

Fort McKavett State Historical Site
P. O. Box 68
Fort McKavett, Texas 76841



Fort McKavett Gazette

“News of our Volunteers and Friends”

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Fort McKavett Upcoming Events

December 3-5, Christmas at Old Fort Concho, Education Day on Friday

Dec. 11, Yuletide Texas, Battleship Texas

December 24-25, Site closed for Christmas

December 31 & January 1, Site closed for New Year's

March 25-26, West Texas Heritage Days, Fort McKavett*

April 3, Fort McKavett Spring Star Party*

April 8-10, Fort Richardson Days

May 13-14, Lake Arrowhead State Park Open House

May 20-21, Fort Lancaster Western Frontier Days*

*THC Historic Sites Event



Color Copies of all the Fort McKavett Gazettes can be found at:

www.fortmckavett.org

Notes from the Post...

Another year is coming to an end. We have seen great improvements in our site this year and both staff and volunteers have been busy showing Fort McKavett all over the state. Thanks to everyone for their hard work.

I would like to remind everyone to try to make it to Fort Concho this December 3rd – 5th. It looks like it will be another great event!

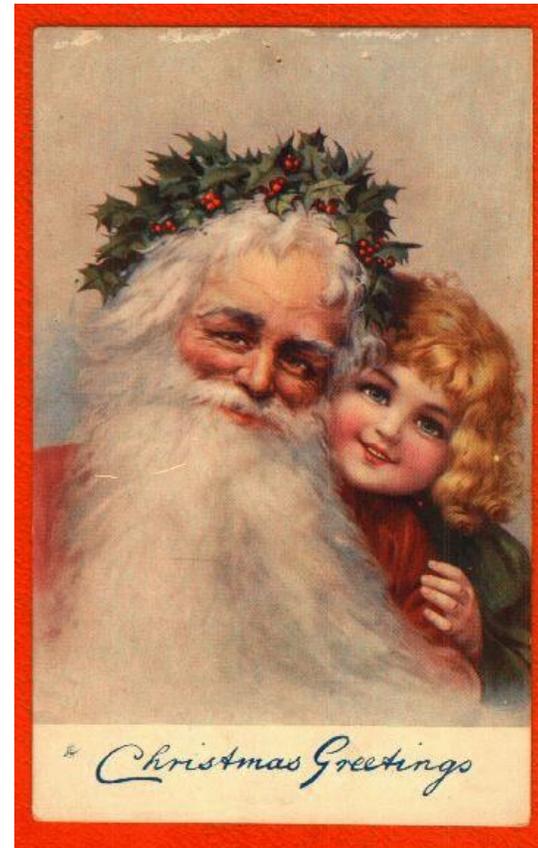
In the year to come, we will be finding out how our budget will be affected by the upcoming legislative session. All state agencies will be facing cuts and we will have to see how we stand when the dust settles. I will be watching this session and will let everyone know as soon as we have any information.

John Cobb
President
Friends of Fort McKavett

Texas State Troops Event at McKavett

The weekend of November 12-14, 2010 Fort McKavett hosted a living history event that hadn't previously been interpreted on site: the Texas State Troops. During the American Civil War, Fort McKavett was occupied by Co. E, 1st Texas Mounted Rifles from October 1861-April 1862, and then used by the 31st Brigade of Texas State Troops and the Frontier Regiment of Texas State Troops from April 1862 until May of 1865 when the last of the troops abandoned the post. The Texas State Troops were an organization created during the Civil War to protect the frontier counties from foreign invasion and depredation by indigenous peoples and was disbanded in 1867 when the Federal Army re-occupied the frontier posts. Except for a brief period in 1864, when the control of the Texas State Troops was turned over to the Confederate Government to mobilize against a Federal invasion from Louisiana during the Red River Campaign, these men were under the direct supervision of the governor of Texas.

During the event on site, living historians portrayed the third of the company that remained on post while the remainder of the troops were on patrol. These living historians portrayed the everyday activities of the soldiers as they would have been in 1863. Saturday morning began with roll call and a reading of the general orders, inspection and mail call. The men were then issued rations and were allowed several hours to prepare their rations and store them in their haversacks. Fatigue details were then carried out and the day ended with the men going onto private property for a live fire marksmanship competition. A post sutler shop was set up in the bakery and the soldiers were able to interact with the sutler throughout the day when they had free time. We had plenty of visitors come to the fort and see what Fort McKavett might have looked like during November 1863.



The Friends of Fort McKavett wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our friends.

If you are traveling, please stay safe and we will see you this coming year.



More from the Army Cookbook

Boiled Onions.

242. For 50 men, take about 18 pounds of onions—using none more than half as large as an egg. Boil until thoroughly done and serve with cream sauce. Onions left over may be used in making gravy, hash, stewed potatoes, or lionnalse potatoes.

