra duty for July 1844.[498] But, this number shrank by the next year. There were actually more Second Dragoons present in June 1845 then June 1844, just less men doing fatigue duty.

A dragoon also could serve as a servant or waiter for officers. This duty meant the dragoon was taken "away from the already depleted enlisted ranks and smacked of feudalism."[499] Other soldiers nicknamed him "a 'dog robber'. . . , the joke being that the man was robbing scraps from the family dog."[500] Also, this duty meant the servants did not have to take part in strenuous duties. In October 1843, there was "1 Pvt. Waiting on Capt. Blake since 1. Aug. '43: on daily duty."[501] In November and January, there remained a private waiting on Blake. So at Fort Washita, at least one Second Dragoons officer enjoyed being attended by a waiter.

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493 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 86-?.
494 *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*. Note: While the bake oven has been reconstructed, it does not seem to be usable.
495 Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley*, 7.
496 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," July of 1842.
497 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," July of 1843.
498 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," July of 1844.
499 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 75.
500 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 150.
501 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," October of 1843.

Sometimes a soldier participated in morning drill, which lasted about two hours.[502] Morning drill began about 10 A.M. and took place only a few days a week.[503] This was when the soldiers learned how to properly march, ride, handle their weapons, and move as a unit. There was also a Saturday inspection which took place during the morning.[504]

At lunch, the dragoon would have again cared for his horse before eating the noon meal. The soldier would have gone to the stables probably about "forty minutes before noon."[505] At Fort Scott, lunch occurred at noon. But, one fort during the 1830s did not have lunch until 2:30 P.M.[506] Similar to reveille, perhaps the post commander chose the time for lunch.

After lunch, a soldier returned to his various duties. A soldier might partake in more drill. There also was likely fatigue duty that still needed done. At the end of the afternoon, the dragoon might once tend to his horse.

Upon the conclusion of supper, the soldiers prepared for the day's end. Thirty minutes before sunset, the soldiers assembled for parade. Soldiers gathered on the parade ground and "went through the manual of arms, after which orders were read, roll call was taken."[507] Sometimes when higher ranked officers or officials visited a post, the soldiers wore their dress uniforms for parade.[508] As the sun set, the musicians played retreat, and the flag was lowered. After retreat, a dragoon again cared for his horse.[509]

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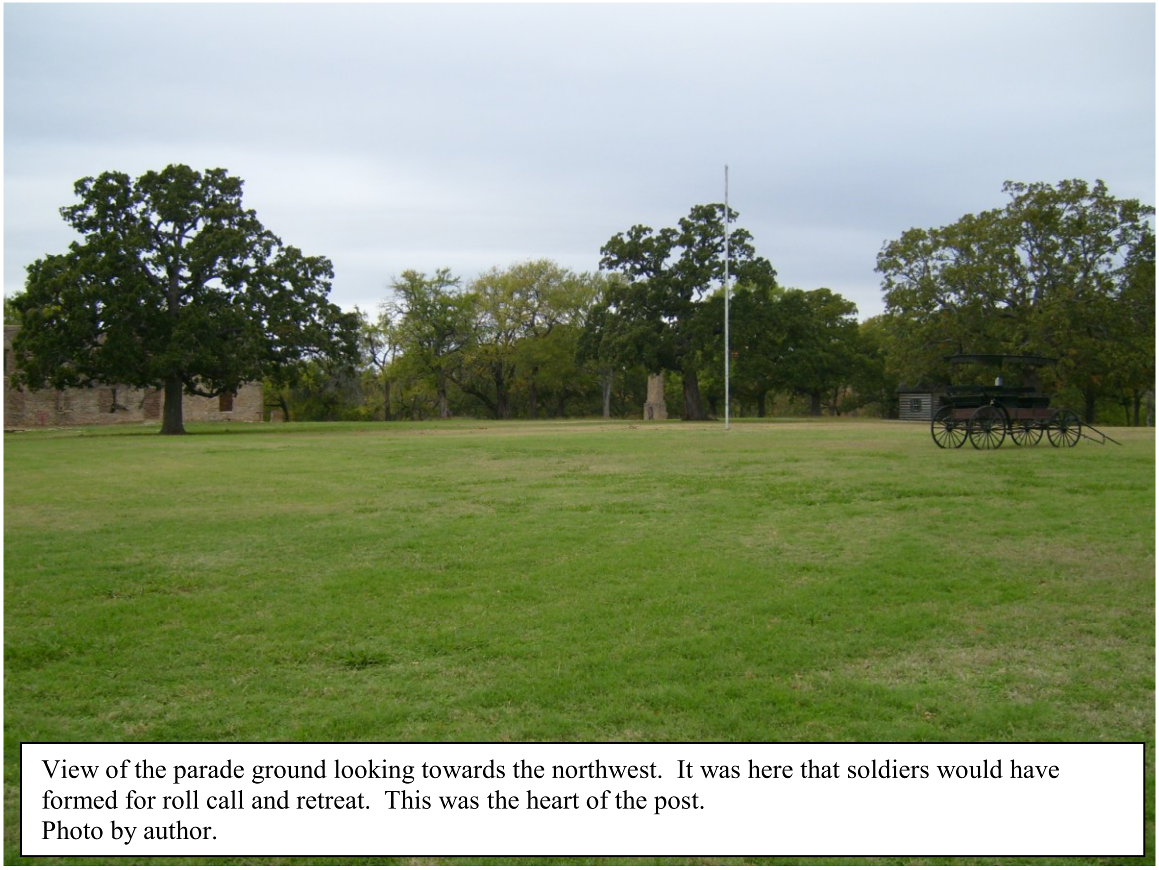
502 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 184.
503 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
504 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 184.
505 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
506 Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 184.
507 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 98.
508 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 151.
509 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).



View of the parade ground looking towards the northwest. It was here that soldiers would have formed for roll call and retreat. This was the heart of the post.
Photo by author.

Once the day was over, the dragoon returned to his barracks. Beginning during the 1840s, the bugler sounded tattoo, which was the final call for a soldier not on duty to be in his barracks, and then two more roll calls were taken, at least at Fort Scott.[510] Upon his 1844 visit to Fort Washita, Colonel Croghan wrote about the barracks, "The quarters of the men are convenient and comfortable; each company has two blocks or sets of houses, containing two rooms of 17 by 19 feet, separated by a hall or passage nine or ten feet wide. These houses are of oak logs hewn on the inside, and though built with no eye to permanency, they will nevertheless answer every purpose for some years."[511] These structures had chimneys made of stone.[512] One of these structures was later used as a schoolhouse and adjutant's office. Another foundation marked

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[510] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Daily Life," Fort Scott National Historical Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon9.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[511] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 52.
[512] Department of the Interior, United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma*, 4.

"laundry" and used as laundress' quarters was also an original barracks.[513] The soldier would have been arranged in his bunk by the squad he was in.[514] Also, generally each bunk had two or even three levels with two men sharing each level.[515] These barracks had almost no privacy for the soldier.

Important to any enlisted man was his pay. In 1830, before the dragoon regiments were present in the United States army, a soldier's pay was five dollars per month.[516] In 1833, a dragoon private earned "the comparatively high pay of eight dollars a month."[517] By 1838, a dragoon private still only made eight dollars per month.[518] This was a dollar more a month than the dragoon's counterpart in the artillery or infantry. Perhaps this was because a dragoon earned his money by becoming a good horseman, where as it takes less effort to just march. Soldiers did not always regularly receive their pay, especially at frontier posts. But, when he did receive his pay, the soldier signed for his money and saluted the paymaster at the exact same time.[519] At least in the 1870s, officers allowed a soldier to put money into accounts which kept him from spending it, but "The money could not be withdrawn until after the soldier was discharged."[520]

Cleanliness, or lack of, and physical appearance were part of a dragoon's life, even when physical cleanliness was not always generally a part of Anglo society. A soldier typically washed

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513 Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
514 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Command Structure," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon8.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
515 Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 98.
516 Louis Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley: An Account of Marches and Activities of the First Regiment United States Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley Between the Years 1833 and 1850* (Iowa City, IA: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1917), 5.
517 Major General John K. Herr and Edward S. Wallace, *The Story of the U.S. Cavalry 1775-1942* (October, 1953; repr. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953),, 25.
518 Towson to Roger Jones, November 1, 1842, contained "Table: Of Pay, Subsistence, Forage, &c., allowed to Officers of the U. S. Army, &c., per Acts of the 5th and 7th July, 1838," in ""Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 259, T, 1842," Center for Research Library (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
519 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 107.
520 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 169.

his feet twice a week, but took only one bath.[521] Not everyone probably did this, or washed their hands and face daily. When a dragoon bathed, he might have done so in a stream or tub of water. Due to lack of hygiene, a soldier could pick up bacteria and diseases which at times were deadly. Lice was a problem, though a soldier was "supposed to get monthly haircuts."[522] Some of the First Dragoons supposedly had long hair and even earrings.[523] At least by the time of the Mexican-American War, the Second Dragoons also had facial hair along with long head hair.[524] There are artist's pictures that present a Second Dragoon captain with long hair during the Mexican-American War. When it came to facial hair, a dragoon was different than other soldiers. In 1841, the military made "it clear that dragoons were free to wear mustaches. . . *but no other man in the Army*, from the General in Chief to the lowest private!!"[525]

Just like an officer, the enlisted man needed entertainment. The entertainment complex for officers was also, as Colonel Croghan reported, opened "at stated hours to such soldiers (and to those only) as merit every indulgence."[526] This allowed a soldier to relax on the post where he would have been less likely to cause or get into trouble. One way a soldier entertained himself was through the use of alcohol, and if he got drunk he might become troublesome to himself and others. Croghan's attitude about alcohol was that "the soldier who *will* have whiskey *can* procure it. Put not therefore too many restraints upon the good soldier, but during intervals of duty let him feel that the time is his own, to pass it as he may in any innocent amusement."[527] Some soldiers were no doubt literate, and probably read for entertainment. If there were any prostitutes around, soldiers probably hired them, and a town grew up west of the fort which created more problems with alcohol and prostitutes among the troops. A Second Dragoons soldier likely

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[521] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 128.
[522] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 129.
[523] "The 1st United States Dragoons: The Exploration of the Des Moines River Valley," The Fort Museum-Fort Dodge, Iowa, http://www.fortmuseum.com/dragoon.html (accessed February 13, 2013).
[524] Peter F. Stevens, *The Rogue's March: John Riley and the St. Patrick's Battalion* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's 1999), 45.
[525] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 119.
[526] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 133.
[527] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 133.

hunted and fished as there was a river nearby and the open prairie around him. A soldier might have also sung songs such as “The Girl I Left Behind Me” while he drilled, work, or relaxed.

