

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



Fort McKavett Gazette

“News of our Volunteers and Friends”

Volume 4 , Number 1

January, 2005



January 19-22...Huff Wagon Train
at Fort McKavett

February 12-13...Battleship Texas
Event, Houston

March 11-13Fort McKavett
Living History Event

Huff Wagon Train updates
can be watched on TPWD's
Webcast located at:

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/expltx/ef/>



Fort
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Huff Wagon Train and Fort McKavett

TPWD is helping sponsor the Huff Wagon Train from El Paso to Houston this month. They will be arriving at Fort McKavett area starting January 19th (Weds) and will be in our area of operation until Saturday morning, the 22nd.

We need as many volunteers to help with the cooking and feeding of these folks as possible. Please contact Buddy Garza at the Post if you can help. If nothing else, one day of being around helping with odds and ends would be great.

Buddy can be reached at:
(325) 396-2358
See you there!!!

From the Archives



Fort McKavett and the Post Gardens

In the 1874 Surgeons Report, the Post Gardens supplied the Fort with Watermelons, Cantaloupes, Tomatoes, Squash, onions and Pumpkins. Later reports speak of Peas, Beans (Pinto or Red Beans and others) and Sweet Potatoes.

Irish Potatoes were always a failure because of the dirt having so much limestone content. These had to be imported from Denton and later on from San Antonio at great Expense. Numerous peppers were also grown and Watercress was found in abundance at the springs.

Each Company or Troop, as well as the Band (who also took care of the Hospital, raised their own selves and sold the excess to other units with the money going into the Company Funds. The harvested vegetables were kept in the root cellar of the Commanding Officers Quarters, Barracks No. 1, and at the Hospital. Several times, the records point out Companies were disappointed when they had to transfer and lose their crops.

Unlike most of the Forts in Texas, McKavett was a healthy Post with very little cases of Scurvy or other dietary problems. This made us one of the healthiest Posts in the West.

The Gardens were watered by flood irrigation on the river and later by windmill.

Soldiers at Fort McKavett 22nd Infantry 1879-81

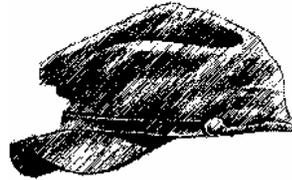


Edward Otho Cresap Ord II, was born at Benicia Barracks, California, November 9, 1858. He attended the public schools of San Francisco and Omaha, Nebraska. He was appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy in 1876, but withdrew the following year. In 1879 he was appointed second lieutenant in the 22nd Infantry at Fort McKavett. His father was the Commanding Officer of the Department of Texas. His wife (Mary) wrote "A WEDDING TRIP IN 1879", printed in the Gazette a couple of years ago. He served at McKavett until January, 1881 where he took part in several campaigns against the Apaches in the Post area of operation. After leaving the Post, he was in command of the Seminole Indian scouts in 1882. He participated in the campaign against Sitting Bull in 1891-1892. At the beginning of the Spanish-American war (1898) the 22nd Infantry was among the first troops landed in Cuba, and he was promoted captain of infantry.