Sliced Onions, etc.

243. One vegetable dish full is sufficient for 10 men. Peel and wash the onions; cut into thin slices and serve without a dressing, or serve with a dressing of pepper, salt, and vinegar. Or take onions and pickles, half and half, chop together, very fine, and season to taste with pepper and salt. Or take one-third each of onions, cabbage and pickles; chop fine; mix well and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Onion Recipes

American Canned Peas.

246. For 50 men, take 10 1-pound cans and empty contents into the stew-pot; salt and pepper to taste; let come to a boil; thicken slightly with a flour batter, and let come to a boil again when they are ready to serve.

Green Peas.

247. For 50 men, take about 10 Government tin cups of shelled peas. Carefully pick over, mash, and place in a boiler or a stew-pot. Add half as much beef stock as peas, a small quantity of drippings or butter, season with salt and pepper, and let boil for about 15 minutes; then thicken slightly with a flour batter and serve hot. If practicable add 1 can of Highland cream to each gallon of peas.

Army Peas

German Boiled Potatoes.

250. For 50 men, take about 18 pounds of potatoes—cut to about the size of an egg. After boiling, place in vegetable dishes and over each spread about 2 basting-spoonfuls of browned onions. Serve hot. Potatoes left over from this recipe may be used in lionnalse potatoes, salad, creamed potatoes, fried potatoes, hash, stew, and various other ways.

The Army Potato

Weather, Fort McKavett, Texas December 1879

Meteorologicals:
Maximum temperature during the month 84° F.
Minimum temperature during the month 9° F.
Monthly mean temperature 52.38° F.
Prevailing winds - South & Southwest.
No. of days of rain 2. Quantity of rain fall 0.36 inch.
Average cloudiness, 3.91+

The weather for Fort McKavett is found in the Medical Journal. In December, 1879, Dr. Goddard recorded this entry. Note the warm temperatures.

New Fort McKavett Buildings Approved in 1869

Headquarters Fifth Military District,
Austin, Texas, May 26, 1869.

Bot. Lieut Col. W. Rime,
Commanding Post, Fort McKavett, Tx.

Thro' Office Chief Quartermaster, Fifth Military District.

Sir:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and enclosures of the 9th instant, — The location of the Hospital and Warehouse approved and the Contractor can proceed at once to build them. — The plan of the reservation is herewith returned. — The other enclosures will be returned as early as practicable.

Very respectfully, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
A. M. Moore,
Acting Assistant Quartermaster General.

(Enc. Enclosures)

In this correspondence from Department Headquarters in Austin, Fort McKavett received the approval for a new hospital and quartermaster warehouse in May of 1869. Because the War Department did not receive funding from congress for several years, it was 1872 before construction started and 1874 before the hospital and the warehouse were completed and in use.

More Photos of the 1863 Event

*Staff and Volunteers Showing
Texas State Troops*



*The November 12-14,
1863 Event at Fort
McKavett showed
visitors to the site a little
known part of history of
the post during the Civil
War*

51.

CHRISTMAS DINNER.

Oyster Soup and Crackers.
Roast Turkey with Dressing.
Cranberry Sauce.
Boiled Ham and Mashed Potatoes.
Green Peas.
Asparagus with Cream Sauce.
Celery.
Lettuce Salad.
Pumpkin Pie.
Peach Pie.
Jelly Roll.
Marble Cake.
Mixed Candies and Nuts.
Crushed Strawberries and Cream.
Bread and Butter.
Coffee.

Christmas on an Indian Wars Army Post

Christmas Day and the 4th of July were the only days off in an 1800's army post. The only people who were not off were the guards, cooks and medical staff.

The menu above was the suggested fare from the Army Cookbook for Christmas Dinner on post. This is quite a feast compared to the daily meals usually served by the army cooks. As you can see, there were quite a few sweet items that were seldom served to the troops. Of course, wild game could be substituted when these things could not be shipped to the frontier.

Interesting bit of Trivia

SUGAR AND COFFEE.

SEC. 1294. For each ration of sugar and coffee not issued, nor commuted for the extract of coffee combined with milk and sugar, enlisted men shall be paid in money. [See § 1147.]
5 July, 1838, c. 162, s. 17, v. 5, p. 258.

This could amount to 15 cents per day. Needless to say, the army took great care to have an issue of coffee and sugar for the soldiers.

RATIONS OF ENLISTED MEN.

SEC. 1293. Sergeants and corporals of ordnance shall be entitled to receive one ration and a half daily. Other enlisted men shall be entitled to receive one ration daily.
8 Feb., 1815, c. 38, s. 11, v. 3, p. 204.
2 Mar., 1821, c. 13, s. 11, p. 615.
5 July, 1862, c. 133, s. 3, v. 12, p. 508.

Regulations also said ordnance NCO's ate better!