While less information is known about the enlisted men at Fort Washita, the interpreter needs to inform the people that these were real men with their own lives. They had their own names and attitudes. Post life should be presented as mundane for these men. An historian can present to the public the dragoon’s uniform and living conditions, for example bed rolls and tents.

CHAPTER XIII

DRILL INSTRUCTION

Military drill was to have been part of a dragoon's weekly routine. While a dragoon did not always have time to drill, this activity remained an important part of his military life. Drilling provided a number of advantages to a soldier and his comrades, and the Second Dragoon might have used a couple of different drill manuals.

Drill was when a man learned how to properly conduct himself as a soldier. For example is that through drill a dragoon learned how to properly stand with and mount his horse. But, more importantly a dragoon learned how to think and move with his comrades as one unit. This was important in battle because whether or not a group of men could stand together as a unit meant not only loss or defeat, but life or death of themselves. Also, drill allowed a soldier to "build physical fitness."[528] For the Second Dragoons, "Upon the arrival of the regiment at the new stations in Louisiana and Arkansas, Colonel Twiggs began a strenuous schedule of training. Captain William J. Hardee. . . had just returned from a tour of observation of European cavalry, and was made executive office, supervising the tactical exercises and mounted drill of the regiment."[529]

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[528]Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 143.
[529] Major Joseph I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (The Capper Printing Company, 1939), 24.

A dragoon needed a drill manual to follow. The dragoon of the 1840s would have used"Poinsette's 1841 Cavalry Tactics."[530] By 1864, the full name of this manual was *Cavalry Tactics. In Three Parts. School of the Trooper, of the Platoon, of the Squadron, and the Evolution of a Regiment*. This manual "was the first really comprehensive manual published for the mounted corps, and contained detail instructions for training the trooper in every phase of horsemanship."[531] On June 19, 1844, Adjutant General Jones wrote to Colonel Twiggs, "Your letter. . . has been received, and <u>one</u> copy (3 vols.) of the Cavalry Tactics has been this day sent to each company of your regiment, being all that can be furnished from the supply on hand."[532] *Cavalry Tactics* was what the Second Dragoons companies stationed at Fort Washita trained by at least the last year they were present at the post. Steffen wrote of *Cavalry Tactics* that "The text of the manual was from the French manual of the same period, and the illustrations were copied from the French ones, somewhat modified to show a *sort* of resemblance to the United States dragoon's uniform. But whoever did the art work had little idea of what the equipment looked like. These illustrations are completely useless for reference."[533]

Instruction manuals cost money, and sometimes officers had to pay for them. During May of 1844, Adjutant General Jones wrote to Colonel Twiggs that, "a second Copy of *Cavalry Tactics* has been forwarded to each of the officers of your Regiment; but as they have been once furnished at the public expense, the officers. . . had no right to give them away as you report in part to have been the case. They will accordingly be inquired to reimburse the government at the

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[530] Galen Ewing, Park Ranger Fort Scott National Historic Site, e-mail message to author, June 4, 2012.
[531] Randy Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, vol. 1 of *The Horse Soldier 1776-1943: The United States Cavalryman: His Uniforms, Arms, Accoutrements, and Equipment* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 154.
[532] Roger Jones to David E. Twiggs, June 20, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 306.
[533] Steffen, *The Revolution, the War of 1812, the Early Frontier 1776-1850*, 177.

contract price of of the work."[534] In his June of 1844 letter, Jones exclaimed, "The cost of these books will not be charged by the government."[535] Then, in September the Adjutant General's Office wrote to Twiggs, "Your letter. . . relative to the Cavalry Tactics forwarded to officers of your Regiment and for which they were required to pay, has been referred to the General in Chief, by whose instructions I have to say, that the insinuation it contains that a distinction in the supplying of the books in question would be made between the 1st and 2d Dragoons to the prejudice of the latter, is unjust and improper."[536] It seems if a dragoon officer took care of his manual, the government paid for it. But, if an officer gave the manual away without permission, than he had to pay for it. Though, Twiggs was not happy with his officers having to pay for the manuals though they were responsible for the loss of the books.

Cavalry Tactics covered many drill exercises for the mounted soldier. Dragoons learned drill exercises in steps, and when "the School of the Trooper, Dismounted, had been mastered, the dragoons progressed to the School of the Platoon, dismounted, and the School of the Trooper, Mounted, which were held jointly. Approximately 180 days or six months were spent learning these lessons."[537] Part I of the manual covered such actions as formation of the regiment, position of officers, how a soldier mounted his horse, and dismounted exercises with weapons. Part II included how the mounted trooper held his reins, setup of the saddle, how to properly ride a horse, and use of weapons while mounted. Part III covered such ideas as movement in lines and

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[534] Roger Jones to David E. Twiggs, May 20, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 263.
[535] Roger Jones to David E. Twiggs, June 20, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 306.
[536] Thomas to David E. Twiggs, September 2, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 390.
[537] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Training," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon7.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).

columns and even the charge. These drills had the men in different size groups such as squadron, platoon, and regiment.[538]

First Dragoons officers created a drill manual which the Second Dragoons could have used. Stephen Watts Kearny was the original lieutenant colonel of the First Dragoons, and he was "every inch a professional and a stickler for perfection."[539] With his professionalism, he realized that "no manual existed for the use of the Dragoon's breechloading Hall carbine."[540] He used a "copy of the latest French mounted manual available in the regiment, Kearny now appointed Captain Sumner as president of a board to come up with a standard system for the carbine."[541] First Dragoons officers Philip Kearny, William Eustis, and Henry Turner visited Europe to study other countries' military instructions. These officers then went to Carlisle Barracks where "the men employed their training. . . to complete the first manual for the American horse soldier. By 1841, their Colonel declared that, beginning on 23 March, the system, which finally had been approved by the army, would be followed to the letter."[542] Of course, Steffen wrote that *Cavalry Tactics* was supposedly the first manual to have the distinction of providing instructions for the dragoons, though both were ready in 1841. Another source states that the First Dragoons manual was created in 1837.[543] Either way, while the Second Dragoons companies were present at Fort Washita, a First Dragoons company was also stationed at the post so they could have both used either manual. On 16 March 1842, while at Fort

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538 Printed by order of the War Department, *Cavalry Tactics in Three Parts. School of the Trooper, of the Platoon, of the Squadron, and the Evolutions of a Regiment. Part I.........Dismounted. Part II……Mounted. Part III…….Evolutions of a Regiment* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 93, http://books.google.com/books?id=0DhGAAAAYAAJ&pg=PR2&lpg=PR2&dq=%22Cavalry+Tactics%22+1841&source=bl&ots=24nJNljDS9&sig=VVyS-G6czmfUlqE48jq5WWEopEk&hl=en&sa=X&ei=YbXfT5G9IaX42gX9jqmGCg&ved=0CFIQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=%22Cavalry%20Tactics%22%201841&f=false (accessed February 13, 2013). Note: There is little difference between this 1864 copy and the 1841 manual.
539 Gregory J. W. Urwin, *The United States Cavalry: An Illustrated History*, Illustrations by Ernest Lisle Reedstrom (Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press, 1983), 54-56.
540 John Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, Men-At-Arms Series 281, Illustrated by Bill Younghead (London: Osprey, 1995), 15.
541 Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, 15.
542 Langellier, *US Dragoons 1833-55*, 15.
543 Urwin, *The United States Cavalry*, 73.

Towson, Second Lieutenant McDonald wrote, "As I have not been furnished with the new Dragoons Tactics I have to request a copy of the Same."[544] It is interesting how McDonald did not use the words "Cavalry Tactics," which mean he could have referred to another manual such as the one First Dragoons officers created. Colonel Croghan even reported that Fort Washita used "Dragoon and Infantry Tactics."[545] While the Second Dragoons did use the 1841 *Cavalry Tactics*, there were other options available.

Officers sometimes became concerned that soldiers were so busy with other duties they did not have time to drill, and they tried to fix the problems. This happened at Fort Washita in 1844, and Colonel Croghan wrote how officer resented "men being taken from them to become house builders, ect., they are thus deprived of the stimulation of the drill, always so delightful to the soldier. Colonel Harney avers that he will dispel this tediousness by requiring sabre exercises every morning and evening and readings of the Dragoon and Infantry Tactics at stated hours through the day."[546] Harney intended to overcome the lack of drill exercises and make sure that the soldiers had proper military instruction. It is interesting how Harney wanted to train the men with sabers though this type of weapon was not often used by the United States military.

Commissioned officers did not always did not always supervise drill or have the knowledge to do so. It was junior officers who were generally supposed to have "conducted tactical training (which was confined to for the most part to small-unit drill."[547] Sometimes West Point officers did not know how to do a drill exercise until they learned just before teaching their

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[544] Phillip W. McDonald to Roger Jones, March 16, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 254, L 69 – M 131, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[545] *Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958),, 133.
[546] *Army Life on the Western Frontier*, 132-133.
[547] William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 184.

soldiers.[548] In Texas, noncommissioned officers often drilled the soldiers.[549] Also, at Fort Scott it was the noncommissioned officers who "delivered the majority of the training to the soldiers."[550] For example, corporals supervised new recruits who without the aid of saddles mounted horses.[551]

Though the soldier learned how to properly hold his guns, he did not get to often fire them through instructions. The government thought that target practice for soldiers was too expensive as that meant ammunition was being used. It was not until 1869 that soldiers target practiced on a regular basis, though previous to this "weapons training and target practice amounted to firing perhaps one or two shots per soldier per month. It was not unknown for troops to have no target practice for an entire year."[552] Yet, at least at Fort Scott, the First Dragoons did take part in target practice.

Of course the dismount of the Second Dragoons meant it would have changed its tactics. The regiment had become riflemen and so a manual that described a horseback unit was useless. Of course, the dismount lasted only about a year and when the regiment remounted it would have again referred to drill exercises for the mounted soldier.

The historical interpreter must be able to explain how a soldier drilled. This allows the visitor to understand what type of training soldiers received. While a historian can try and verbally explain the type of drills, visitors would understand better by either watching men drill or taking part in basic foot maneuvers.

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548 Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 184.
548 Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry*, 91.
549 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 188.
550 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Command Structure," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon8.htm (accessed February 11, 2013).
551 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Training,"-Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon7.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
552 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 144.

CHAPTER XIV

NAILS AND HORSESHOES

Metallic items were part of a dragoon's post life, and somebody at Fort Washita needed the proper skills to work with metal objects. The blacksmith and farrier performed this type of work. These men were important to many aspects of a dragoon's military life, from the barracks to his horse.

