

Lonely Sentinel

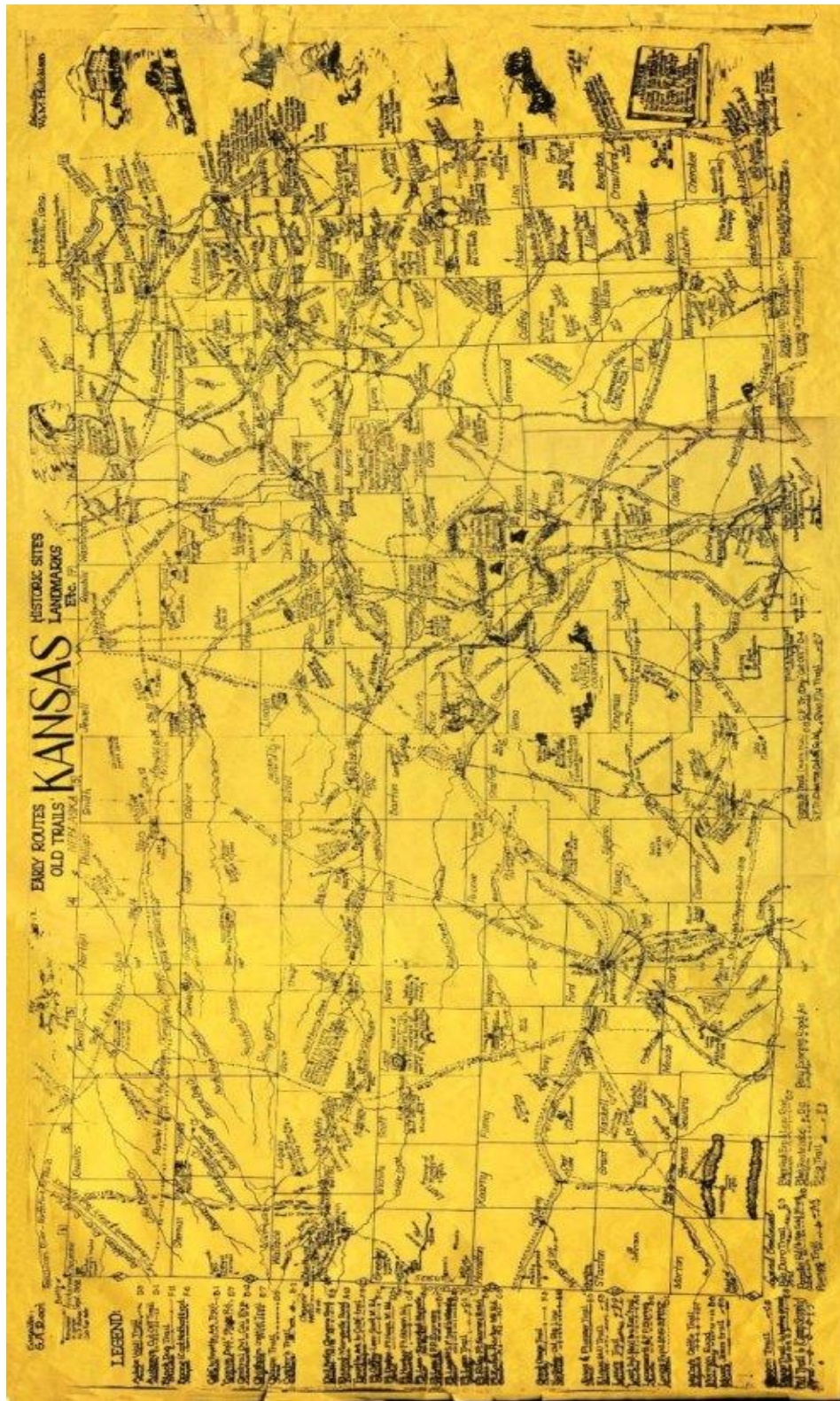
Fort Aubrey and the Defense of the Kansas Frontier, 1864-1866



Defending the Fort: Indians attack a U.S. Cavalry post in the 1870s (colour litho), Schreyvogel, Charles (1861-1912) / Private Collection / Peter Newark Military Pictures / Bridgeman Images

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This study examines Fort Aubrey, a Civil War-era frontier post in Syracuse Township, Hamilton County, and the men who served there. The findings are based upon government and archival documents, newspaper and magazine articles, personal reminiscences, and numerous survey works written on the subjects of the United States Army and the American frontier.



Map of Kansas featuring towns, forts, trails, and landmarks. SOURCE: Kansas Historical Society. Note: This 1939 map was created by George Allen Root and later reproduced by the Kansas Turnpike Authority. The original drawing was compiled by Root and delineated by W. M. Hutchinson using information provided by the Kansas Historical Society.

Introduction

By the summer of 1864, Americans had been killing each other on an epic scale for three years. As the country tore itself apart in a “great civil war,” momentous battles were being waged at Mansfield, Atlanta, Cold Harbor, and a host of other locations. These killing grounds would become etched in history for their tales of bravery and sacrifice, but, in the West, there were only sporadic clashes between Federal and Confederate forces. Encounters at Valverde in New Mexico Territory, Mine Creek in Linn County, Kansas, and Sabine Pass in Texas were the exception rather than the norm. While martial glory and fame was won in Louisiana, Georgia or Virginia, the soldiers on the Kansas frontier saw a far different kind of service. Their war was one of surviving inconclusive skirmishes with hostile Indians, braving the harsh elements, and enduring the loneliness of isolated, wind-swept forts. One such post, Fort Aubrey, reconstituted from the earlier Camp Wynkoop, was located on Spring Creek, about 300 yards from its junction with the Arkansas River. This point lies seven miles east of Syracuse in present-day Hamilton County. In the 1870s, as the area was about to be settled, the land above the river was considered good soil with sufficient rainfall, wells producing water at a depth of 30 to 40 feet, and a trifling amount of timber along the river and one sandy creek. Below, the country was mostly bare sand hills. Men from Colorado, Wisconsin, Missouri, and scores of lands around the world spent a portion of their time in uniform defending this ground. This is their story.¹

Background

Francois Xavier Aubrey (or Aubry) was the namesake for the military post that would become Fort Aubrey. A French-Canadian by birth, he came to Independence, Missouri in the early 1840s. While the war with Mexico was raging, he was on hand to see the expansion of overland freighting to Santa Fé. Aubrey soon involved himself in the lucrative carrying trade as goods

traveled over 800 miles of road from Missouri river towns to New Mexico. Making two or three excursions per year while the conventional trader made only one, Aubrey was the first man to pilot a supply train over the trail during the winter. He traveled extensively over the Cimarron Cutoff on the arid *Jornada* route, but he was always interested in making shorter, faster, and thus more financially beneficial trips. In one round-trip between Santa Fé and Independence during the months of September and October 1851, he blazed a new route by leaving the trail at Cold Spring in contemporary Cimarron County, Oklahoma, following the divide between the Raton and Cimarron rivers, and traversing the Arkansas River approximately 60 miles above the traditional Cimarron Crossing. The new ford came to be called Aubrey's Crossing.²

Santa Fe Trail historian Eugene P. Burr said of the Aubrey Cutoff and its abundant advantages:

This trail, known appropriately as the Aubry Route, had two termini—Cold Spring on the south and Aubry Spring on the north ... It was a better cutoff than the Mountain Route of the Santa Fe Trail and the Cimarron Route because it was better watered. Nowhere along the trail was the distance between water more than thirty miles, meaning the travelers were assured of having water at least every other day. Also, there was less Indian trouble. The area was barren without natural shelter, contributing to a lack of game, and thus not suited for Indian hunting grounds. It was also somewhat shorter, and Aubry thought it easier to travel than the Cimarron Cutoff.³

Aubrey's Crossing, as well as Aubrey Spring and the site of Fort Aubrey, is located in section 23, township 24, range 40 west of modern-day Hamilton County.⁴ Reportedly now a wheat field, the land on which Fort Aubrey sat is privately owned and the titleholder, Irvin David Brownlee, passed away in October 2015 while this study was being prepared. Due to the family's personal tragedy, and difficulties in finalizing appointments with local historians, attempts to gain access to the site proved unsuccessful. The fort and the surrounding Arkansas River country are displayed below in Figure 1.