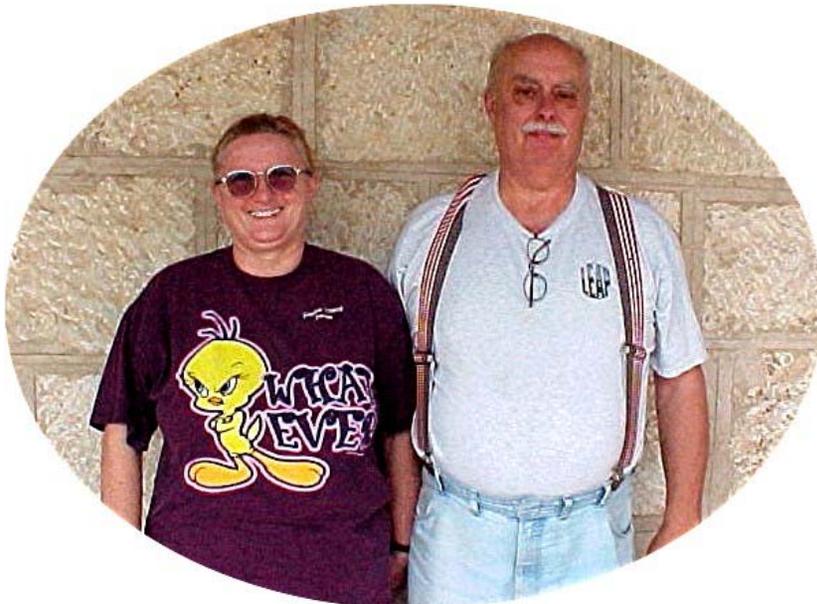
Photograph 1883 in San Antonio, Texas

After the war, Capt. Ord remained in Cuba for nine months as interpreter on the staff of Gen. Alexander R. Lawton. He was then sent to the Philippines when rebellion broke out, but was forced to retire on October 10, 1903 due to physical disabilities contracted in Cuba. Subsequently, Capt. Ord did relief work after the San Francisco earthquake. He was then military instructor at St. Matthew's school, San Mateo, California, and later military aide on the staff of the governor of Arizona, and saw service on the Mexican border. On June 3, 1916, he was advanced to the grade of major on the retired list. After a year as military instructor at the University of Alabama he returned to full active duty, serving at Big Bend, Texas; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He eventually retired in 1918 He spent his last years in California painting landscapes and writing poetry. He died at Eagle Rock, California, April 4th, 1923 and is buried with his Grandfather, Father, Son and their families in Arlington National Cemetery.

A tip of the hat!!!



Meet our Park Hosts

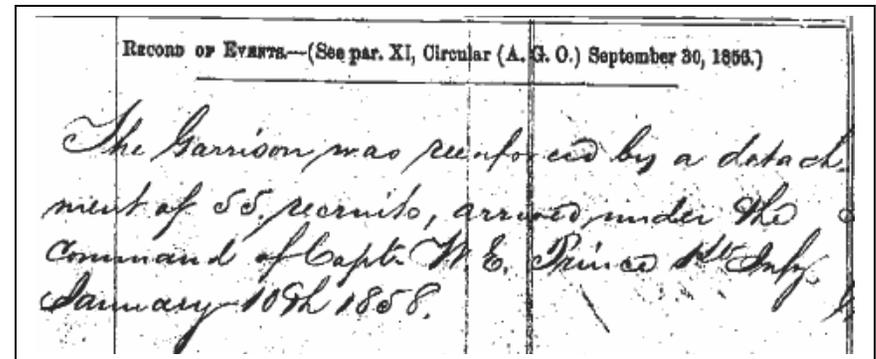


Terry Conrad and Glenn Gaylord from Colorado have been our on site Park Hosts for the last couple of months and will be staying through the last of January.

They have helped out in every aspect of the Site. Terry has made window coverings for all the buildings. Glenn is retired from Law Enforcement and Kodak. They both “dig in” and work at any project. They have worked in the visitors center, maintaining the grounds, and special projects. We hope they will come back later in the year and help out again.

.Thanks from all the Volunteers and Staff of Fort McKavett.

January, 1858



With just a little more than a year left before the closing of Fort McKavett before the Civil War, Captain W. E. Prince of the 1st U.S. Infantry brought 55 recruits to the Post on January 10th, 1858. This excerpt is from the Post Returns of Fort McKavett and can be seen at the Post Library.

1.	John Coleman	Priv.	1 st Inf.	Jan 12
2.	John J. Atkins	"	"	" 12
3.	Michael Kelly	"	"	" 12
4.	Thomas Smith	"	"	" 12

These four recruits were placed in the Guard House of Fort McKavett on their arrival. Research is underway to see what they were charged with and how it was handled.