A blacksmith provided a number of items needed by the dragoons stationed at Fort Washita. These metal workers were under the command of the post quartermaster.[553] It was the blacksmith who "provided the metal repair and fabrication for the post."[554] The First Dragoons was supposed to have at least one blacksmith in each company.[555] Post blacksmiths could have been either civilian or soldier, and "Most post commanders preferred to use civilian blacksmiths because they were likely to have better skills, and. . . civilians were able to devote their entire workday to blacksmithing."[556] At least in 1846, a civilian named Jonathan Morris worked as a blacksmith at Fort Washita.[557]

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[553] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[554] *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.
[555] National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
[556] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008),, 108.
[557] Tom Holt, interview by Maurice R. Anderson, September 30, 1937, Interview ID 8790, transcript, University of Oklahoma Libraries Western History Collections, http://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/pioneer/paper.asp?pID=3196&vID=43 (accessed February 13, 2013).

A blacksmith, of course, needed various tools to perform his duty. These included a forge in which to heat the metal needed to fabricate items. He required various size tongs to pick up the metal and hammers to beat it into various shapes. The Fort Washita blacksmith might have made square nails to be used in construction of the post. There was a shortage of Second Dragoons blacksmiths at Fort Washita, so perhaps civilians or a blacksmith from another unit performed the needed tasks at the post.

The farrier was vital to a dragoon. A farrier specifically dealt with shoeing the regiment's horses. The dragoon needed his horse's feet in good condition or else the mount could become lame and leave the soldier afoot. A farrier also might have performed veterinarian type duties on the horses.[558] During the post-Civil War period, "Each cavalry company was authorized two farriers."[559] Before the Civil War, the First Dragoons had only one farrier per company.[560] These men were part of the Second Dragoons as the November 1842 regimental return identified at least one soldier working as a farrier.[561]

The number of Second Dragoons' blacksmiths and farriers at Fort Washita varied over the years. During October 1842, Company A and I each had one.[562] During the next several months, neither company had any blacksmiths or farriers.[563] When the regiment was dismounted, it kept "the old organization except for farriers and blacksmiths, who would be discharged."[564]

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558 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 108.
559 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 108.
560 National Park Service, "Dragoon Soldier-Recruitment," Fort Scott National Historic Site, http://www.nps.gov/fosc/forteachers/dragoon6.htm (accessed February 13, 2013).
561 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm,," November of 1842.
562 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861" (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, October of 1842.
563 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," November of 1842 to February of 1843.
564 Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 24.

When the regiment was remounted, blacksmiths and farriers were again needed, but it was not until August of 1845 that the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita had either among its ranks.[565]

A blacksmith's pay was better than that of an enlisted man. In 1838, a blacksmith earned about ten or eleven dollars a month.[566] While less than a sergeant or corporal, this was more than the average for a private. Blacksmiths and farriers were skilled laborers and performed tasks the average soldier would generally not have known how to do.

Top, foundation of the blacksmith shop located west of the main post and near the 1850s stables.

Bottom, foundation of the blacksmith shop located just west of the commissary.

Photos by author.

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[565] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," August of 1842.

[566] N. Towson in *Congress*, House, "Cavalry and Infantry: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting a Comparitive Statement of the Expense of Enlistment, Equipment, Mainetance, &c., of Cavalry or Mounted Men and Infantry, &c.," 25th Cong., 2d sess., March 19, 1838, Doc. No. 250, 2, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/Digital/?p_product=SERIAL&p_theme=sset2&p_nbid=T58X4FJMMTM2MDYzMzkwNS4yMDM4MzY6MToxMzoxMzkuNzguNTAuMTU1&p_action=doc&p_docnum=10&p_queryname=2&p_docref=v2:0FD2A62D41CEB699@SERIAL-103624455AC944F0@2392453-@0 (accessed February 11, 2013).

Blacksmiths and farriers need a building in which to work. The farrier likely worked in the stable. Today at Fort Washita, there are two foundations marked as blacksmith shops. One is just a short distance west of the commissary while the other is down the hill near the 1850s stables. Perhaps there were two blacksmith shops at the post, were in different eras, or the buildings were used for different things.

The historian can teach people about blacksmiths and farriers. An interpreter sufficient at blacksmithing can use the bellows forge at Fort Washita in the reproduction blacksmith shop. This not only allows the visitor to know about the work of a blacksmith, but also see how it is done. A farrier is much more complicated, but the historian can continue to imply the importance of a dragoon caring for his horse so as not to be on foot.

CHAPTER XV

SUTLER

Sometimes a dragoon needed to purchase items which the government and military did not provide. The man filling this position at the post was the sutler. While the Second Dragoons were stationed at Fort Washita, a sutler at the post was supposed to have provided the needed items, though he did not always get along with those around him or do a good job.

The government appointed a sutler who was generally a civilian.[567] He might have "had the rank of a warrant officer to give him some status and authority among the soldiers."[568] Sutler's were:

> appointed to three year terms by the Secretary of War upon the recommendation of a Post Council or Administration and the approval of the Post Commander. In return, the sutler could be taxed by the Post Council for as much as twelve cents a month for each officer and enlisted man serving at the post. The money was set aside in a special fund to be used for miscellaneous things such as garden seeds, night school, a post library, and newspaper subscriptions.[569]

Being a sutler could be a financial boon.[570] From 1821 to 1867, sutlers were assigned to regiments with whom they traveled with.[571] But, the sutler at Fort Washita seems to have

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[567] Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008),, 112.
[568] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 90.
[569] Marylnn Ann Fleck-O'Keefe, *Fort Towson Indian Territory: A Link to the West* (Wolfe City, TX: Henington Publishing Company, 1997), 18.
[570] Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, Illustrated by Jack Jackson (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 77.
[571] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 112-113.

specifically served at that post. Also, though the sutler was appointed by the government, he had to maintain his own buildings and provided non-military issued items to the soldiers.[572]

A soldier did business with the sutler, though they did not always agree with one another. Soldiers often thought a sutler overcharged for his products.[573] Also, when a soldier received his pay he in return had to settle any outstanding debt owed.[574] While the sutler allowed the soldier to buy items on credit, he only extended credit on what he believed the soldier could repay.[575]

Even when a sutler sold overpriced goods, he often relieved the monotony of post life. He provided extra food items, tobacco, and whiskey.[576] The sutler's store also served as a social gathering place.[577] Alcohol was likely a big seller among the troops, and about 1843 "it was decided to sell spirits in sutlers' stores to those men who could be trusted to use it moderately. It was believed that the open sale of it in small amounts would be more conductive to sobriety than if it were forbidden altogether."[578] Also, if a sutler sold alcohol on post property, officials were able to keep a better eye on the soldiers' consumption and actions.

To become sutler, a man endured the process described above, and this was no different at Fort Washita, even while it was still a camp. On 28 March 1842, in Order No. 3, Blake wrote that Second Lieutenant McDonald was to be on the Council of Adminstration, "there being no other officer present."[579] The next day, Captain Blake wrote to Adjutant General Jones, "I have the honor herewith to enclose, for the Action of the Secretary of War, the proceedings of a Council of Administration that convened at this post on the 28th inst. and nominated A.

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572 Fleck-O'Keefe, *Fort Towson Indian Territory*, 16.
573 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 77.
574 Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 107.
575 Fleck-O'Keefe, *Fort Towson Indian Territory*, 18.
576 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 112.
577 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 112.
578 Major Joseph I. Lambert, *One Hundred Years with the Second Cavalry* (The Capper Printing Company, 1939), 25.
579 G.A.H. Blake, March 28, 1842. "Order No. 3," in "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

Cummings Esq. of Georgia, for Post Sutler."[580] The Council of Administration "regulated the garrison's sutler, administered the post fund raised from the taxes on sutler's sales, and in the case of the larger posts after 1838, appointed the chaplain."[581] Sometimes there were difficulties obtaining a sutler. On 2 July 1842, Jones wrote to Blake that, "Mr. Cummings having been appointed Sutler for another post render any action therein unnecessary. It is proper to inform you that the Regulations do not recognize a Council composed of only one person, as in this instance."[582] So, Cummings was not available as the military had appointed him to another post. Also, the Adjutant General assumed from Blake's letter that there had only been one council member, when a council was supposed to have consisted of more than just one person. Yet, Blake or somebody else might have been on the council as Jones wrote in October that the former realized the council had not consisted of only one person.

Eventually a man by the name of Thomas Bryant became post sutler at Fort Washita. On 19 August 1842, William H. Dirtz wrote to Secretary of War John C. Spencer and asked that he appoint Bryant as the "permanent Sutler at False Washita, there being no Sutler there."[583] This could have been United States Dragoons Captain Thomas S. Bryant who Canby R. Steel wrote about in a May of 1842 letter to Adjutant General Jones.[584] Steel mentioned Bryant had been an assistant surgeon in 1833, "but soon left that rank, and entered the Dragoons. He may not be a

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580 G.A.H. Blake to Roger Jones, May 29, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

581 William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 185.

582 Roger Jones to G.A.H. Blake, July 2, 1842, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 12, Volumes 17 – 18, January 2, 1841 – November 21, 1842," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 230-231.

583 William H. Dirtz to John C. Spencer, August 19, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

584 Canby R. Steel to Roger Jones, May 26, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

captain, but I know he held a high rank."[585] In September 1843, F. Bradford wrote Secretary of War James M. Porter about a Captain Thomas L. Bryant who was supposed to have been in the Second Dragoons.[586] Rodenbough listed a Thomas S. Bryant who had been an assistant surgeon and risen to the rank of captain in the Second Dragoons before he resigned in 1839.[587] In a couple of different letters from 1844, Quartermaster General Jesup addressed Bryant as a captain. Though he had possibly resigned from the military, Jesup's use of the rank may have been a sign of comradeship and respect that existed among officers. Or, perhaps, Bryant still held a captaincy.