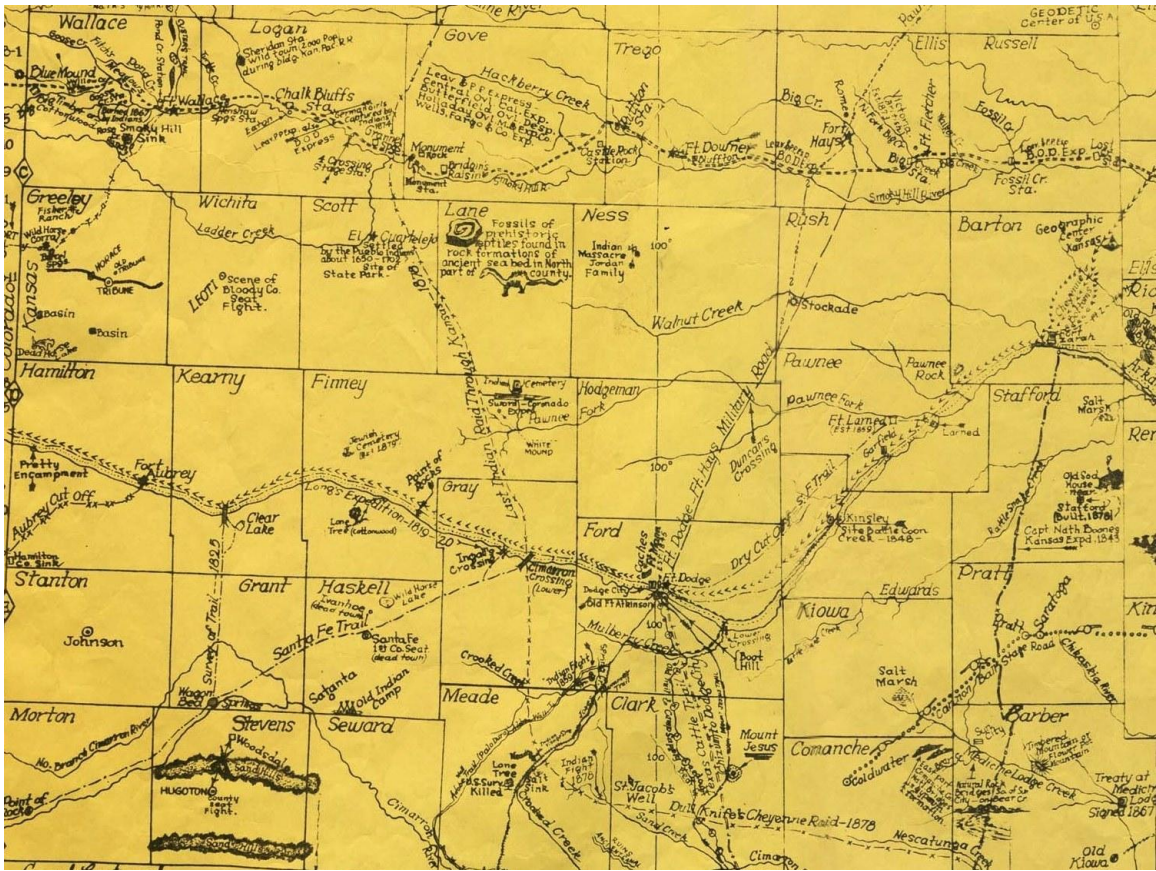


Figure 1: Southwestern corner of George Allen Root's map of Kansas.
 SOURCE: Kansas Historical Society.

In 1861, when the sectional conflict compelled the War Department to redeploy the Regular Army's regiments to the East, their place on the frontier line was filled by state volunteer troops. The need for these citizen-soldiers was great as increased Indian depredations required a corresponding rise in the quantity of forts. In 1860, the total number of frontier posts was 73. Four of these were located in Kansas. Four years later, the number had increased to 101, with five in the Sunflower State. The Indian threat would be countered, although not eradicated, by the judicious use of military escorts, patrols, and campaigns, and the creation of these additional forts. The army post of this era can be placed in two distinct categories: the permanent fort and the temporary camp or outpost. Both were often merely unfortified buildings and tents,

and strategically positioned to restrain Indian tribes and defend emigrant wagon trains, remote stage and telegraph stations, mines, burgeoning settlements, and commerce and communications routes linking the frontier to the East. Garrisons of the first group included Fort Leavenworth, which stood at the crossroads of main thoroughfares to the West. In addition, Forts Riley, Harker, Hays, and Wallace protected travelers on the Smoky Hill trail, while Forts Zarah, Larned, Dodge, and Lyon kept vigil over the Santa Fé Trail. Those of the second class comprise among their number Camp Wynkoop and its successor, Fort Aubrey, and fulfilled the needs of a short-term strategy.⁵

Assigned to command the Union Department of Kansas on January 1, 1864, and headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Major-General Samuel Ryan Curtis was worried his right flank was exposed to potential Confederate incursions from Texas and Indian Territory. While emissaries of both the Union and the Confederacy sought to establish alliances with the Plains tribes, most Indians instead chose to use the internecine conflict to rid themselves of all white interlopers. As time passed, warriors became more determined, and less restrained, in their efforts to drive the white men from the buffalo ranges. Later in the year, raids were believed to threaten Fort Larned, on the south bank of Pawnee Fork, and Fort Lyon, west of William Bent's new fort in Colorado. Curtis responded by shifting troops from the Platte River line to the Arkansas. Fortunately, the rumors proved to be false. Faced with a possible advance into western Missouri by Confederate General Sterling Price, Curtis became intent on maintaining his left flank and so was unmindful of the brewing Indian conflict.⁶

The construction of Camp Wynkoop, and the later Fort Aubrey, was due to the Cheyenne War of 1864. The origins of the clash may be found in actions taken by local political and military leaders to maintain a federal presence, and their respective power bases, in Colorado.

The driving force of this policy was the colonel of the First Colorado Cavalry, Methodist preacher John Minton Chivington. An egotistical, politically ambitious Indian-hater, the militarily able “Fighting Parson” had assumed command of the District of Colorado in November 1862. Together with Curtis’ preoccupation concerning Confederate movements in Missouri, Arkansas, and Indian Territory, and bushwhackers in Kansas, the federal command arrangement allowed Chivington, headquartered in Denver, to have a great deal of latitude. Another key figure in this study, Major Edward Wanshear Wynkoop, took command of Fort Lyon on May 9, 1864.⁷

To further his schemes, Chivington pressured his subordinates to take aggressive measures. While attempting to recover livestock reportedly stolen by Cheyennes along the Platte, Second Lieutenant Clark Dunn, commanding Company C, First Colorado Cavalry, attacked a small band of Dog Soldiers on April 12 near Fremont’s Orchard. The next day, First Lieutenant George S. Eayre, Company K of the same regiment, drove Crow Chief and his band from their camp on the Republican River, and skirmished with other Cheyennes near Fort Larned on May 16. Major Jacob Downing and a squadron of the First Colorado struck a Cheyenne encampment at Cedar Bluffs near the American Ranch on May 3. Indian raids were conducted along the military road between Forts Riley and Larned, but the level of violence was relatively mild.⁸

Nevertheless, the mounting Indian unrest was hindering the conveyance of the U.S. mails between Riley and Larned, and General Curtis ordered Chivington to address the issue. The colonel was also cognizant of potential Rebel activity on the western flank. In addition to sending ten companies to the Santa Fé Trail, the colonel ordered Wynkoop to post a strong picket camp on the Arkansas River near the southeastern line of Colorado under the command of a reliable officer.⁹

Camp Wynkoop

First Lieutenant Luther Wilson and a detachment of Company F, First Colorado were instructed to carry out the colonel's orders. An outpost was established at Aubrey's Crossing 60 miles east of Fort Lyon and called Camp Wynkoop in the major's honor. Scouts were immediately sent out in the direction of the Red River. Wilson was also wary of a Cheyenne camp that had been erected in the vicinity. The companies of the First Colorado were permanently assigned either to Fort Lyon or Fort Larned, and time spent at Camp Wynkoop would be considered temporary duty. An abstract of Fort Lyon's monthly returns concerning Wilson provide an example: "May 64. Absent on [Detached Service] at Camp Wynkoop 80 miles [sic] below this post on the Ark. River."¹⁰

Since provisional assignments are often not reflected in the available service records, identifying individual enlisted soldiers at the camp is problematic. Instead, a general discussion of the men who volunteered for service in the First Colorado cavalry regiment may be helpful. The origin of the outfit began with the First Colorado Infantry in 1861. This latter regiment was created as Regular Army troops were being withdrawn to fight on battlefields east of the Missouri River. New Mexico Territory, which encompassed contemporary Arizona, New Mexico, and the southern edge of Nevada, was protected by a mixed force of regular foot soldiers and volunteer infantry and cavalry. Opposing them would be two invasion forces from Texas. Dispatched to New Mexico to help defend the territory, the First Colorado Volunteers was a "tough, semi-disciplined outfit, composed largely of individualistic adventurers, miners, and saloon brawlers." True of volunteers from other states who would serve at Aubrey's Crossing, the Colorado soldiers went to war for various personal reasons, including "initial war enthusiasm, the example of friends and associates, financial need (or greed), a fear of future

conscription, a sense of duty, and a vaguely-defined but strongly-felt love of country and hatred of those who seemed determined to destroy it.” They would play a pivotal role at the battle of Glorieta Pass. Upon returning from New Mexico in 1862, the Colorado infantrymen reorganized into the First Colorado Cavalry.¹¹

The men who would garrison Camp Wynkoop were drawn from those tens of thousands who had flocked west in the Pike’s Peak gold rush that climaxed in 1859. The prospectors who came to seek their fortunes in the mountain streams, and the entrepreneurs who satisfied their needs for supplies or entertainment, came from all over the world. Seventy percent of Colorado’s thirty thousand non-Indian residents hailed from northern states and territories, including New York, Vermont, Illinois, and California. In addition, “Pike’s Peakers” emigrated from Great Britain and various European countries. Although the territory was formally, and aggressively, pro-Union, secessionist sentiment was propagated by those from Virginia, Georgia, the Carolinas, Mississippi, and Texas.¹²

These “’59ers” lived and worked in demanding conditions. Prior to embarking across the plains, the last town of significance was St. Joseph, Missouri, and the trip from there to the Colorado goldfields took weeks by stagecoach. Even if one survived the dangers of crossing the empty prairie, fording rivers, and braving the elements, there were still hostile Indians with which to contend. Many who came west met a grisly end as wagon trains were attacked, the livestock stolen, and men, women, and children slaughtered. As author Flint Whitlock said, “Indeed, anyone who worked the gold and silver mines in the early days was a special breed of man—tough, resilient, resourceful, unafraid.”¹³ These were the type of soldiers who protected Aubrey’s Crossing.