W. E. Prince, Captain at this time, took the oath in 1838 having acquired an appointment as a 2nd Lt. in the 1st Infantry. He served in that regiment until November 1861, when he was promoted to Major in the 3rd U.S. Infantry. In 1864, he became a Lt. Col. in the 3rd and was medically retired in March of 1864. In retirement, he lived a long life and died in January of 1893. He was from Mass.

Frontier Times
Volume 4; June 1927; Number 9
Great Indian Raid near Fort McKavett in 1866
Related by Jasper Newton, of San Angelo, Texas in 1911

When the great Indian raid occurred in 1866, I was living in old Fort McKavett. My father-in-law, Mr. Dawson, lived on Charlie Champie's place on the river about a mile below the Post. His daughter had become afflicted and in order to secure medical treatment, he had taken her to a doctor at Georgetown. Her condition was almost hopeless and years elapsed before she recovered.

During Mr. Dawson's absence, I with my family, remained on his place to look after the stock and the premises. For some days before the raid, I had been assisting Mr. Poe, who then lived at 18-mile crossing of the San Saba, in leveling to see if water for irrigation could be taken from the river. Early one morning about an hour before day, Charley Champie dashed into the yard and yelled: "Jasper, get up and get home quick; he valley is literally alive with Indians; they have killed McDougall, lanced Clara Schulenberger and drove off all the stock in the country, and I expect their scouts will be back today and murder all the people. There are over two hundred Indians in the bunch!" I hurried off and when I reached Mr. McDougall's place, about 1 1/2 miles below McKavett, I found a few men hunting for McDougall, whose body was not found until the following morning. The day before the raid, McDougall had started with George Roberts to take a bunch of fat cattle to San Antonio. They drove to Hillard's on Cedar Creek and penned. McDougall hobbled out his horse and the next morning the beast was back home. McDougall mounted a pony, came home and got his horse and started back, and that was the last time his family saw him alive.

A few minutes after he left, which was about 9 a.m. Mrs. McDougall sent Clara Schulenberger, a 16-year-old daughter by a former husband to the garden to gather vegetables for dinner. The girl wore a large sun-bonnet and hearing the sound of horses feet, she looked up and saw a group of horsemen approaching, whom she took to be a cow outfit from the Conchos. These men dashed upon her and a white man on a powerful horse, ran over her knocking her down. She arose and ran screaming toward the house, which was only a few steps away. Mrs. McDougall ran to her and assisted her into the house, the girl did not know she had been wounded, but the brave mother saw the blood pouring from the wound when she helped her into the house, but she had no time for tears and condolence. The Indians, about 200 by this time, were

leaping their horses over the fence into the yard and welling like demons. She closed and barred the doors of the little picket house in which she lived, and seized an old double barreled shot gun that had been out of fix for years, and which was only a keepsake in the family and had not been even loaded or fired for years, she was prepared to sell out as dearly as possible. It chanced to be house-cleaning day, and that morning Mrs. McDougal had moved nearly everything out of the house into the yard. The Indians fell to dividing up the plunder. They ripped open the feather beds and pillows, poured the feathers to the winds, and appropriated the ticking. They took everything they could carry off and destroyed the rest. Several could speak good English and would call to her to come out or else open the door and admit them. When one of them would approach too near, she would thrust the muzzle of that old worthless gun through a crack and threaten him with instant death, and he invariably made a dive to get out of the range of that frowning old gun. When these men first charged on Clara Schulenberger, quite a large number left the main body and went in pursuit of McDougall. They soon came up with him and killed him. It seems that he surrendered when they overhauled him and that they stripped him of his clothing and with arrows or other sharp instruments, pricked his back full of wounds. When found he was entirely nude, and was lying on the low bank of the river near the water. He had swam across the stream of the opposite shore and had grasped a bamboo briar. He still held the briar in his hand when found, and had been shot in the back, the ball entering between the shoulder blades and coming out the throat. The theory held was that after being tortured he plunged into the stream and as he reached the opposite shore the fatal shot struck him. He was not scalped.