At times, problems existed between the sutler and his competitors. On 6 December 1843, Bryant wrote about how during July Indian Agent Upshaw allowed a trader to setup up shop on the fort's land, and "Subsequent events, have Shown the object to be an opposing interest in the regular Sutler."[588] The sutler claimed that the name of the man who supposedly owned the store was not the real owner. Foreman lists various traders which included J. B. Earheart and A. P. Sheldon.[589] Bryant wrote "a Citizen of Arkansas obtained the contract for Supplying the Post with corn, and. . . therewith obtained a license from the Indian Agent. . . to establish a Store for the Sale of goods or rather to trade goods for corn."[590] Bryant paraphrased and quoted Army

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585 Canby R. Steel to Roger Jones, May 26, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
586 F. Bradford to James M. Porter, September 1, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 265, B 1-296, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
587 Theophilus F. Rodenbough, compiler, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry: An Authentic Account of Service in Florida, Mexico, Virginia and the Indian Country, Including the Personal Recollections of Prominent Officers. With an Appendix; Containing Orders, Reports, and Correspondence, Military Records, Etc., etc., etc.* (First Edition, 1875: Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 450.
588 Thomas S. Bryant to Benjamin L. Beall, December 6, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
589 Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier: 1830-1860* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), 104.
590 Thomas S. Bryant to Benjamin L. Beall, December 6, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

Regulation No. 189 which stated a sutler had to pay a tax and that the post's commander was to protect the sutler's rights. Also, Bryant wrote:

> Again; these stores have, not only to gain Custom from the soldiers, put their process for goods, below that affixed by the Council of Administration, for the government of the Sutler. But I am informed have even Credited the enlisted men. It is well known that the Chickasaw Nation have no funds; that the Annuity Cannot be paid until next Summer and that these Stores can only look for Support, from the Casual trade of the post.[591]

Bryant went on to ask that the traders be removed from the post's grounds, and that if the post commander did not act than the letter be sent to the Secretary of War. On 20 December, Captain Beall sent a letter to Assistant Adjutant General W.W.S. Bliss in which he stated, "I cannot comply with the sutlers request in prohibiting the men from spending their money when they please - especially to. . . all these traders, of whom he complains sell much more reasonably than he does."[592] Beall explained that the traders in the area had been permitted by Upshaw and Lieutenant Colonel Harney, and as the captain expected Harney to return to the post, the former did "not wish to push the matter at present."[593] By mid-1844, traders were no longer allowed to deal with the soldiers.[594]

Both Bryant and officers caused problems for the sutler. In the 20 December 1843 letter, Captain Beall wrote that Bryant was suspended in July 1843, and that "Proceedings which were then instituted against Capt Bryant for neglect of duty & c as Sutler, were withdrawn on the

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591 Thomas S. Bryant to Benjamin L. Beall, December 6, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
592 Benjamin L. Beall to W.W.S. Bliss, December 20, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
593 Benjamin L. Beall to W.W.S. Bliss, December 20, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
594 Quotation in a letter by Roger Jones to Zachary Taylor, June 26, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1800-1890, Roll 13, Volumes 19-20, November 22, 1842 – December 31, 1844," (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm, 312-313.

Condition that he would resign his appointment as Sutler in the fall which has already passed."[595] A man by the name of Sheldon temporarily held the position of sutler.[596] On 15 December 1843, J.M. Porter of the War Department wrote, "In consequence of information received of the irregular conduct of S. T. Bryant, sutler at Washita, Samuel C. Humes, Esq. is appointed sutler in his place, to hold the situation for three years, unless sooner removed."[597] However, on 20 February 1844, Beall, Howe, Merrill, and Newton signed a letter which stated:

> that each and all of us would be glad if he could obtain any situation from the General Government which would Contribute to the support of himself and family. Though we do not think him qualified for a Sutler on account of his want of knowledge in Mercantile pursuit, yet as a gentleman we wish him well, and hope that he may receive that protection from the government which his long services would seem to entitle him.[598]

Though Fort Washita had a new post sutler, some of the officers wished Bryant well. Although there was at least one other sutler at Fort Washita while Second Dragoons were present, Bryant's tenure exemplified the problems a post sutler faced.

Yet, Bryan't removal as post sutler did not mean the end of him at Fort Washita. On 15 November 1844, Quartermaster General Jesup wrote to Second Lieutenant Rogers a letter asking if Rogers had taken from Bryant "certain logs belonging to him, which he states were taken by you for public purpose at that post. You will report whether this claim is correct, and return the

[595] Benjamin L. Beall to W.W.S. Bliss, December 20, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[596] Benjamin L. Beall to W.W.S. Bliss, December 20, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[597] J.M. Porter, December 15, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 275, P 91 – R 121, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm. Note: Porter put the initials "S.T." when it should have been "T.S." for Thomas S.
[598] Benjamin L. Beall, Marshall S. Howe, Hamilton W. Merrill, and Washington I. Newton to the Secretary of War, February 20, 1844, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 275, P 91 – R 121, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

papers to this Office."[599] So, even after Bryant departed, there were still problems from when he was at Fort Washita that needed resolved.

A sutler needed a place to conduct his business. However, there are currently no site markers at Fort Washita denoting a sutler's building. Both on and off the historic site, a few unmarked ruins could have quite possibly been the sutler's store.

The interpreter should relay the importance of the sutler. The sutler and his goods, such as alcohol, helped break the monotony of a soldier's life. Also, a soldier could get other items which the military did not provide. The interpreter can setup a tent and items to show what a sutlery might have looked like.

[599] Thomas S. Jesup to Daniel G. Rogers, November 15, 1844, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 246.

CHAPTER XVI

HOSPITAL PERSONNEL, SICKNESS, AND DEATH

A Second Dragoons soldier could get sick or injured, so somebody needed to be available to care for him. Medical staffs, such as assistant surgeons, as well as hospital stewards and attendants, were part of post life. These men were vital to a garrison's health.

During Fort Washita's early years, several assistant surgeons were stationed there. The first was W.I. Sloan, who arrived on 3 July 1842.[600] Sloan even signed Captain Beall's oath of allegiance for the latter's rank of brevet major.[601] In September 1843, Assistant Surgeon James Simons arrived at Fort Washita.[602] On 31 May 1844, Simons for some reason was under arrest.[603] But, the next month he returned to duty. In September 1844, Sloan transferred to Philadelphia.[604] On 14 September 1844, Assistant Surgeon John C. Glen arrived at Fort Washita.[605] At least one time Glen got to travel around the region as he was "Detached with Lieut Johnstons Command P. O. No 38 March 25th 45 left Post March 26th 45."[606] During May, Simons served as a witness for

[600]"Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, July of 1842. Note: Of course this was when the site was still a camp and not an official post.
[601] Benjamin Beall and William Sloan, April 21, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 265, B 1-296, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[602] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," September of 1843.
[603] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," May of 1844.
[604] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," September of 1844.
[605] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," September of 1844.
[606] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," March of 1845.

a trial at Fort Smith. Then in August 1845, the military transferred Simons to another post. In September 1845, Glen was "Transferred to Austin Texas. per order no 164 dated Fort Washita CN."[607] He left Fort Washita at the same time that the Second Dragoon companies headed for the southern part of Texas to prepare for war. But, Assistant Surgeon W.E. Fullwood "Joined Post 31 Aug. . . per Post order No 14. dated. . . Fort Towson CN August 29th 1845."[608] This meant Fullwood arrived at Fort Washita before the Second Dragoons companies left. The soldiers at a military post were lucky to have a surgeon on staff.[609]

A surgeon might hold a military rank, which could be problematic. Until 1832, military medical personnel did not have to pass an exam for his position.[610] A military surgeon did have to take the oath of an officer.[611] This meant these men generally held the rank of a lieutenant or higher.[612] Military medical personnel did not receive a very high rate of pay, and it was not easy to move up the ranks as there were only so many positions. This proved especially true if he argued with other officers.[613]

Even in the 1840s, a medical officer knew little about germs and what caused sickness, yet sometimes he unknowingly understood certain health issues. Sometimes a surgeon realized that a soldier easily got sick when in certain areas such as swamps. The surgeon just did not understand that it was the insects that lived there which caused or transmitted diseases.[614] Yet, even this limited understanding allowed military officials to rethink living conditions, and in doing so they saved men's health and sometimes lives. Still, a surgeon "knew little concerning

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607 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," September of 1845.
608 "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," September of 1845.
609 Col. John Elting, *American Army Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982), 61.
610 Elting, *American Army Life*, 61.
611 George Buish and J. Collingwood, August 13, 1842, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 246, B 87-407, 1842," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
612 Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 110.
613 Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 88.
614 Elting, *American Army Life*, 61.

the interiors of the human body except for the major bones, muscles, nerves, and organs, and believed that suppuration in wounds was necessary and should be encouraged—the 'laudable pus' thus produced was supposed to free the body of harmful substances."[615]

The assistant surgeon cared for men sick from various causes and diseases. The illnesses a soldier could get ranged from the common cold to malaria, dysentery, and pneumonia. Malaria was caused by "a parasite transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. . . After the malarial parasites enter the bloodstream, they mature and propagate within the red blood cells. . . Each episode causes alternating chills, fever, and sweats, along with aches, pains, and other symptoms."[616] Along the False Washita River, "Its bottom is not extensive in this vicinity; and if there be any malaria generated therein, the prevailing winds during the summer and autumnal seasons waft it in a different direction."[617] Dysentery was "a diarrheal disease caused by bacteria, viruses, or parasites in the intestines. . . the result of improper preparation of food and poor sanitation practices."[618] Pneumonia affected the lungs and made it very hard to breath. Sometimes a soldier died from these sicknesses and diseases. A soldier could contract sexually transmitted disease such as syphilis which was able to "eat away at the brain, spinal cord, and blood vessels."[619] Of course, injuries such as broken bones, cuts, or gunshot wounds were suffered by soldiers. Now, the Second Dragoons may not have gotten such diseases or injuries while at Fort Washita, but they were a threat among the soldiers.