On May 29, Major Wynkoop instructed scouts be sent in the direction of Fort Larned in order to obtain all available information. The same day, Chivington ordered the reinforcement of Camp Wynkoop with a company or two. He further directed Lieutenant Wilson to break up the gangs smuggling whiskey to the Indians even if he had to “break the neck of the offender.” Two days later, Chivington commanded Wilson to be vigilant for the presence of Comanches and Kiowas who might be after government stock.¹⁴

In early June, Wilson warned Wynkoop of a possible approach by Confederate Texans with the intent of assaulting Fort Lyon. Amid more rumors, these whispering of Kiowa depredations in the Fort Larned area, the major sent Captain David L. Hardy and a detachment of Company M on June 4 to reinforce Wilson. The captain’s instructions were to extend a semicircular line of pickets from Camp Wynkoop stretching in a southeastern direction toward the Red River. He was there for only a short time, though, before he went on leave. The remainder of Company F was ordered to the camp and, on June 16, Wilson was directed to assume command of the entire outfit upon its arrival. Four days later, Wilson reported sighting two men on the Arkansas who were believed to be Texan scouts, but the threatened Rebel attack evidently came to nothing. By the end of June, Hardy and Wilson had returned to Fort Lyon and, on July 16, Captain Isaac Gray and Company E were ordered to take over manning the camp. An example of the records that show Gray’s temporary assignment is seen in Figure 2 below.¹⁵

G | *1 Cav.* | *Colo.*

+ *Gray*

Capt Co. E. 1 Cav. of Col.

Return

of Fort Lyon, Colo. Ter.,

for the month of *July*, 186*4*.

dated *July 31*, 186*4*.

shows the following with regard to the person named above :

Post or station

Remarks:

left this Post with his Co. E. for Camp Nymphokop Co. T. via S. A. M. 11th Reg. Fort Lyon Co. T. July 16. 1864

.....

.....

.....

+ Taken from remarks

Book mark:

.....

J. Merchant

(546) Copyist.

Figure 2: Abstract of monthly return of Fort Lyon, Colorado Territory for July 1864. SOURCE: Compiled Service Records. Note: Army regulations required each post submit a monthly return to the Adjutant General. These forms reported the units stationed at each post, the strength of each unit, names and assignments of officers, number of officers and enlisted men present and absent, a catalog of official communications received, and a record of events.

At the same time, Chivington's bellicose policies had resulted in the murder of several peaceful Indians and further exacerbated the tense situation. Cheyennes retaliated and the plunder they brought back to their camps encouraged young Kiowa, Comanche, Sioux, and

Arapaho warriors to also take to the warpath. All along the Platte, the Smoky Hill, and the Arkansas rivers, raiders struck stagecoaches and wagon trains, burned ranches and stage stations, stole hundreds of head of livestock, and killed scores of people. On July 21, General Curtis rushed to Fort Riley and took to the field with four hundred Kansas volunteers and two artillery pieces. While marching toward Fort Larned, they established the posts of Ellsworth, where the road crossed the Smoky Hill, and Zarah, on Walnut Creek near modern-day Great Bend. Upon reaching Larned, Curtis divided his command into three columns and dispatched them to sweep the country north, south, and west. Although no Indians were brought to battle, the campaign persuaded the Kiowas, Comanches, and Kiowa-Apaches to remove to Texas, and the Cheyennes and Arapahos to head beyond the Platte. Soon afterward, however, Indians returned to the Santa Fé Trail and once more attacked unprotected wagon trains.¹⁶

The soldiers at Camp Wynkoop responded and continued to provide security for the Trail. On August 7, Major Wynkoop received word a Mexican caravan had been attacked seven miles east of Fort Lyon by a war party of Kiowas and Comanches, and he ordered Gray to deploy his troopers along the opposite bank of the Arkansas as a blocking force. Wynkoop and 80 men trailed the Indians, confirmed to be led by notorious Kiowa chief Santanta, to the Cimarron, but declined to attack due to superior enemy numbers. Four days later, while hunting for a stray horse, Wynkoop's ordnance sergeant was chased by fifteen Indians to within sight of Fort Lyon's commissary building. Wynkoop and thirty soldiers immediately rode in pursuit. One squad of the major's force engaged a party of Indians near Sand Creek, Colorado and Wynkoop dispatched the balance of his troops to support the action. Meanwhile, Captain Gray's men had arrived from Camp Wynkoop and were assigned to garrison Fort Lyon in the interim. By August 31, the outpost at Aubrey's Crossing was being staffed by Lieutenant George W. Hawkins and

Company A. Before the end of 1864, Camp Wynkoop was abandoned and its name disappeared from the returns of the Department of Kansas. Hawkins' men were posted to Fort Lyon. The Cheyenne War would climax in Colonel Chivington's brutal atrocity at Sand Creek in November 1864. While Camp Wynkoop remained closed, soldiers who had once been posted to Aubrey's Crossing were present at the attack later branded "as perfidious and the slaughter as wanton."¹⁷

Coupled with the end of the War Between the States, the lessons learned in the recent uprising brought changes to the frontier defense establishment, including, ultimately, the creation of Fort Aubrey. On January 30, 1865, the Military Division of the Missouri was formed to manage military affairs in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and in Nebraska, Dakota, and Montana territories. Major-General John Pope was placed in command on February 4, with his headquarters in St. Louis. The division was further divided into four geographical departments: the Dakota, the Platte, the Missouri, and the Arkansas. The Department of the Missouri, of which the remainder of this study is most concerned, was headquartered at Fort Leavenworth under the command of Major-General Grenville Mellen Dodge. The general was tasked with administering the districts of Kansas, also headquartered at Leavenworth; the Upper Arkansas, at Fort Ellsworth; New Mexico, at Santa Fé; and the Indian Territory, at Fort Gibson. Along with the reorganization, military commanders also enacted a new three-part strategy. First, protect the settlements and the overland trails; second, launch a punitive campaign into the Powder River country and strike a decisive blow at the defiant Indians; and third, make peace with the tribes in western Kansas and effect their removal from the state.¹⁸

While General Pope's troops were otherwise occupied in preparing for a spring offensive, former Confederate soldiers, known as "Galvanized Yankees," would occupy the old Camp

Wynkoop site for a brief time. These Southerners had been recruited in Union prisoner of war camps and organized as U.S. volunteer infantry for the express purpose of protecting emigrant and mail roads on the frontier. Commanded by Yankee officers, the regiments, ultimately six in number, escorted supply trains, rebuilt telegraph lines, fought Indians, and garrisoned forts.¹⁹

Guarding Aubrey's Crossing would be the responsibility of Company H, Fifth U.S. Volunteer Infantry. The regiment was organized at the Alton and Camp Douglas military prisons in Illinois. Company H was enrolled at Camp Douglas on April 11, mustered into service for three years on the fourteenth, and arrived at Fort Leavenworth on the twenty-eighth. First Lieutenant Charles H. Hoyt, a 20-year-old civilian appointee, assumed command on May 1. The company's first sergeant was Leonidas M. Brooks, a 22-year-old veteran who had been captured at Nashville while a private in the Seventeenth Alabama Infantry. The remainder of the outfit was primarily from Alabama and Georgia, and most had been captured during the Atlanta and Chattanooga campaigns; nearly all were experienced soldiers. Beginning in late July, the Galvanized Yankees at Camp Wynkoop spent six frustrating weeks hampered by their lack of horses, and unable to offer much protection to passing wagon trains. Having received word the regiment was redeploying to Nebraska, Hoyt was ordered in September to abandon the camp and proceed to Fort Kearney.²⁰

Fort Aubrey

Throughout the summer of 1865, nearly every stagecoach and government wagon train on the Santa Fé Trail was accompanied by troops, which reduced the number of Indian depredations. Additionally, military posts were established to facilitate the escort system. Fort Dodge had been occupied on April 10 near the intersection of the "wet" and "dry" routes of the trail, as was

Camp Nichols on June 1 near Cold Spring on the Cimarron branch. On September 15, Major-General Washington Lafayette Elliott, commanding the District of Kansas, sent a letter from his Fort Leavenworth headquarters to the commanding officer at Fort Lyon. The dispatch contained Special Order No. 20, which authorized the establishment of a new fort on the site of Camp Wynkoop and further stated, “The post to be established on Aubry's Crossing of the Arkansas, formerly Camp Wyncoop [sic], will be known as Fort Aubry.” The letter arrived at Fort Lyon on September 20. Five days later, Captain Wilson L. Parker led his Company K, Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry toward the location designated for the new post.²¹

Organized in St. Louis from September 1864 to February 1865, the Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry was staffed by discharged state militiamen who had served the Union, primarily from the Second and Sixth Missouri Militia Cavalry regiments. Most, but not all, hailed from counties outside of the region known as “Little Dixie.” Company K had enrolled at Cape Girardeau on February 9, 1864 and mustered into service on April 11.²² Unlike the U.S. regulars who would come later, state volunteers were citizen-soldiers who held a wide variety of occupations before the war. Presumably, they returned to these professions after the cessation of hostilities. Based upon available records, the types of peacetime employment pursued by the men of the Thirteenth Missouri are displayed in Table 1 on the following page.