After having killed all the chickens on the place and taking all the household plunder they cared to carry away, the Indians left the McDougall place and not until they were out of sight did Mrs. McDougall find time to attend her suffering child. Upon examination, she found that Clara was indeed sorely wounded. The Indian's lance had entered her back near the spine and had severed three ribs. There were no physicians nor surgeons in the country in those days, and the daughter was too grievously wounded to be taken to Austin or Georgetown. She lay four years a sufferer from that wound.

As to the number of these Indians making this raid; Bobbie Robinson took his field glass and went to the top of his house, the highest in McKavett, and from which he had a commanding view of all of the valley below and for miles around. From his lofty perch, and with an

excellent field glass he could see and count each squad as they rounded up bunch after bunch of cattle and passed up the valley. Mr. Robinson counted 250 Indians, and the lowest estimate placed upon the number of cattle they drove out was 10,000. The season was extremely dry, and there was no water to be had only in the river and the valley was full of stock that had drifted in from other ranges to procure water, and all the savages had to do was to round the up and drive them off.

Runners were sent to the lower settlements for help, and two days later a company of 53 men came up from Mason and Camp San Saba. They followed the trail left by the Indians until they reached the dry lakes on the head of Devil's River. There seemed to have been water in these lakes when the Indians were on heir way down to San Saba, but they were dry. The men had been in doubt as to the number of Indians in the layout. They thought Mr. Robinson's count was made while laboring under intense excitement, and was therefore, greatly exaggerated. They didn't believe there were over 40 Indians in the raid and they could easily whip the whole outfit if they could once get sight of them. But at the dry lakes they found that the Indians had camped while on their way down the country, and had killed and barbecued eleven horses. They could easily estimate the number killed and cooked since there still remained the heads and feet. Those men didn't go any further, although within a day's ride of the Indians. They reasoned that if it took eleven head of horses to feed that body of Indians, their number must be far in excess of Bobbie Robinson's estimate, and that it would be suicidal folly for 53 to attack such an army, and so they turned back and went home.

A few days before this raid, a Federal officer, with an escort of two companies of well mounted and equipped cavalry, spent a day and two nights in Fort McKavett. This officer was making a tour along the entire frontier, inspecting, with a view to reoccupying former U.S. military posts, and the locating of new post. On the day of the raid, we knew that this officer with his two companies of cavalry was camped on Spring Creek, not far from where Fort Concho was later established. The night following the raid and while one herd was held by the Indians at the head spring, and yet another was being held in Middle Draw Valley above McKavett, we decided that if we could only get word to this officer he might be able to head off the savages, recover our stock and avenge the

under control. Nothing to hinder their coming back on the morrow and slaughtering every person in the near McKavett. No one cared to go. Finally, a Mexican by the name of Augustine said he would go if John Ringer would let him ride his fine race horse. Ringer told him he was more than welcome to the use of the horse and 20 minutes later Augustine was in the saddle and away in the darkness of the night. He rode east a few miles, then turned north, and by circuitous route reached the soldier's camp on Spring creek next morning at sun rise, and delivered the appeal of the people of McKavett. The officer in command, pompously informed our messenger that he was not out hunting Indians; that his orders were to locate posts, and if those people wanted the Indians whipped, they could go after them and do their own fighting.

This Indian raid was credited to the Comanches, but I don't believe there was a Comanche in the entire gang. They were Kickapoos.

Addition information about this story:

Mr. McDougall is buried in the Fort McKavett Cemetery his head stone reads killed by Indian attack.

Clara Schulenberger did in fact recover from her wounds and the site has a photograph of her near a creek with her husband and nine children. She is also buried in the Fort McKavett Cemetery.

The building that Bobbie Robinson used to view the aftermath of the raids is said to be the Commanding Officers Quarters the only two story building at the post.

The Army never owned the property that the reservation was on but leased it from the Robinson Family.