The medical officer needed medicine and equipment to administer to the sick or injured soldier. During the Mexican-American War, surgeons made use "of a recently developed sodium hypochlorite 'disinfecting fluid,' and great attention was given to the cleanliness of the troops'

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615 Elting, *American Army Life*, 62.
616 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 134.
617 General Thomas Lawson and Richard H. Coolidge, M.D., prepared under, *Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States, Compiled from The Records of the Surgeon General's Office; Embracing A Period of Sixteen Years, From January, 1839, To January,* 1855, copies of found in files located at Fort Washita Historic Site (Washington, D.C.: A.O.P Nicholson, 1856), 271.
618 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 133.
619 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 135.

quarters and kitchens; the walls were whitewashed, and chloride of lime was applied to latrines and garbage pits."[620] During the 1800s, surgeons commonly bled their patients or gave them laxatives in an effort to promote healing.[621] Other medicines included opium, mercury, and, of course, whiskey.[622] Though these cures were sometimes more deadly than the sicknesses, a soldier likely enjoyed the whiskey cure and maybe even faked sickness in order to have a sip. At least during the 1860s, and probably in the 1840s, a surgeon's medical instruments included a variety of saws, probes, and scissors.[623] At times, a surgeon had to amputate a soldier's injured leg or arm, and some were able to "amputate a leg and have the stump properly bandaged in about three minutes."[624] Amputation was very painful, and if no medicine was available to block the pain, it was important that the surgeon moved swiftly. Other illnesses, such as appendicitis, called for surgery, but "the chances for recovery from abdominal surgery was very poor. In less-than-ideal sanitary conditions, any kind of surgery could lead to deadly infections, since the link between germs and infections was not understood for most of the nineteenth century."[625] Some surgeons tried to keep hospitals and medical instruments clean, though most probably did not.[626]

Surgeons had the power to have a man medically discharged, and such discharges took place at Fort Washita. During September 1842, a Company A private received a medical discharge.[627] While the former may not have been at Fort Washita, Company A Privates Foster and Miles were discharged on the "2.d Feby. '43 at Fort Washita, on Surgeon's Certifcate of Disability."[628] During September 1843 at Fort Washita, a Private William O. Donald received a

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620 Elting, *American Army Life*, 91-92.
621 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 131.
622 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 132-134.
623 David Miller, ed., *The Illustrated Directory of Uniforms, Weapons, and Equipment of the Civil War* (London: Salamander Books, 2001), 87.
624 Elting, *American Army Life*, 62.
625 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 136.
626 Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 136-137.
627 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916: Roll 14; Second Cavalry Dec. 1836-Dec. 1845," Oklahoma State University, Microcopy No. 744 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1970), microfilm, September of 1842.
628 "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," February of 1843.

surgeon's discharge.[629] These are just examples of the Fort Washita Second Dragoons soldiers who received a surgeon's discharge. Also, if a surgeon decided a soldier needed to be discharged, he had to fill out the proper paperwork.

Enlisted men also took part in caring for their comrades. Though they were not necessarily at Fort Washita, the Second Dragoons returns show that enlisted men worked as hospital stewards and attendants. These men probably did not have many qualifications to work in a hospital setting.[630] A noncommissioned officer could fill the position of hospital steward who "supervised several hospital orderlies and attendants."[631] But, sometimes the soldier holding the position of hospital steward was a warrant officer, meaning he "was specialized personnel with the equivalent rank of sergeant."[632] This rank meant the hospital steward outranked other noncommissioned officers.[633] This man was expected to keep the hospital in order, and he needed some general knowledge about medicine.[634] At Fort Washita, one Second Dragoons private was a hospital steward, though he "neglected his duty."[635] He was relieved and another dragoon or rifleman took his place. A steward had a permanent job in a hospital while an attendant was a temporary position. An enlisted man would not have always enjoyed hospital work as this included such "tasks as dressing wounds, bathing patients."[636] Fort Washita had a relatively small garrison and so an attendant probably did not often have a lot of work to do. Yet, a soldier who served on hospital duty received extra pay.[637]

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[629] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," September of 1843.
[630] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 131.
[631] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).
[632] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 90.
[633] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 111.
[634] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 111.
[635] Benjamin L. Beall to Roger Jones, December 19, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 266, B 297 – C 115, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.
[636] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 150.
[637] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 95.

Like troops elsewhere, Second Dragoons got sick. Though the number of troops at Fort Washita consisted of more than just members of the Second Dragoons, "it appears that there have occurred 3,334 cases of sick and wounded, from the 1st of July, 1842, to the 31st December, 1848, inclusive."[638] For the general military, "Army records show that for every 1,800 soldiers treated by doctors between 1850 and 1890, 1,550 of them were treated for various diseases versus 250 wounds or injuries."[639] The decade before the Civil War, a "soldier stationed in Texas was ill more than three times a year. During this period 703 soldiers died, a mortality rate of about 3.5 percent."[640] During April 1842, Company A had three privates sick.[641] The next month there were still three men sick. That July, there were eleven men sick, among them Captain Blake.[642] During November, Companies A and I had a combined number of seventeen men sick.[643] April 1843 found Company A with three sick privates while Company I had five privates and Second Lieutenant Rogers ill.[644] During October 1843, Companies A, G, and I had a combined twenty-eight men sick, which included subalterns and noncommissioned officers.[645] The next April, the three companies had a total of fourteen men ill.[646] There were seven sick Second Dragoons during October 1844.[647] During April 1845, there were again seven sick soldiers of the Second Dragoons.[648] In *Advancing the Frontier: 1830*-1860, Foreman paraphrases and quotes an 1845 letter in which Captain Beall asks for reinforcements because at Fort Washita the Second Dragoons still had no horses and sickness had thinned the ranks.[649] Members of the Second Dragoons were presented as sick at Fort Washita even after the companies left for Texas. Also,

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[638] Lawson and Coolidge, *Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States,* 271.
[639] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 130.
[640] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 195.
[641] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1842.
[642] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," July of 1842.
[643] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," November of 1842.
[644] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1843.
[645] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," October of 1843.
[646] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1844.
[647] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," October of 1844.
[648] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," April of 1845.
[649] Benjamin Beall to Arbuckle, March 26, 1845, as quoted in Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Foreman: 1830-1860* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), 239.

there is a chance that not all of those marked as such on the Fort Washita returns were present at the post, but might have been at other instillations. The July 1842 post return had for Company A eleven men sick, and the regimental return had the same number except it reported that "1 Pvt sick at Fort Jesup 14 Jany 42. 2 Pvt sick at Fort Towson 1 June 42."[650] The number of sick men on the post returns does not always equal the number on the regimental returns. During April of 1843, the Fort Washita return had three sick privates for Company A while the Second Dragoons return showed seven sick privates for the company. Again, this may be because the sick were at other posts such as Fort Jesup or Fort Towson.

While there were sick men at Fort Washita, the number of Second Dragoons deaths at Fort Washita remains unclear. Between 1 July 1842 and 31 December 1848, "there were five deaths only—namely, two from remittent fever, one from acute dysentery, one from a gun-shot wound, and the fifth from delirium tremens."[651] The last cause of death "is a severe form of alcohol withdrawal that involved sudden and severe mental or nervous changes. . . Delirium tremens can occur when you stop drinking alcohol after a period of heavy drinking, especially if you do not eat enough food. Delirium tremens may also be caused by head injury, infection, or illness in people with a history of heavy alcohol use."[652] There is a chance that none of these five men were Second Dragoons soldiers. But, in the Fort Washita return for January 1843, Company A had one ordinary death though there was no name or cause of death on the form.[653] During August 1844, a Second Dragoons soldier died by accident, but again there was no name or description of the accident.[654] Another Second Dragoons soldier died during May 1845; yet again

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[650] "Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments 1833-1916," July of 1842.
[651] Lawson and Coolidge, *Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States,* 271.
[652] "Delirium Tremens: DTs; Alcohol withdrawal – delirium tremens," in *A.D.A.M. Encyclopedia*, National Center for Biotechnology Information and U.S. National Library of Medicine, http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001771/ (accessed March 18, 2013).
[653] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," January of 1843.
[654] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," August of 1844.

there was no name or report of how he died.[655] On the next month's post return, another Second Dragoons member died of an accident, but as with the others there was no description of the death.[656] Perhaps these men were not present at Fort Washita with their companies but were posted elsewhere. But, the Second Dragoon returns for those months contain no reports for deaths in the companies at Fort Washita. But, on 27 April 1843, Colonel Twiggs wrote to Adjutant General Roger Jones, "Your letter of the 8.th inst. in relation to Private Powell of 'A' Company, I had the honor to receive by the last Mail. I find upon examination that it was omitted to report his death to his Company Commander. The Return of 'A' Company was returned, however, the following Month for Corrections, and Powell's death noted by the Adjutant."[657] Due to Captain Blake's lack of awareness of Powell's death, the soldier was probably not at Fort Washita.

United States soldiers were buried in this post cemetery. After the American Civil War, the bodies were removed to Fort Gibson, thus the sign reads 1842-1872.
Photo by author.

A surgeon needed a structure in which to work. Fort Washita's "first hospital was a log building with two rooms and a detached kitchen. One of the rooms was a dispensary where the

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[655] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," May of 1845.
[656] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916," June of 1845.
[657] David E Twiggs to Roger Jones, April 27, 1843, "Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series) 1822-1860, Roll 277, S 225 – T 236, 1843," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1964), microfilm.

medical officer examined soldiers on sick call. The other room served as the ward for critically ill patients."[658] These structures' foundations are located between the parade ground and the entrance to the historic site. According to Penham, "Documentary evidence indicates that the hospital building dates from the early days of the fort's occupation and was occupied, with modifications, through at least the mid-1850's."[659] Penham quotes a couple of different letters from 1845 and 1847 about the size and condition of the fort, and he summarized about the hospital complex that "These two reports suggest a small, presumably log building in a north-south direction. It measured thirty-six feet in length by fourteen feet in width."[660] This was a small structure that at times was adequate for a small garrison. Yet, there were eras when a number of soldiers were sick at the same time. On 12 June 1845, Assistant Quartermaster General Stanton wrote to Second Lieutenant Rogers, "The Surgeon General has referred to this Office a letter addressed to him by Adjutant Surgeon J.C. Glen, covering a plan of a hospital proposed to be erected at Fort Washita. It is not deemed expedient to incur any expense in building or repairing quarters, hospital, &c, at your post except such as may be indispensably necessary."[661] Penham also quoted an officer who claimed that during the 1840s there was no hospital at Fort Washita.[662] Stanton's letter addressed that Glen wanted a hospital, but this was probably in reference to a new one, and not that there was no hospital present. No matter when the first hospital was constructed or its condition, the structure was not replaced by a new one until the 1850s.