Occupation	Number
Farmer	130
Laborer	4
Carpenter	2
Bricklayer	1
Clerk	1
Druggist	1
Hostler	1
Mechanic	1
Miner	1
Saddler	1

Table 1: Civilian occupations held by Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry officers and enlisted men.
 SOURCE: Compiled Service Records. Note: These numbers only include personnel confirmed to have been present for duty at Fort Aubrey.

In a letter, dated October 1, Parker reported reaching Fort Aubrey on September 28. Upon arrival, the outfit consisted of 92 men, including First Sergeant Edwin R. Manning, seven other sergeants, eight corporals, two musicians, one blacksmith, and 70 privates. Problematic for the cavalrymen was the fact they had only 57 serviceable horses. Parker's letter also noted the mounts had had only one month's worth of issued forage since May 19, and in that time had marched over twelve thousand miles. Serving as the fort's acting assistant quartermaster was Second Lieutenant James D. L. Parks, also of Company K.²³

The use of the Charles Schreyvogel painting on the title page of this study should not be construed to mean such an attack ever occurred at Fort Aubrey. Despite being a staple of popular media, the sight of Indian warriors assailing the palisades of a frontier fort was an extremely rare event. Camp Wynkoop and Fort Aubrey were never assaulted by hostile Indians, and the artwork's inclusion was entirely due to an appreciation for the painter's talent and his portrayal of iconic Western imagery. The only major examples of such an occurrence are the Navajo foray

on Fort Defiance, New Mexico Territory in April 1860, and the Sioux attack on Fort Ridgely, Minnesota in August 1862. Indeed, the term “fort” normally implies the notion depicted in the painting, a wooden stockade with defensive features such as gates or guard towers. Such a structure may have been found in the forested country east of the Missouri, but in the treeless plains of western Kansas they were non-existent. Instead, the available building material would have been sod and native stone. The majority of engagements where Indians attacked entrenched positions were against encircled troops in the open sheltered behind hastily-erected field fortifications. The Wagon Box Fight in Wyoming in August 1867 and the Battle of Beecher’s Island in Colorado in September 1868 would be two instances. Since the primary function of Fort Aubrey was to support Fort Lyon in providing escorts, the post was designed to offer its garrison a base of operations and supply. One of Parker’s first duties was to arrange for shelter for his men. In his October 1 letter, Parker suggested a slight change to the fort’s building plan that had accompanied his orders and promised to send a revised diagram for General Elliott’s approval. The sketch was included in the captain’s service records and is displayed in Figure 3 on the following page.²⁴

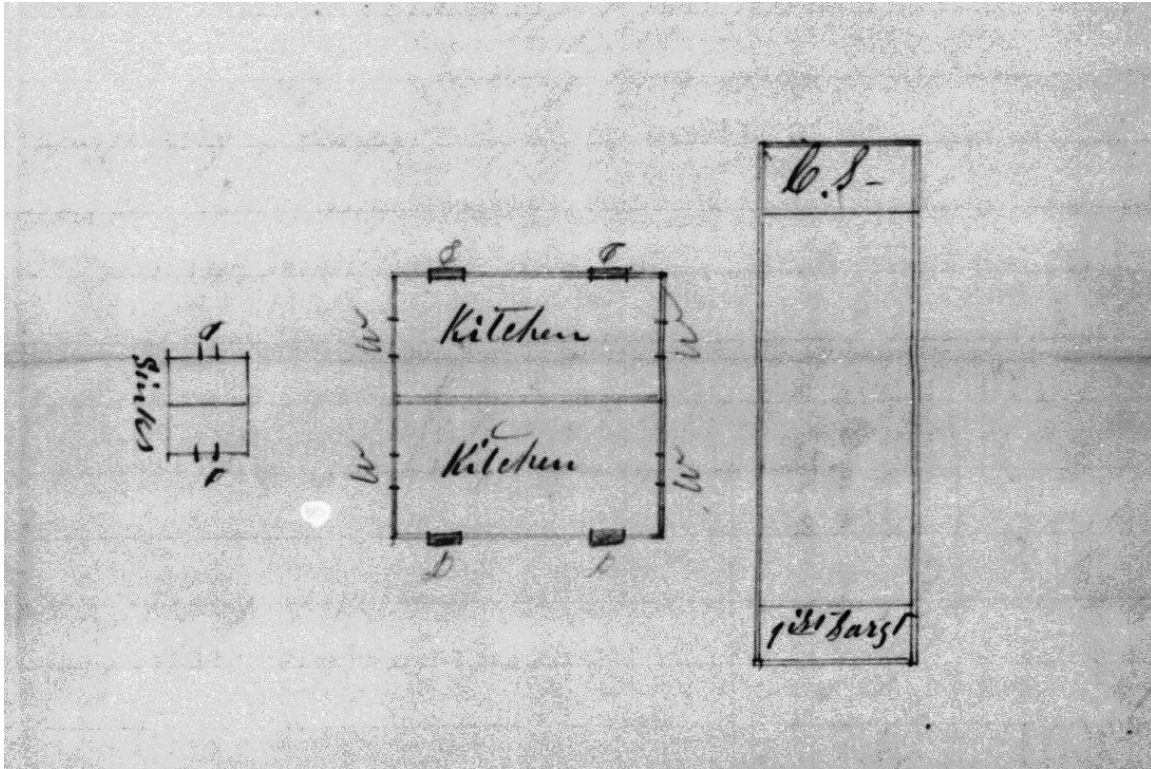


Figure 3: Sketch of Fort Aubrey. SOURCE: Compiled Service Records. Note: Despite popular misconception, army posts on the western frontier were rarely surrounded by defensive walls.

These permanent structures apparently first existed in a crude form, and extensive improvements would have to wait until the following spring. In the meantime, according to a correspondent for the *Daily Rocky Mountain News* who visited the post,

... the men are quartered in half underground caves, dug and built in the bank of a little spring branch about three hundred yards from the Arkansas River. The only other building put up are of adobe, or sod, covered with earth. They are quite comfortable but not very stylish in appearance. Timber is scarce; only a little green cottonwood upon the islands and sand bars in the river.²⁵

Parker and his Missourians would not have to endure the primitive conditions by themselves for long. On October 7, Special Order No. 4, District of Kansas, directed Companies D and F of the Forty-eighth Wisconsin Infantry to Fort Aubrey. Leading Company D was Captain Adolph Wittman, First Lieutenant Franklin Davis, and Second Lieutenant James E. Brown; the last named officer subsequently acted as the post adjutant. Wittman commanded 69

enlisted men, of whom one was absent on detached service and another nine were ill. Completing the garrison's new roster of line officers were Captain Alexander J. Lumsden and First Lieutenant George S. Rogers of Company F. Lumsden led 61 enlisted men fit for duty, one detached from the company, and eight who were absent because of sickness. Assistant Surgeon Henry E. Zielley, who was the equivalent of a captain, was a member of the regimental field staff, and had charge of the post hospital.²⁶

In the early 1860s, Wisconsin was a frontier state. Cash money was in short supply, debt was customary, and the barter system was commonplace. Approximately five-sixths of the population labored as farmers. The men who would enlist in the Forty-eighth Wisconsin came from the eastern tier of counties that skirted Lake Michigan. Company D was primarily drawn from Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Racine counties. The recruits of Company F were predominately from Sheboygan, Dane, Crawford, Washington, Dodge, Winnebago, and Walworth counties. The inhabitants of this region were often products of the "Yankee exodus" from New England, or hailed from other countries. Indeed, one-third of the state's population was foreign born, and almost half of these had emigrated from the assorted German states. Milwaukee County possessed a sizeable population of Germans. Norwegians were prominent in Racine and Dane counties and, not unexpectedly, the latter also held a substantial concentration of immigrants from Denmark. The dominant ethnicity of Holland, in Sheboygan County, was likewise naturally Dutch.²⁷

The garrisoning of relatively recent immigrants from Northern Europe with Unionist Missourians might have been an explosive mixture. Differences in language and customs may have led to ethnic tensions, communications problems, and brawling, but, regrettably, no primary records exist to shed light on the interpersonal relations of the rank and file. Also, little to no

scholarly work has been done on the topic, even concerning neighboring forts. Therefore, any musings on the internal associations of the Fort Aubrey personnel must remain conjecture.²⁸

The Forty-eighth Wisconsin had been organized at Camp Washburn in Milwaukee in February and March 1865. The regiment was mustered into service under the command of Colonel Uri B. Pearsall and Lieutenant-Colonel Henry B. Shears. On March 22, Lieutenant-Colonel Shears transferred eight companies to Benton Barracks in St. Louis and then to Paoli, Kansas on the twenty-ninth. They arrived on April 13 and the companies were dispersed to various posts. Before their assignment to Fort Aubrey, Company D had gone first to Fort Scott, and Company F to Olathe. Colonel Pearsall would arrive at Fort Scott with the last two companies on April 28 and assumed command. On August 10, the regiment was ordered to Lawrence, arriving on the twenty-fifth. They expected to be discharged, but conditions on the frontier compelled them to instead escort government supply trains and the U.S. mails through hostile country.²⁹

On October 17, First Lieutenant Thomas J. Shinn, acting as company commander, and Company D of the Thirteenth Missouri arrived at Fort Aubrey to join their sister unit. The company had enrolled at Springfield on February 17, 1864 and mustered into service on April 9. Assisted by Second Lieutenant John Vietz (or Viets) and First Sergeant Henry Lightfoot, Shinn commanded 61 enlisted men present for duty, ten on special duties, and three who were sick. He also brought 30 serviceable horses and ten unserviceable. Other personnel were also away from their units. First Lieutenant Thomas Doyle, Company K, Thirteenth Missouri, and Second Lieutenant Christian Amman, Company K, Forty-eighth Wisconsin, had both been listed as absent without leave since September 6 and October 1 respectively. By the end of the month, two

enlisted men were discharged by order of General Pope, as was another to accept a promotion. The monthly tally of Fort Aubrey's troop strength appears below in Table 2.³⁰

Month	Enlisted Men	Officers	Total
October 1865	294	12	306
November 1865	286	11	297
December 1865	192	7	199
January 1866	127	3	130
February 1866	175	5	180
March 1866	166	5	171
April 15, 1866	167	5	172

Table 2: Troop Strength of Fort Aubrey by Month. SOURCE: Monthly post returns.

The garrison's escort duties were soon to be made safer by a peace conference held at a camp on the Little Arkansas. From October twelfth to the twenty-fourth, talks between a delegation led by Colonel Jesse Henry Leavenworth, the Indian agent for the Upper Arkansas Agency, and numerous leaders of the Kiowas, Kiowa-Apaches, Comanches, Arapahos, and Cheyennes secured the Little Arkansas Treaty: a series of accords between the United States and the Plains tribes. While the year 1866 would be the quietest for the Santa Fé Trail in a decade, for both whites and Indians, peace would prove an elusive goal.³¹

The month of November was fairly routine for the garrison. Four men from Company D, Thirteenth Missouri were ordered to be discharged for disability, Private John D. Kelly was appointed regimental veterinary surgeon and transferred to headquarters, and Zachariah Taylor of Company F was discharged for disability by telegraphic order from the War Department. Lieutenant Amman was still on the rolls, but he had been ordered to be mustered out by Special Order No. 108, Headquarters, Military Division of the Missouri, effective September 4, 1865. The final monthly return specified the post strength as 266 officers and men present for duty,

another 31 absent, and 111 serviceable horses. The complete roster was composed of 4 captains, 7 subalterns, 26 sergeants, 32 corporals, 6 musicians, 4 blacksmiths, and 218 privates. One of the lieutenants was Thomas Doyle, who, in accordance with Special Order No. 46, returned to duty on October 9.³²

Daily life at any frontier fort was filled with scheduled drill and guard duty, fatigue details, an evening dress parade, and the occasional patrol or campaign against hostile Indians. In general, though, “isolation, boredom, and monotony characterized life at the western posts.” Low pay, lack of advancement, and inadequate living conditions had the tendency to make soldiering on the frontier a less-than-attractive profession. Identical to the rest of the frontier army, unapproved absence was a chronic problem at Fort Aubrey, as illustrated below by Table 3.³³

Month	AWOL	Desertion	Total
October 1865	2	0	2
November 1865	0	0	0
December 1865	2	0	2
January 1866	0	0	0
February 1866	2	0	2
March 1866	0	9	9
April 15, 1866	0	11	11

Table 3: Number of Men Reported Absent Without Leave or as Deserting Fort Aubrey.
SOURCE: Monthly post returns

The health of the individual soldier often influenced the overall morale of the garrison. At any average fort, rations were normally range beef of uncertain quality, salt pork, beans, rice, bread or hardtack, and coffee. Fresh vegetables were rare unless the post or company planted their own gardens. Dried vegetables and fruit, or tinned delicacies, were sometimes available, the latter often at inflated prices. While Fort Aubrey might have been far from civilization, the

countryside was fortuitously teeming with wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, and herds of buffalo numbering in the hundreds of thousands. In addition, S. N. Wood, of Chase County, and W. J. Plumb, of Lyon County, were awarded the contract to furnish beef to Forts Zarah, Dodge, and Aubrey from November 1, 1865 to June 13, 1866. Between the commodities supplied by the contractors and by hunting, the soldiers did not lack for fresh meat. However, sanitary conditions at the typical fort were also detrimental to good health. Bad water, the careless handling of waste, and the improper storage and preparation of food all contributed to frequent occurrences of disease. Indeed, illness produced a greater number of casualties than Indian arrows or bullets. The monthly sick call is reflected below in Table 4.³⁴

Month	Enlisted Men	Officers
October 1865	42	1
November 1865	25	1
December 1865	22	0
January 1866	15	0
February 1866	21	0
March 1866	21	0
April 15, 1866	19	0

Table 4: Number of Men on Sick List and in Hospital at Fort Aubrey
SOURCE: Monthly post returns

When off-duty at remote camps, officers and enlisted men alike had few available pastimes, and many turned to drinking and gambling. Both were blights the army would not overcome for decades. Drunkenness was one infraction that could land a soldier in the guardhouse; others included desertion, insubordination, disobedience, malingering, and neglect of duty. The maintenance of discipline for minor infractions was left to the discretion of the company commander or the first sergeant. Punishment could be lenient or harsh, fair or unjust,

depending on the whim of the officer. Proscribed but commonly dispensed penalties included spread-eagling, bucking and gagging, confinement in a sweatbox, marching to exhaustion while carrying a heavy weight, or being suspended by the thumbs. Authorized reprimands were extra duty, restriction of liberty or privilege, reduction in rank, and forfeiture of pay. Major transgressions were the province of the courts-martial, which was regulated by the outdated Articles of War. The courts were equally arbitrary and often delivered inconsistent sentences for the same offense. As a matter of course, few soldiers had faith in the military justice system. The monthly tally of men in confinement while awaiting their fate is given below in Table 5.³⁵

Month	Number
October 1865	0
November 1865	1
December 1865	0
January 1866	6
February 1866	5
March 1866	3
April 15, 1866	2

Table 5: Number of Men in Arrest or Confinement at Fort Aubrey
SOURCE: Monthly post returns

On November 17, the headquarters for the District of Kansas issued Special Order No. 117, which instructed Company M, Second U.S. Cavalry, under the command of First Lieutenant Axel Smedburg Adams, to proceed to Fort Aubrey. Adams, First Sergeant James A. Willett, two sergeants, three corporals, and 37 privates arrived from Fort Leavenworth on December 3. The same order also required Captain Parker and Lieutenant Shinn to take their companies to Leavenworth. The Missourians would be released from service on January 11. Meanwhile, Captain Wittman, as ranking officer, assumed command of Fort Aubrey. Travel was impeded by

a heavy winter storm in the first days of the month, and work on the post was forced to halt. Snow lay on the ground up to a foot and a half in some places. Wagon traffic along the Aubrey and Cimarron routes was brought to a standstill by the excessive cold that lasted all winter. Three troopers of Company M, one sergeant and two buglers, were discharged when their enlistment ended. By the end of December, the post possessed a complement of six officers, including Dr. Zielley, and 171 rank and file.³⁶

As was the case at Fort Aubrey, Adams' arrival presaged the gradual replacement of state volunteers along the entire frontier with U.S. regulars. Even more than their volunteer counterparts in Colorado and elsewhere, Regular Army regiments were cosmopolitan organizations. Some 65,000 men from all walks of life signed up for the Regular Army during the Civil War, be they young men in search of challenging military service, old veterans, ne'er-do-wells, petty criminals, or the recently emigrated. As in the antebellum army, foreign soldiers continued to comprise a sizable portion of the regular ranks. Recent analysis of army enlistment records revealed that 46 percent of the regulars serving during the war were immigrants. The majority of these recruits came from Ireland or the German states, with a smaller assortment from England, Canada, Poland, France, Switzerland, and an array of other countries. While state volunteer units enjoyed a higher rate of recruitment, wartime regular regiments struggled in their efforts to reach and maintain their authorized troop levels. The reasons were varied. Regular Army recruiters were strangers to local sources of manpower, while volunteer officers raising state regiments were often recognized community leaders. The Regular Army's reputation for exacting standards and rigid discipline tended to discourage enlistment. Additionally, high casualty rates, authorized absences and desertions, discharges for disability and other reasons,

and resignations and dismissals eroded the effective strength.³⁷ As for why some men chose the regulars over the volunteers, one professional soldier and student of the Civil War responded:

The wartime regulars left home and enlisted for any number of reasons. Just like their comrades who joined state volunteer units in 1861, some regulars joined the military to preserve the Union, others to abolish slavery, still others just to participate in a great national event. A few joined the Regular Army instead of the volunteers because they were veterans of the antebellum regulars, while others thought that being in the Regular Army would provide them with better uniforms, superior armaments, more thorough training, and the opportunity to serve under experienced sergeants and officers. But in the bewildering world of America's wartime mobilization in 1861, chance encounters with a persuasive recruiter probably account for the majority of Regular Army enlistments.³⁸

Company H of the First Battalion, Eighteenth U.S. Infantry was assigned to Fort Aubrey by virtue of Special Order No. 149, Headquarters, Second District of Kansas. In December, the company commander, Captain Anson Mills, had been busily incorporating new recruits into his command at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri; most of these men were recently discharged volunteers. Arriving on January 20, 1866, Mill's command was comprised of five sergeants, two corporals, two musicians, and 59 privates. Four privates had deserted while the outfit was on the march. The following day, in compliance with Order No. 2, Captain Wittman led Companies D and F to Fort Leavenworth in order to report to General Elliott and be mustered out of service; accompanying them was Assistant Surgeon Zielley. The Wisconsin soldiers would receive their discharges on February 19. Meanwhile, Captain Mills assumed command of the fort and Lieutenant Adams was assigned the additional duties of post adjutant, quartermaster, and commissary of subsistence. By the end of the month, including Adams's cavalymen, the garrison now comprised two lieutenants, 12 sergeants, seven corporals, three musicians, one blacksmith, and 104 privates.³⁹

The reduction in troop numbers proved only temporary. Per Special Order No. 4, First Battalion, dated November 21, 1865, the fort was reinforced by the arrival of Company C, First

Battalion, Eighteenth Infantry on February 19. As company commander, Captain William Pollock McCleery led one lieutenant, three sergeants, two corporals, one musician, and 44 privates. By the end of February, Mills was in charge of five officers, 14 sergeants, three corporals, five musicians, and 149 privates. Taking over as post surgeon was Acting Assistant Surgeon Joseph Kugler, who had reported for duty on February 17.⁴⁰

With the coming of spring, the garrison was able to resume construction projects on the post. One retired army officer writing of the Second Cavalry's history noted:

Leavenworth, Riley, Kearney, Lyon, and Larned had been established before the war, and had protection of some kind for troops, officers, and horses. Ellsworth (now Fort Harker), Hays, and Pond Creek (now Fort Wallace), on the Smoky Hill; Dodge and Aubrey, on the Arkansas, were simply points where General Dodge had located volunteer troops during the preceding summer, and were entirely without protection of any kind, except canvas and the underground huts built by the volunteers. Being the pioneers of the army, the brunt of the hard work in building quarters was thrown upon the regiment; so that, after protecting themselves as best they could during the winter, which was an unusually severe one, they commenced early in the spring to build.⁴¹

Captain Mills remembered the post as being a collection of "rude huts and dug-outs."⁴² In a letter to the editor of the *Junction City Weekly Union*, dated July 28, 1875, a correspondent described his travels through the Arkansas River valley. The party he was accompanying camped for the night near the abandoned Fort Aubrey and the contributor reported his observations:

Old Fort Aubrey ... consisted of a few adobe houses, situated on one side of a spring of clear, cold water, and upon the other a ... one-story stone house, about 20x30 feet, the walls of which are perforated with loop-holes. It is situated so as to command an extensive country, and probably was the stronghold against the Indians.⁴³

Through no fault of his own, Mills' tenure was unremarkable as the regulars only performed standard garrison duties for the entire period. Instead, the captain recalled spending his off-duty time "relieving the monotony by killing some of the buffalo which covered the whole country, riding a spirited horse which could overtake any buffalo." The tedium may have

been the cause of six privates from Company H and two from Company M deserting in March, and five from Company C, three from Company H, and two from Company M in April. Mills went on a four-month leave of absence to the nation's capital on March 25. While he was gone, the fort was commanded by Captain McCleery. Company M was ordered to march to Fort Lyon on April 13 and then Fort Wallace the following month. The post returns ended on April 15, and on that date the total complement of present and absent personnel consisted of two captains, three lieutenants, 11 sergeants, 13 corporals, two musicians, one blacksmith, and 130 privates. The exigencies of the service were changing by the spring of 1866 and so the remaining garrison was ordered to abandon Fort Aubrey on April 20.⁴⁴

Once the United States Army demobilized from its wartime footing, the regular regiments were obliged to resume their traditional roles of defending the Republic from external threats and suppressing internal disorder. Chief among these duties was the occupation of the vanquished Confederate states and the protection of the expanding waves of settlement in the West. Therefore, President Andrew Johnson signed into law the "Act to increase and fix the Military Peace Establishment of the United States" on July 28, 1866. The measure authorized a manpower increase to over 54,000 officers and men, and new organizational structures for the staff departments and the line regiments. More than one million volunteers were discharged by June 30, and Regular Army regiments, reaching only a total effective strength of thirty thousand, would be hard-pressed to meet demands when they returned to the frontier.⁴⁵

Leaving Aubrey on April 22, Companies C and H marched to Fort Lyon and then to their new duty stations at Camp Douglas, Utah Territory and Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory respectively. In September, the companies of the Second Cavalry were ordered to the Department of the Platte, and Company M was posted to Fort Sedgwick. In the aftermath of

these various changes, the army would repeatedly reorganize its line of frontier posts and, in addition to closing Aubrey, vacate Fort Lyon, on June 9, 1867; Fort Zarah, on December 4, 1869; Fort Larned, on July 19, 1878; and Fort Dodge, on October 2, 1882.⁴⁶

Mayline

Several other places of settlement can be included in the Fort Aubrey community. One of these was the village of Mayline, which never became more than an assortment of outbuildings that served the area around the post. Later it existed as a siding for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad and was connected by rail to Kendall, Syracuse, and Coolidge. Surviving until the 1890s, no structures presently occupy the townsite but instead were hauled to nearby farms for use as barns and storage buildings. The origins of the hamlet's name are unknown.⁴⁷

Post Office

Postmaster George Pool's office was established on January 24, 1866 and continued in operation until October 3 of the same year. Prior to the formation of the southwestern tier of Kansas counties, the unorganized territory had been administratively attached to Marion County and the post office for Fort Aubrey was located there.⁴⁸

Wright's Ranch and Stage Station

Robert Marr Wright, an early plainsman and one of the founders of Dodge City, came to Aubrey's Crossing in the spring of 1864. There, in partnership with James Anderson, he established a "fine ranch" that also functioned as a stagecoach station. He later recounted, "At that place we had numerous little skirmishes, troubles, trials, and many narrow escapes from the Indians." Working on contract for the Barlow & Sanderson Southern Overland Stage Company, Wright established stage stations every 35 or 40 miles between Fort Larned and Fort Lyon, typically dugouts measuring 14 by 20 feet cut into the sides of hills. Barlow & Sanderson

operated a weekly service originating in Kansas City, but the stage from Larned ran across the north side of the Arkansas, and stopped at the stations on Big Coon Creek; the Little Coon; between Coon Creek and Blanco Arroyo; Fort Dodge; Cimarron station, four miles west of the present town; Bluff station, near modern-day Pierceville; Fort Aubrey; Pretty Encampment; Sand Creek; and Fort Lyon. From there, the stage road turned south along the old mountain route of the Santa Fé Trail, crossed through Raton Pass, and continued to Fort Union and then Santa Fé. Barlow & Sanderson were to be the only successful stage line on this road, and became renowned for reducing their travel time from one month to thirteen days. To reduce expenses, ranches that operated as stage stations customarily grew their own hay for use along the route, and Wright was no different.⁴⁹

Once Fort Aubrey was abandoned for good, Wright and his family occupied the buildings and fortified them in preparation for an Indian attack. Their stay there was short-lived though, “In 1866 I went to Fort Dodge.”⁵⁰

Even after Wright departed, the stage company’s operations at the old post continued for some two years. In mid-June 1866, a Mr. Banks was en route from Fort Lyon to Fort Aubrey to pick up a load of freight. He was gathering his horses on the prairie when a party of Utes roped Banks and pulled him from his mount, injuring him. They stole Banks’ money and horses, but stopped short of hurting him further. The Indians explained they had no wish to wage war on whites but they did need money and horses.⁵¹

Fort Aubrey continued to be a topic in military correspondence and newspaper articles for years. Brevet Major Andrew Sheridan, commandant of Fort Dodge, reported to his superior of an altercation that occurred at Aubrey on October 20, 1866. According to the letter, Jean

Baptiste Hart, a laborer for a lumber train heading from Fort Lyon to Dodge, had shot and wounded a stage driver. Brought to Fort Dodge as a prisoner, Hart would plead self-defense.⁵²

Walter Stickney had sent a wagon load of corn from Fort Aubrey to Fair View, the station nine miles to the west, on May 23, 1867. When the supply wagon was within two miles of its goal, Indians killed the driver and a “very fine” team of mules, and mortally wounded another teamster. Three others escaped. On the same day, all of the mules at Fair View were taken.⁵³

Conclusion

The Arkansas River country remained a raw frontier for several more years, and the scarce population there was largely transitory in nature. With the coming of the railroad on Christmas Day, 1872, settlers finally began to arrive and put down roots. The first was a colony from New York and they eventually called their new home Syracuse. Hamilton County would be established by the act of March 6, 1873.⁵⁴

As the guns of the Yankees and the Rebels fell silent, so too has the wilderness been tamed. In southwestern Kansas, and all along the former frontier, towns and farms now peacefully exist where once buffalo and Indians freely roamed. Likewise, Fort Aubrey, a harbinger of civilization on the Arkansas River line, is no more. The buildings from which soldiers stood in defense of traders and emigrants are long gone. No monuments or historical markers give evidence of their service. The bugle calls have ceased, the sabers are sheathed, and even memory of their lonely vigil has faded.