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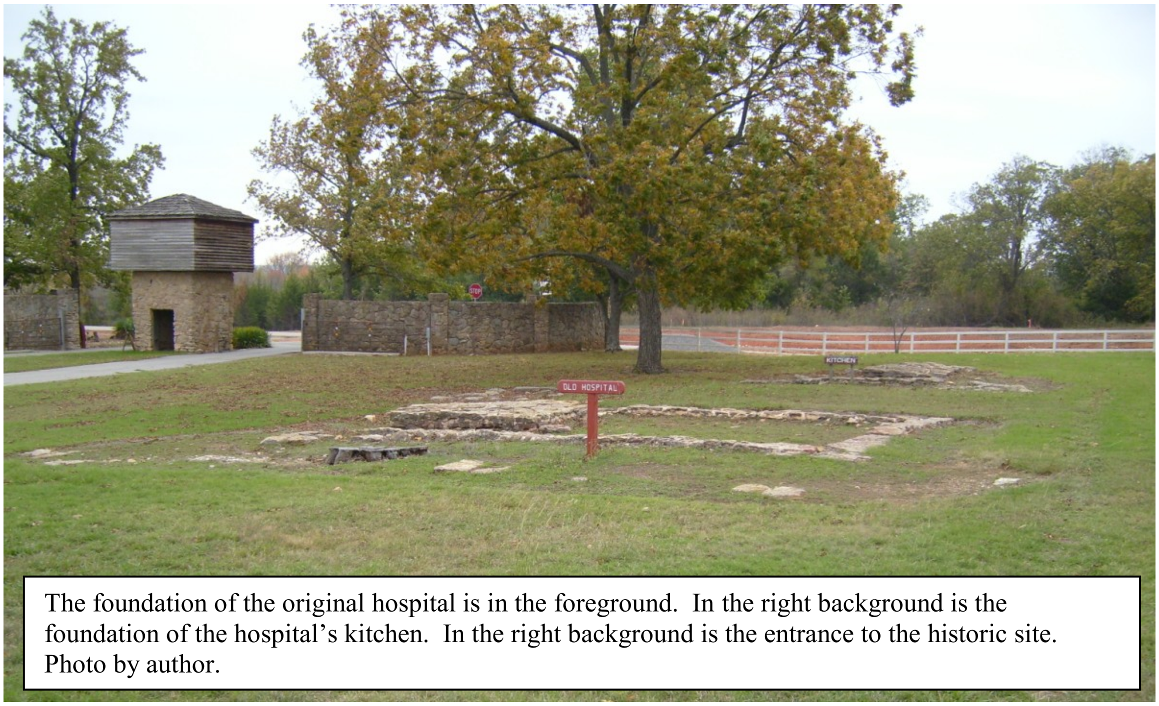
[658] *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide*.
[659] Penman, "Hospital Complex" in *Fort Washita from Past to Present: An Archeological Report*, ed. Kenneth E. Lewis (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1975), 145.
[660] Penman, "Hospital Complex" in *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 146.
[661] Henry Stanton to Daniel G. Rogers, June 12, 1845, "Letters Sent by the Office of the Quartermaster General Main Series 1818 – 1870, Roll 19, Volume 36, June 11, 1844-Aug. 7, 1845," Center for Research Libraries (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1968), microfilm, 565-566.
[662] Penman, "Hospital Complex" in *Fort Washita from Past to Present*, 146.



The foundation of the original hospital is in the foreground. In the right background is the foundation of the hospital's kitchen. In the right background is the entrance to the historic site. Photo by author.

Medical personnel were important in helping keep the soldiers healthy, and the historian can provide this information through demonstrations. The interpreter could setup a tent hospital with period style equipment and discuss what the different items were used for. This has been done by historians for the American Civil War period, and would be helpful in recreating the life of a Second Dragoons soldier and the illness and injuries he had.

CHAPTER XVII

DAUGHTERS, WIVES, AND WASHERWOMEN

Though men were generally the majority at a military post, there were sometimes women present. These women had their own lives at a fort. They typically were part of a soldier's family, as laundresses, both, or even prostitutes.

A soldier's family sometimes accompanied him to where he was stationed. Though she died at Fort Towson, Captain Beall had a daughter who perhaps lived with or visited him at Fort Washita. Commissioned officers' wives "generally came from middle-to-upper-class backgrounds. Collectively, officers' wives formed the elite of garrison society. Their greater wealth allowed them to access considerably more daily comforts—better food, better quarters."[663] Enlisted soldiers' wives may have also lived at the post. Some of these women would have "worked as servants for officers."[664] Wives did not really have any power at a post as they "were legally 'camp followers,' a generic term for all civilians with nonofficial functions on the post. Thus technically, the commanding officers of a fort had the authority to order any woman other than a laundress off the post."[665] It was an officer's wife who probably entertained important

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663 Robert Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers: Garrison Life on the Texas Frontier*, The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series 2 (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1987), 99.
664 Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 99.
665 Jeremy Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (Missoula, Missouri: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 2008), 115.

guests to a post. The women also made each other feel welcome.

Laundresses were a part of post life. These women actually received rations from the military. The amount of pay they earned for their work was "set by a board of officers. . . Some undoubtedly added prostitution to their list of services."[666] An officer generally paid more per month for his clothes to be washed than an enlisted man, which could have been five dollars versus two dollars.[667] During 1802, a company could have four laundresses.[668] In 1843, the number of laundresses was only two per company.[669]

Interpretive laundry stop during the annual fur trade rendezvous at Fort Washita.
Photo by author.

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[666] Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers*, 98.
[667] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 64.
[668] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 114.
[669] "Returns from U.S. Military Posts 1800-1916, Roll 1387; Fort Washita, Okla.; June 1834 – April 1861," Oklahoma State University (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 1965), microfilm, August of 1843. Note: On the return, it looks like it could be the word "laundresses" for two per company.

Life on a frontier military post was not easy for women, yet there were positive aspects. A wife looked after her family and was "viewed as lending moral tone to a post."[670] She had to endure the monotony of post life and being far away from family and friends. It was not easy to clean a uniform, yet a laundress generally did a good job.[671] She typically "washed the clothing of about fifteen to twenty men, so she usually made more money than a private."[672] This enabled a woman to earn a descent amount of money. Soldiers held these women in high esteem as there were so few females present. At some posts, women "accompanied their husbands to the sutler's store for entertainment or a game of billiards."[673]

Women at a post sometimes had a true home or at least a structure in which to live or work. An officer's wife probably lived with her husband in his quarters. A laundress was "entitled to army housing. . . The laundresses' quarters were usually pretty basic, typically a row of tents or wooden shacks located behind the stables and warehouses. These shanty towns were often nicknamed 'Soapsuds Row' or simply 'Suds Row.'"[674] But a laundress's quarters "depended on the whim of the commanding officer for the quality of. . . housing."[675] During 1844, at Fort Washita there existed "log huts for the camp women."[676] These huts were not likely well built, but were better than living in a tent. Today at Fort Washita, on the ridge leading westward away from the parade ground area, is a foundation marked as laundry which was originally a soldiers' barracks constructed about 1842.[677]

Historians need to present to visitors that men were not the only inhabitants of a post. The interpreter can show how women helped bring civilization to a post and cared for the men

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[670] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 192.
[671] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 65.
[672] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 114.
[673] Wooster, *Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers*, 192.
[674] Agnew, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier*, 114.
[675] Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers*, 98.
[676] Department of the Interior, United States National Park Service, *Fort Washita, Oklahoma: Special Report for National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings* (Santa Fe: 1965), 4.
[677] Oklahoma Historical Society, *Fort Washita Walking Tour Guide* (Department of Central Services).

through such activities as doing laundry. There are historical interpreters who show people, especially children, how women did laundry and even let the visitors take part.

The foundation of the laundress' quarters which was originally a barracks. Most likely women were hired to wash and care for the soldiers' clothing.
Photo by author.

CHAPTER XVIII

INTERPRETATION

Interpreting the life of Second Dragoons troops and other personnel at Fort Washita can be fun and challenging. An historical interpreter must remember and consider certain ideas about interpreting history. He or she must know the basic guidelines of interpretation, the different personas involved, and other issues.

The interpreter should be aware of the six guidelines that Freeman Tilden wrote about in *Interpreting our Heritage*. Tilden's first principle was "Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality of the visitor will be sterile."[678] The interpreter must decide what information to present in order to retain the visitor's attention.[679] Perhaps a visitor may be mostly interested in the soldier's cuisine, so through questions and other means the interpreter must be able to pick up on what interests the visitor. There are a few different ways to know if the interpreter has retained the visitor's attention. One way is if the visitor asks questions about the topic, which shows that the person wants to know more about the subject matter. Also, an interpreter might have a chance to use humor about the topic, and if the visitor laughs or smiles than the speaker knows that the listener is paying attention.

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[678] Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, Rev. ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 9.
[679] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 13.

Tilden discussed how interpretation and information are linked and unlinked. His second principle is "Information as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information."[680] Tilden discussed that information is basically facts where interpretation is more of the input of emotions and feelings into those facts. An interpreter must paint a verbal, and perhaps visual picture, of a Second Dragoons soldier's life and what he faced instead of just telling about dates and military facts.

When pursuing his or her craft, an interpreter is an artist. Tilden's third principle is that "Interpretation is an art, which combines arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable."[681] A good historical interpreter is able to convey the past through a sort of story form. Some interpreters know their facts and information but are not able to present them in a way that engages the visitors. Of course, some interpreters are able to tell a fun story, but they do not really know their information. Tilden believed that the interpreter needs to "dip into his artistic appreciation, give form and life to his material, and tell a story rather than recite an inventory."[682] An interpreter who recites only cold hard facts, such as names and dates, will bore the visitor.

The interpreter must be able to get the audience to react. Tilden's fourth principle was: "The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation."[683] The author wrote, "It is true that the visitors to these preserves [or historic sites] frequently desire straightforward information, which may be called instruction, and a good teacher will always be able to teach when called upon. But the purpose of Interpretation is to stimulate the reader or hearer toward a desire to widen his horizon of interests and knowledge, and to gain an understanding of the

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[680] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 9.
[681] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 9.
[682] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 29.
[683] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 9.

greater truths."[684] Perhaps a visitor might be so impressed by the determination and hard work of the dragoons that he or she might decide hard work should not be a thing of the past. Or, the visitor may be inspired to research his or her own ancestry and find out if anyone served in the military. Also, a visitor may realize the importance of the Second Dragoons and Fort Washita, and that it is an historic site worth preserving. The interpreter must find ways to allow the visitor to understand various ideas and act upon them.

An interpreter must be able to reach the whole visitor. Tilden wrote about the fifth principle, "Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part, and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase."[685] Furthermore, Tilden mentioned, "It is far better that the visitor to a preserved area, natural, historic, or prehistoric, should leave with one or more whole pictures in his mind, than with a mélange of information that leaves him in doubt as to the essence of the place, and even in doubt as to why the area has been preserved at all."[686] A visitor, for example, might leave the post with the idea that it was built in order for the federal government to keep its promise to protect Native Americans. But, if the visitor just remembers a few dates and names that do not mean anything, then that person does not have a whole picture in mind.