Endnotes

1. Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), VIII: 23. Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 51. Francis W. Blackmar, ed., *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, Embracing Events, Institutions, Industries, Counties, Cities, Towns, Prominent Persons, Etc.* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1912), I: 657. Hereafter cited as *Cyclopedia of Kansas History*. Eugene P. Burr, "A Detailed Study of the Aubry Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail and Fort Aubry," *Emporia State Research Studies*, XXIII (Summer 1974): 24. *Garden City Telegram*, September 13, 1872.
2. Walker D. Wyman, "F. X. Aubry: Santa Fé Freighter, Pathfinder and Explorer," *New Mexico Historical Review*, VII (January 1932): 1-2. Blackmar, ed., *Cyclopedia of Kansas History*, I: 118. Leo E. Oliva, "The Aubry Route on the Santa Fe Trail," *Kansas Quarterly* 5 (Spring 1973), 21. Henry A. Bundschu, "Francis Xavier Aubrey," *The Pacific Historian*, V (August 1961): 112-16. Robert M. Wright, "Personal Reminiscences of Frontier Life in Southwest Kansas," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society*, VII (1901-1902): 51. Hereafter cited as "Frontier Life in Southwest Kansas."

Aubrey was stabbed to death in Santa Fé in September 1854 during an altercation with Major Richard Hanson Weightman. *Kansas Weekly Herald*, September 29, 1854. *Texas State Times*, October 21, 1854. For more on this colorful frontiersman, see Donald Chaput, *Francois X. Aubrey: Trader, Trailmaker and Voyageur in the Southwest, 1846-1854* (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1975).
3. Burr, "Aubry Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail," 22-23.
4. Frazer, *Forts of the West*, 51. Burr, "Aubry Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail," 24.
5. Robert M. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 212, 215. Marvin H. Garfield, "The Military Post as a Factor in the Frontier Defense of Kansas, 1865-1869," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, I (November 1931): 50, 51-52, 57. Hereafter cited as "The Frontier Defense of Kansas." Leo E. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 140. Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *The Civil War in the American West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 7, 232.
6. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1906), Series I, XXXIV, Pt. 2: 7, Pt. 4: 151. Hereafter cited as *OR*; all references are to Series I. Marvin H. Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier, 1864-'65," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, I (February 1932): 140, 142. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 140. At this time, the Department of Kansas encompassed the state of Kansas, the territories of Nebraska and Colorado, and the Indian Territory, including the post of Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Beginning in August, General Price would launch an expedition, known as "Price's Missouri Raid," through Missouri and Kansas that ended in defeat at Newtonia, Missouri on October 28. For more on the final Rebel offensive west of the Mississippi, see Michael J.

Forsyth, *The Great Missouri Raid: Sterling Price and the Last Confederate Campaign in Northern Territory* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2015).

7. Utey, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 284-85. Paul Andrew Hutton and Durwood Ball, eds., *Soldiers West: Biographies from the Military Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 154. Flint Whitlock, *Distant Bugles, Distant Drums: The Union Response to the Confederate Invasion of New Mexico* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2011), 64-65. *OR*, XXXIV, Pt. 3: 531-532.
8. Hutton and Ball, eds., *Soldiers West*, 155. Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 141. Utey, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 286. *OR*, XXXIV, Pt. 3: 149-50, 166-67, 218-19, 242, 303-04, 465, Pt. 4: 38-39. *Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Colorado*, First Colorado Cavalry, George S. Eayre and Clark Dunn.
9. *OR*, XXXIV, Pt. 4: 273, 205, Pt. 3: 564-565.
10. *OR*, XXXIV, Pt. 3: 630, 712. Frazer, *Forts of the West*, 51. *Compiled Service Records*, First Colorado Cavalry, Luther Wilson.
11. Josephy, *Civil War in the American West*, 42, 61-63, 76. Susan-Mary Grant, "For God & Country: Why Men Joined Up for the U.S. Civil War," *History Today* 50 (July 2000), 21. Paul I. Klinger, "The Confederate Invasion of New Mexico," *Blue & Gray Magazine* 11 (June 1994), 20, 48-57. Utey, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 285. For a first-hand account of the New Mexico Campaign, see Ovando J. Hollister, *Colorado Volunteers in New Mexico, 1862*, ed. Richard Harwell (Chicago: R. R. Donnelly & Sons Company, 1962).
12. Whitlock, *Distant Bugles, Distant Drums*, 3-5, 6, 7, 46. Josephy, *Civil War in the American West*, 293-94.
13. Whitlock, *Distant Bugles, Distant Drums*, 6-7, 44.
14. *OR*, XXXIV, Pt. 4: 56, 115-116, 151.
15. *OR*, XXXIV, Pt. 4: 208, 620, 229, 273. *Compiled Service Records*, First Colorado Cavalry, David L. Hardy, Luther Wilson, and Isaac Gray.
16. Hutton and Ball, eds., *Soldiers West*, 156. Utey, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 287. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 153-54. *Daily Kansas Tribune*, July 27, August 7, 10, 23, 1864. *Emporia Weekly News*, September 3, 1864. Josephy, *Civil War in the American West*, 302.
17. *OR*, XLI, Pt. 1: 231-232, 237-238; Pt. 2: 735, 981, Pt. 4: 988-993. Prior to arriving at Wynkoop, Company A was reported to have lost all their livestock to Indian stampedes while at Cimarron Crossing. *Daily Kansas Tribune*, August 26, 1864. Utey, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 297. Santanta was one of the best-known and feared Kiowa warriors on the Southern Plains. For a well-researched biography of this exceptional tribal leader, see Charles M. Robinson,

Santanta: The Life and Death of a War Chief (Austin: State House Press, 1997). The August 11 skirmish at Sand Creek was not the infamous massacre that occurred three months later. For the definitive account of that shameful episode, see Stan Hoig, *The Sand Creek Massacre* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961).

18. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War*, House Executive Document No. 1, 39th Congress, 2nd Session (Serial No. 1285), 3. *OR*, XLVIII, Pt. 1: 3, Pt. 2: 1201. Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 147.
19. Josephy, *Civil War in the American West*, 314. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 308. Mark Mayo Boatner III, *The Civil War Dictionary* (New York: David McKay Company, 1988), 322.
20. Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion* (Des Moines, IA: Dyer Publishing Company, 1908), 1717. D. Alexander Brown, *The Galvanized Yankees* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 206, 208. Brown incorrectly identified John C. McDade as the company's senior noncommissioned officer and referred to him as a sergeant-major. In actuality, McDade only rose to the grade of sergeant, whereas the sergeant-major was the highest-ranking enlisted man in the entire regiment. *Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers (Galvanized Yankees) Who Served in the 1st through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866*, Fifth U.S. Volunteers, Charles H. Hoyt, Leonidas M. Brooks, and John C. McDade, M1017, and *Alphabetical Card Index to the Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Belonging to Union Organizations Not Raised by States or Territories*, Leonidas M. Brooks, M1290, both in RG 94. Before the war, Brooks had been a farmer in Pike County, Alabama. He was promoted to the rank of first sergeant on May 1, 1865, and deserted the regiment on April 17, 1866 at Booneville, Colorado "with Springfield Rifle-Musket and accoutrements." Hoyt would submit his resignation "for private reasons" on July 19, 1866. The regiment was mustered out at Fort Leavenworth on November 13, 1866.
21. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 162. Frazer, *Forts of the West*, 52, 122. Louise Berry, "Fort Aubrey," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, XXXIX (Summer 1973): 188. See also *OR*, XLVIII, Pt. 2: 1201, 1203-04, 1079. The Fort Aubrey post return for September 1865 has not been found. Many accounts, including Blackmar and Frazer, erroneously credit Captain Adolph Wittman, Forty-eighth Wisconsin Infantry, with being the first commander of the fort. As will be seen, Captain Wittman did not arrive until the following month. Incidentally, there is a high probability that Lieutenant Hoyt either formally transferred command of the post to Parker, or the two companies missed each other by just a few days.
22. *Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861, '62, '63, '64, '65* (Washington, D.C.: Adjutant General's Office, 1867), Pt. VII: 8, 26, 43. Kenneth E. Weant, *Civil War Records. Union Troops/Missouri Volunteer Cavalry* (Arlington, TX: Kenneth E. Weant, 2007), VIII: 41.
23. *Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Missouri*, Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry, Wilson L. Parker, M405, RG 94. *Returns*

from *U.S. Military Posts, 1800-1916*, October 10, 1865, M617, RG 94. Hereafter cited as *Post Returns*.

In the mid- to late-1800s, first sergeants were the cornerstone of any infantry, cavalry, or artillery company. They continue to be a mainstay of the army to this day. While captains command companies, first sergeants run them. For more on this vital leadership role, see Ernest J. Fisher, Jr., *Guardians of the Republic: A History of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps of the U.S. Army* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001).

24. Garfield, "The Frontier Defenses of Kansas," 50. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 164, 168. *OR*, XLVIII, Pt. 2: 1079. *Compiled Service Records*, Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry, Wilson L. Parker. For brief accounts of the four actions mentioned, see Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 170, 265, and Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), 124-25, 147-48.
25. *Daily Rocky Mountain News*, January 22, 1866.
26. *Post Returns*, October 10, 20 and 31, 1865. E. B. Quiner, *The Military History of Wisconsin: A Record of the Civil and Military Patriotism of the State in the War for the Union* (Chicago: Clarke and Company, 1866), 866.
27. Frank L. Klement, *Wisconsin in the Civil War: The Home Front and the Battle Front, 1861-1865* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1997), 3-4. *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers, War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*, II (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1886): 834-835, 837-839.
28. Leo E. Oliva, a recognized authority on Kansas military posts, has written *Fort Dodge: Sentry of the Western Plains* (Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2001), and *Fort Larned: Guardian of the Santa Fe Trail* (Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 1982). Reflecting the absence of available information, neither delve into the makeup of volunteer companies in Kansas during the Civil War.
29. *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Wisconsin* (Madison, WI: William J. Park & Company, 1866), 562-564. Quiner, *Military History of Wisconsin*, 864-866.
30. *Post Returns*, October 20 and 31, 1865. Weant, *Civil War Records*, 35.
31. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue*, 314-15. *OR*, XLVIII, Pt. 2: 796-97. Charles J. Kappler, comp. and ed., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904): 887-895. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 180-81.

Agent Leavenworth was the son of Colonel Henry Leavenworth, namesake of the military post in northeastern Kansas. For more on this warrior and peacemaker, see Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "Col. Jesse Henry Leavenworth," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, XIII (March 1935): 14-29.
32. *Post Returns*, November 10, 20, and 30, 1865. *Compiled Service Records*, Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry, John D. Kelly. *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers*, 839.

33. Don Rickey, Jr., *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 88, 144. Edward M. Coffman, "Army Life on the Frontier, 1865-1898," *Military Affairs*, XX (Winter 1956): 197. Lieutenants Doyle and Amman have already been discussed, while the remainder of the desertions was committed by enlisted men. *Returns from Regular Army Cavalry Regiments, 1833-1916*, March-April 1866, M744, RG 94. Hereafter cited as *Regimental Returns*, Second Cavalry.
34. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 85-86. Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*, 97-98. *Atchison Daily Champion*, April 18, 1866, October 18, 1865.
35. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 87, 84-85. Coffman, "Army Life on the Frontier," 199.
36. Theophilus F. Rodenbough, comp., *From Everglade to Cañon with the Second Dragoons* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1875), 371. *Post Returns*, December 10 and 20, 1865. *Compiled Service Records*, Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry, Wilson L. Parker. Berry, "Fort Aubrey," 195, 196. *Regimental Returns*, Second Cavalry, December 1866.
37. Mark W. Johnson, *That Body of Men: The U.S. Regular Infantry and the Civil War in the West* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2003), 24-25, 23. Clayton R. Newell and Charles R. Shrader, *Of Duty Well and Faithfully Done: A History of the Regular Army in the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), xiv, 39, 47, 58. More than two million men served in the Union Army during the war, and regulars numbered less than four percent of the overall force.
38. Mark W. Johnson, "Where Are the Regulars?": *An Analysis of Regular Army Recruiting and Enlistees, 1851-1865* (Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Albany, 2012), 161.
39. Anson Mills, *My Story*, ed. C. H. Claudy (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003), 102. Captain Mills incorrectly recalled the volunteers at the fort as being from Ohio. *Returns from Regular Army Infantry Regiments, June 1821-December 1916*, December-January 1866, M665, RG 94. Hereafter cited as *Regimental Returns*, Eighteenth Infantry. *Post Returns*, January 20 and 31, 1866. Mills to Adjutant General, two letters dated January 22, 1866, *Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, 1861-1870*, M619, RG 94. Hereafter cited as *Letters Received, Adjutant General's Office*. *Junction City Weekly Union*, December 30, 1865. Quiner, *Military History of Wisconsin*, 866. *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers*, 834-835, 837-839. Weant, *Civil War Records*, 35, 41.

During its one year of war service, the Forty-eighth Wisconsin would lose a total of sixteen men, not from battle wounds, but from disease. Company D's only casualty died at Fort Scott in April 1865. None from Company F died while in uniform. Charles Eastabrook, ed., *Wisconsin Losses in the Civil War* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1915), 196.

40. *Post Returns*, March 1 and February 20, 1866. *Regimental Returns*, Eighteenth Infantry, February 1866. Mills to Adjutant General, February 21, 1866, *Letters Received, Adjutant General's Office*. *Army and Navy Journal*, III (January 6, 1866): 313. *Regimental Returns*, Second Cavalry, February 1866.
- James A. Wier, "19th Century Army Doctors on the Frontier and in Nebraska," *Nebraska History* 61 (1980), 204: "The contract physician, or acting assistant surgeon, was a civilian hired for a specific time to give medical care to the troops. Some were on duty for just weeks or months, while others hired by the year renewed their contracts annually and served their entire professional careers with the Army."
41. Rodenbough, comp., *From Everglade to Cañon with the Second Dragoons*, 372.
42. Mills, *My Story*, 103.
43. *Junction City Weekly Union*, August 7, 1875.
44. *Regimental Returns*, Eighteenth Infantry, March-April 1866. Mills, *My Story*, 103, 104. *Post Returns*, March 31, April 10 and 15, 1866. *Regimental Returns*, Second Cavalry, April-May 1866. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*, 164.
- Those absconding from Company C were Maurice Koernback, Charles Davis, William Grier, John J. Mink, and Edward Southwick; Company H, John Dunke, Thomas Hezlett, Winfield S. Pietz, Alonzo Platt, William Mullins, Edward O'Donnell, John Allen, Patrick —, and James King; Company M, Charles White, Llewellyn Willis, John McNulty, and John —. Private William Kruse, of Company M, deserted on February 27, 1866. He continued to be carried on the regimental returns as a deserter and apparently was never apprehended.
45. Johnson, *That Body of Brave Men*, 595. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, 11-12. Newell and Shrader, *Of Duty Well and Faithfully Performed*, xvi, 303, 304. The demobilization and redeployment process was a complicated affair that nevertheless was accomplished within a relatively short period of time. For a fuller treatment of the effort, see William B. Holberton, *Demobilization of the Union Army, 1865-1866* (M.A. thesis, Lehigh University, 1993).
46. *Regimental Returns*, Eighteenth Infantry, April 1866. Rodenbough, comp., *From Everglade to Cañon with the Second Dragoons*, 372-373. Frazer, *Forts of the West*, 42, 52, 55, 59. *Junction City Weekly Union*, June 16, 1866.
47. Burr, "Aubry Cutoff of the Santa Fe Trail," 68, 70. *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Kansas State Historical Society* (Topeka, KS: State Printing Office, 1913), 115.
48. Berry, "Fort Aubrey," 196 n22. Robert W. Baughman, *Kansas Post Offices: May 29, 1828-August 3, 1961* (Topeka: Kansas Postal History Society, 1961), 46, 188.
49. Wright, "Frontier Life in Southwest Kansas," 55, 64. Blackmar, ed., *Cyclopedia of Kansas History*, II: 738. LeRoy R. Hafen, *The Overland Mail, 1849-1869* (Cleveland, OH: Arthur H.

Clark Company, 1926), 278, 305-06. Ralph Moody, *Stagecoach West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 299. Robert M. Wright, *Dodge City: The Cowboy Capital and the Great Southwest* (Wichita, KS: Wichita Eagle Press, 1913), 33.

50. Wright, "Frontier Life in Southwest Kansas," 55. Wright, *Dodge City*, 33.
51. Blackmar, ed., *Cyclopedia of Kansas History*, II: 738. *Atchison Daily Champion*, June 17, 1866.
52. Berry, "Fort Aubrey," 197. Boatner, *Civil War Dictionary*, 84: "For practical purposes, brevet rank can be regarded as an honorary title, awarded for gallant or meritorious action in time of war, and having none of the authority, precedence, or pay of real or full rank. There were occasions, however, when an officer could claim that his brevet rank be regarded as real rank."
53. *Daily Kansas Tribune*, June 7, 1867. *Junction City Weekly Union*, August 4, 1866. For some assorted recollections by Stickney, see *Topeka Daily Capital*, March 22, 1908.
54. Blackmar, ed., *Cyclopedia of Kansas History*, I: 803-4. *Wichita Beacon*, September 12, 1911.

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