An interpreter must remember children when forming an interpretation. Tilden's principle number six is: "Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach."[687] He discusses things that children enjoy such as large items and objects that can be touched or smelled. Tilden also asserted that children absorb facts and they enjoy experiencing subjects outside of the classroom. An interpreter at Fort Washita can allow children hands-on

[684] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 33.
[685] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 9.
[686] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 41.
[687] Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage*, 9.

experiences such as washing clothes as women did in the 1840s, allowing them to drill as dragoons in dismounted formations, and allow them to touch reproduction uniform pieces such as a wool jacket. Perhaps, an interpreter discussing a quartermaster's duties can allow children to draw up their own plans for a fort, and this could become a mathematical exercise for older students. According to Rod King, visitors to the reconstructed Fort Wayne "are sometimes asked to participate by stirring stew, turning the spit, joining in a game, or being part of a mock wedding, funeral, or court martial."[688] While it seems court martials for Second Dragoons troops were held at other posts, perhaps one could be done for the sake of showing students how the procedure worked. Children are the future, so it is important for the interpreter to get them interested in history.

In *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, Beck and Cable expand on Tilden's principles. Their principle number seven is: "Every place has a history. Interpreters can bring the past alive to make the present more enjoyable and the future more meaningful."[689] The authors focus on doing living history and various problems interpreters face. For example, they write how "The facts about human actions do not change, but historians and society at large assign meanings and motives to historic deeds within their current frameworks. Society judges historical characters by this continually shifting framework and so our assessments of their actions shift."[690] The historian will have to decide whether or not to tell history as it actually happened, or give a watered down version of it.

Technology can be used for interpreting the past. Beck and Cable's principle number eight is: "High technology can reveal the world in exciting new ways. However, incorporating

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688 Rod King, "Fort Wayne: Soldiers Return to the 1816 Frontier Post," in *A Living History Reader: Volume I; Museums*, Jay Anderson (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1991), 46.
689 Larry Beck and Ted T. Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture* (Champaign, IL: Sagamore, Publishing, 1998), 10.
690 Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 90.

this technology into the interpretive program must be done with foresight and care."[691] The authors write how technology can be used, but it must be something visitors will enjoy doing, performs well, and a visitor can learn something from it.[692] Some historic places with museums have videos that people can watch to learn about the sites' histories. But, Fort Washita has a small museum in which it would be almost impossible to have a place where visitors could sit and watch a video. The authors discuss the use of other types of technology such as the internet. The Fort Washita Historic Site has a Facebook page, and this is being used to update the public about events. The authors conclude how "Although there will always be a place for personal contact and performance, computers and other high tech gadgets can be useful supplementary tools in the hands of thoughtful interpreters."[693]

Historians must have accurate information and know how long to talk. Principle number nine is: "Interpreters must concern themselves with the quantity and quality (selection and accuracy) of information presented. Focused, well-researched interpretation will be more powerful than a longer discourse."[694] The interpreter who discusses too much information can lose the visitor who had become overwhelmed with too many facts and cannot remember what was said. Also, the authors also write about staying away from myths about historical figures and places.

Interpreters must be able to adequately communicate with visitors. Beck and Cable's principle number ten is: "Before applying the arts in interpretation, the interpreter must be familiar with basic communication techniques. Quality interpretation depends on the interpreter's knowledge and skills, which should be developed continually."[695] The authors explain that while interpretation is a form of art, "basic elements of public speaking—such as body language, voice

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[691] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.
[692] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 101-102.
[693] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 113.
[694] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.
[695] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.

control, and presentation structure—must be developed before an interpreter proceeds to artistry."[696] For example, an interpreter must be able to speak clearly and loud enough where everyone in a group can hear the speaker. The authors also discuss proper body language, such as not crossing one's arms as this is a sign of "self-consciousness, a symbolic barrier between you and the audience."[697] Also, an interpreter needs to know what he is talking about instead of stumbling with words while trying to remember the information.

If an interpreter has to write information, he or she should be able to properly do so. Principle number eleven is: "Interpretive writing should address what readers would like to know, with the authority of wisdom and the humility and care that comes with it."[698] An interpreter must write about the site and be inspired to write.[699] A writer must also be able to write without adding details that will bog down the reader, decide whether or not to use quotes, and proper use of humor.[700] So, an interpreter writing perhaps a pamphlet about Fort Washita should give basic information about the site without too many details, such as all of the times an officer was in charge of the commissary.

Interpreters must be able to get backing for their site and programs. Beck and Cable in principle number twelve express: "The overall interpretive program must be capable of attracting support—financial, volunteer, political, administrative—whatever support is needed for the program to flourish."[701] Without support, historians will be unable to produce interpretive programs, much less remain open. Welcoming and working with other historians, politicians, and organizations will help to ensure a site's success as these people can help not only with funding but promote events and programs. These people could even volunteer time during special events such as directing parking or helping with the office. Blake and Cable do warn that problems can

[696] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century* 127.
[697] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 130.
[698] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.
[699] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 138-139.
[700] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 140-143.
[701] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.

arise over controversial issues and some interpreters skip over these issues.[702] One example is about government removal of the Native Americans from the east of the Mississippi River, yet this controversial topic is discussed at Fort Washita.

Visitors must be inspired to focus on the site for what it is. Principle number thirteen is: "Interpretation should instill in people the ability, and the desire, to sense the beauty in their surroundings—to provide spiritual uplift and to encourage resource preservation."[703] Blake and Cable do warn that beauty is in the eye of the beholder.[704] The authors discuss different ideas about beauty in nature, for example "it encompasses all of our senses. The smell of the forest after the rain. The breath of a cool alpine breeze. The song of a meadowlark or trembling aspen leaves."[705] Fort Washita is in a rural setting, and so visitors to the site will get to experience the countryside through florae, birds, deer, and at night the stars as there is not a glare from city lights. This will also remind visitors how it was when the Second Dragoons were posted at Fort Washita. If visitors are impressed by the beauty of the site, then they will want to see it preserved for future generations.

Historians should allow visitors to have the best experience possible. Beck and Cable's principle number fourteen is: "Interpreters can promote optimal experiences through intentional and thoughtful program and facility design."[706] A site should be a place where visitors can relax and not become stressful.[707] Also, "Interpreters must understand the *purpose* and ramifications of what they are doing. To assist interpreters in understanding both their privileges and obligations is the intent of this book. Without a sense of professional purpose we lose direction. We also

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[702] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 161-162.
[703] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.
[704] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 165.
[705] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 167.
[706] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 11.
[707] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 178.

lose motivation."[708] Fort Washita should be a place where visitors can relax and be taught the site's history by interpreters.

Finally, interpretation should include passion. Principle number fifteen is: "Passion is the essential ingredient for powerful and effective interpretation—passion for the resource and for those people who come to be inspired by the same."[709] The interpreter must have passion for the site. People who have worked at or volunteered at Fort Washita tend to love the site and want to see it continue and grow as a site. Also, historical interpreters should enjoy interacting with people and instilling in them their love for the site.

The true historical interpreter is not merely a reenactor, but somebody who is able to properly communicate what is known about the past. There are many reenactors who have incorrect knowledge and equipment for eras they represent, and some are more interested in merely being in battle then educating the public. But, in comparison an historical interpreter is often trained to properly and accurately present history to the public and should want to readily discuss history with the public. Some interpreters not only get a bachelor degree in history, but continue their education to understand how to inform the average person about the past.

Learning about the Second Dragoons at an historic site instead of a classroom can bring history alive to children and adults alike. For some people, there is an aura about learning history where it occurred rather than in a classroom or inside of a normal a museum. John Fortier wrote, "The potential for outdoor museums to attract and involve visitors gives them an advantage in communicating that many institutions envy."[710] Today, Fort Washita's structures from 1842 to 1845 are in ruins, yet some of the original foundations remain visible. This allows a visitor to

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[708] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 183.
[709] Beck and Cable, *Interpretation for the 21st Century*, 10.
[710] John Fortier, "Louisbourg: Managing a Moment in Time," in *A Living History Reader: Volume I; Museums*, 37.

realize he or she is walking upon the same ground as the post's garrison. The interpreter should work closely with the teacher so what is presented compliments what is taught at the school.

An interpreter should indeed work with teachers to assure students learn from the program. In *Breaking Away from the Textbook: A Creative Approach to Teaching American History*, Shelly Kintisch and Wilma Cordero pose a number of questions and outline activities that can be used by students studying American or Oklahoma history. Teachers can ask questions on tests relating to the information learned at the site, such as the Second Dragoons began construction of Fort Washita to defend the Choctaws and Chickasaws from Plains Indians and Anglos. The school or interpreter can provide students with basic maps that show how far the Choctaws and Chickasaws had to relocate from their traditional lands to Indian Territory, or how much territory the United States military had to police.

The interpreter must decide what information to convey about the Second Dragoons companies at Fort Washita and the people around them. An interpreter must decide if he or she wants to give graphic examples of the diseases a dragoon could have suffered, or just give a general description that a soldier got sick and would have had to visit the hospital. To decide on how much to tell, the interpreter will need to take into account the age and character of the visitors. Again, visitors' questions can determine how much to develop the topic at hand. There many possible topics, such as officers, enlisted men, and women, an historian can interpret. However, he or she must decide which ones will be most effective under the circumstances as there will generally not be enough time or staff to interpret every part of Second Dragoons post life. Perhaps historians can decide to group together certain topics. For example, interpreters may group together themes about post commanders, commissioned officers, noncommissioned officers, and medical officers which have an officer theme. Another theme could be enlisted men and have interpretative stops for noncommissioned officers, enlisted men, drilling, blacksmiths, and farriers. A non-dragoon theme could consist of medical officer, women, and sutler. A theme that could consist of students doing mathematics would be the commissary and quartermaster as these men had to oversee supplies and constructing Fort Washita. Or a general dragoon life theme might have the guard house, medical officer, enlisted men, and drilling.

An interpreter must decide how much to generalize. According to the *National Park Service Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education*, "Programs must illustrate and interpret one or more of the park themes as defined in the park's Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP). Generic living history programs with no direct tie to the park's interpretive themes such as candle dipping demonstrations at a site where candles were not used are not appropriate."[711] Sometimes information that pertains to the daily life of post's garrison is lacking, and thus what would be appropriate is hard to decide. Also, the NPS stated, "Living history programs must have a reputable research base for the information conveyed in the program and for the character(s) to be portrayed, the clothing and objects to be used, and the validity of the overall impression. . . Presentations including imaginary characters or scenarios based on speculations are not acceptable. Imaginary characters or scenarios supported by reliable documentation are appropriate."[712] To an extent this can be done at Fort Washita as information exists about dragoon uniforms and even some of the officers, including Lieutenant Colonel Harney. While, not a lot is known about the Second Dragoons enlisted men at Fort Washita from 1842 to 1845, by using general military life from the same era a person can better understand post life. Fortier wrote how an interpreter focused on a specific time period "forces both researchers and interpreters to be more exact. They cannot stop with concepts and generalizations. They must

[711] National Park Service, "National Park Service Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education: Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6 (June 1, 2009): Chapter #8: Living History," http://www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/upload/DO%206%20RM%206%20Living%20History%20r.pdf (accessed February 13, 2013).
[712] National Park Service, "National Park Service Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education: Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6 (June 1, 2009): Chapter #8: Living History," http://www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/upload/DO%206%20RM%206%20Living%20History%20r.pdf (accessed February 13, 2013).

verify the smallest detail of architecture, furnishing, and activities."[713] Colonel Croghan's reports provide a brief glimpse of the condition and setup of Fort Washita while Second Dragoons were present. In "A Living Historian's Primer on Education," Gerry Barker wrote:

> As reenactors or historical interpreters, we are constantly under fire from the academic historians for the flaws in our accuracy. There have been many examples of sloppy history in our past. . . . It is easy to engineer a story/presentation that explains why one individual is presenting a particular skill, situation or environment. We just need to make sure we do not stray too far into fantasy. . . . I maintain the accuracy by talking about something my character had done in the past. Or I tailor my character to something I could realistically be, such as a wagoner.[714]

Also, an interpreter may not always know exactly what type of furniture and equipment was used at a site, and so they may have to use general items based in that era. So, an interpreter has to decide whether or not to generalize, and if so how much. A site such as Fort Washita that does not have much available information on daily life, will probably have to be presented in a generalized fashion in order to allow visitors to learn about military life during the 1840s.

It is also important to decide what type of interpretation technique to use. One is that of the first person which "is basically a skit or presentation that ignores the audience. They are witnessing a part of history through a window. The public cannot interact."[715] Barker explained that some first person interpretation allows the interpreter to talk to the visitor. If an interpreter chooses first person, he or she "should employ that individual's actual documented words as much as possible. Interpreters should not usurp a known individual's character and identity to the point that they can presume that they can 'speak for' that character on a wide range of topics."[716] Barker also discussed second person interpretation in which "the 'you' is the audience that you are bringing into the past. We have done this by including students/participants in historic

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[713] Fortier, "Louisbourg: Managing a Moment in Time," 40.
[714] Gerry Barker, "A Living Historian's Primer on Education: Living History has the Immediacy and Excitement of Live Theater," *Muzzleloader*, January/February 2013, 39.
[715] Barker, "A Living Historian's Primer on Education," 39.
[716] National Park Service, "National Park Service Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education: Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6 (June 1, 2009): Chapter #8: Living History," http://www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/upload/DO%206%20RM%206%20Living%20History%20r.pdf (accessed February 13, 2013).

activities in which they take part."[717] Then there is third person interpretation where the interpreter does not pretend to be from the past, but rather tells about it. In this technique, it is easier to compare the past to modern items and refer to issues that a visitor already knows about. Third person interpretation would be more general, and therefore easier to present with the interpreter having more freedom to interact with the visitor.

It is appropriate for an interpreter--whether using first, second, third person--to wear period clothing, though there are some issues in its use. Fortier discusses how primarily for first person interpreters, costumes sometimes have "a crisis of identity—our own identity. . . Meanwhile, Louisbourg's costumed staff is now told that there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that they are twentieth century employees of Parks Canada."[718] According to the NPS, a person's use of period clothing should not be to boost "visitation or gratifying the role-playing desires of park staff or volunteers."[719] But, interpreters wearing period clothing bring a visual to the visitors who can picture, for example, what the people would have worn at Fort Washita during the early 1840s. Historic sites sometimes struggle for attendance, and the use of clothed interpreters for at least special events potentially boosts visitation. Also, there are people who enjoy wearing period clothing, and so it could be an advantage using these people who are willing to do so. An interpreter must decide how often they will use period clothing. Doing it too often makes a visitor weary of coming to a site and seeing the same thing. Mainly period dress interpretation for school groups and special events is potentially the most appropriate plan.

The interpreter wanting to use period clothing will face several challenges and options obtaining the proper clothing and equipment. An interpreter has to decide whether to make or purchase the clothing. If he or she chooses the latter option, the person will have to decide what

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[717] Barker, "A Living Historian's Primer on Education," 40.
[718] Fortier, "Louisbourg: Managing a Moment in Time," 40.
[719] National Park Service, "National Park Service Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education: Interpretation and Education Reference Manual 6 (June 1, 2009): Chapter #8: Living History," http://www.nps.gov/indu/parkmgmt/upload/DO%206%20RM%206%20Living%20History%20r.pdf (accessed February 13, 2013).

companies to purchase from as these businesses vary. Some have high prices and others do not carry historically accurate items. Some equipment, such as the Hall Carbine, are hard to find, and if so, only as expensive reproductions if not originals. Weapons can be dangerous, so an interpreter might decide to not carry them or have non-firing reproductions. The interpretation, of course, could include information about how dangerous these weapons were to the men who wielded them, such as the officers who died from their own pistols and sabers. To properly portray a dragoon, an interpreter needs a horse which can be expensive. A horse is also dangerous as it can kick or run over people.

The staff of a historic site must decide how to promote its interpretive programs. Fortier wrote, "I concede that living-history programs have often been launched with a lot of hype, which has made them sound like some kind of communications breakthrough. On the other hand, these expensive claims are often not made by museum workers but by the media, feature writers, or tourism promoters."[720] So, interpreters should be careful a program is not presented as something it is really not. Interpretive staff could write a weekly column in a local newspaper that describes what is happening at the site and what visitors can see. Also, staff and media should carefully describe exactly what is happening at the post so the visitor is not expecting something that does not actually exist. According to Barker, "For most educational events, advertising takes the form of letters to schools that explain what is going to be available. The most effective will link the program to that school district's requirements. Personal visits or visits by costumed reenactors are another very effective way to attract an audience."[721]

[720] Fortier, "Louisbourg: Managing a Moment in Time," 37.
[721] Barker, "A Living Historian's Primer on Education," 44.

CHAPTER XIX

CONCLUSION

At Fort Washita, the Second Dragoons soldiers' lives were most likely routine, yet they were important to the post. From the commissioned officers down to the average enlisted man, each had his own duties to perform and life to live. If an interpreter decides to teach the public about the soldiers, than he or she must be aware of a number of ideas and issues that help in properly interpreting history.

The Second Dragoons companies at Fort Washita were there for defense of Native Americans. Though few problems arose, the soldiers had to be ready in case Plains Indians decided to raid the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations recently removed from east of the Mississippi River. The soldiers also kept an eye on any problems arising from Anglos who wanted to cause trouble among the Native Americans.

Commissioned officers held various vital positions at Fort Washita. Captain Blake, Major Fauntleroy, Captain Beall, and Lieutenant Colonel Harney served as post commanders and had to make decisions ranging from defense preparations to what time the men awoke. Officers, such as Second Lieutenant Rogers, distributed supplies and designed the post. Other officers oversaw the post guard and took care of paperwork.

Non-commissioned officers were vital in overseeing enlisted soldiers. These officers held ranks from corporal to sergeant major. They gave commands to the soldiers and helped commissioned officers with paperwork. Among the non-commissioned officers were the musicians, which for dragoons were buglers. These men used the bugle to signal orders to the troops.

The bulk of troops at Fort Washita were enlisted men. They had daily routines which included grooming horses and drilling. Soldiers often constructed their own barracks made of logs, which some of the troops had to haul to the post if not actually cut down. Without enlisted men there would have been no army to guard Indian Territory.

Blacksmiths and farriers were important to any type of military unit, but more so to the mounted dragoons. A blacksmith could make items out of metal such as nails, or repair metal items that had broken. For a new post being built, nails and other items were vital. A dragoon's horse needed metal horseshoes properly affixed, and it was the farrier who shod the animals.

Other people interacted with the dragoons on a regular basis. Post surgeons cared for sick soldiers. Though surgeons did not always know about proper care of sick men, at least by today's standards, the medical men often tried their best to help ailing soldiers. A sutler ran a store where soldiers could purchase items the military did not provide, such as combs. Most likely women would have been about the post either as wives or laundresses. These laundresses cared for soldiers' clothing. Some of these women might have even been prostitutes.

Interpreters must be aware of basic principles when teaching about dragoons' lives. The interpreter must be aware of their type of audience such as adults or children. Each audience experiences the world on two different mental levels. Some organizations such as the National Park Service allow first person interpretation based fully on a historical character with nothing added, where some feel that first person through a fictional character based on historical ideas is appropriate. Third person might be a better way to interpret the past at some sites. An interpreter doing first person cannot use items or issues of today's world as examples of past ideas and is not supposed to add ideas to his or her character. But, third person allows for explaining the past through modern ideas and allows for more generality, thus making it an easier for interpretation. These are guidelines an interpreter must know and decide which to use.

An interpreter must also decide how detailed his or her equipment should be. The interpreter may decide to wear period clothing, which for the dragoon would consist of the dress, winter fatigue and summer fatigue uniforms. An interpreter does not necessarily need all three uniforms and may just decide on the winter fatigue uniform. However it would be inaccurate to wear it during the summer. The interpreter could explain that he is in winter fatigue and that white would be worn in the summer. Some items, such as the 1833 saber, can be found as reproductions, yet the Hall Carbine is really only available as originals. These items can be expensive. Real weapons are dangerous, such as a saber's point can penetrate skin, and guns just loaded with gunpowder when fired can cause serious injuries if not death. These are issues the interpreter must consider when trying to put together an outfit and equipment.

The Second Regiment of United States Dragoons is an important part of history and the men who made up the unit deserve to be remembered. They protected the nations of both the United States and Native Americans. Though the soldiers often lived dull lives, they had their own interests just like people today. If these troopers are not worth remembering, than who or what really is?

This study allows the interpreter to understand different themes and ideas that are part of interpreting the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita. The interpreter should understand that a soldier had a number of duties to perform, from commanding a post to building the structures of that post. Also, he or she will know about the different types of clothing, equipment, and weapons used by the Second Dragoons during the 1840s. The interpreter also is aware of the issues a person faces when doing interpretation, such as getting the proper clothing and deciding what persona to use. While there is probably still more information hidden in the back of the National Archives, libraries, and people's personal collections over the Second Dragoons at Fort Washita, this work provides a guideline for interpreting dragoons' lives at Fort Washita and as a starting place for further research. What began as a child's fascination with the past has become a work of art.

Author at Fort Washita Historic Site during October 2009.
Photo by author.

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