

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



Fort McKavett Gazette

“News of our Volunteers and Friends”

Volume 9, Number 10

October, 2010

Fort McKavett Upcoming Events

October 2, Texas Forts Trail (cancelled),
Frontier Texas, Abilene
October 8-9, Fort Griffin Living History
Event*
October 9, Fort McKavett, Archaeology
Program*
October 9, Fort McKavett Public Fall Star
Party*
October 16, Fort Stockton Living History
Day
October 16, Confederate Reunion
Grounds, Archaeology Program*
November 13-14 Fort McKavett, Texas
State Troops Living History
December 3-5, Christmas at Old Fort
Concho, Education Day on Friday
December 11, Yuletide TEXAS,
Battleship Texas
March 5, Fort McKavett Spring Star
Party*
March 25-26, West Texas Heritage Days,
Fort McKavett*
April 8-10, Fort Richardson Days
May 13,14, Lake Arrowhead State Park
Open House

*THC Historic Sites Event



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

Notes from the Post...

It's a busy time of the year. In the next couple of weeks we will have our star party, Texas Archaeology Month events at Fort McKavett, the Confederate Reunion Grounds and Fort Griffin, and Fort Stockton's Living History day. It's going to be a busy time for everyone.

The Friends of Fort McKavett is purchasing solar powered lights to direct visitors to our star parties. These lights will line the path from the parking lot to the Visitors Center then to the parade ground. These red and white lights will be installed before the each star party then taken up the next day and stored. The lights should make it easier and safer for our guests to get to the star party.

**John Cobb
President
Friends of Fort McKavett**

Important Issue Item...

4. Toilet paper:

For use of enlisted men stationed at such military posts and camps as are provided with modern water-closets with sewer connections—

For each two enlisted men, per month, one package or roll of 1,000 sheets.

For use in water-closets of post guardhouses where such closets have sewer connections—

Such quantities as the commanding officer may order as necessary.

From the Army Subsistence Manual, the issue of toilet paper (and you thought this was something fairly new) for enlisted men at posts where modern water closets with sewer connections were available.

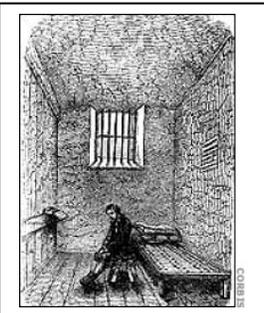
Sad to say, Fort McKavett never had sewer connections or water closets, we had “sinks” (military outhouses) instead.

Issues for Prisoners

776. Such of the following articles as may be necessary, not to exceed in value 50 cents per month for each general prisoner confined at a military post without pay or allowances, will be issued by commissaries on the 15th day of each month to the officer in charge of prisoners, viz :

Beeswax,	Mugs, shaving
Blacking, shoe,	Needles,
Brooms, whisk,	Razors,
Brushes, blacking,	Razor strops,
Brushes, hair,	Scissors,
Brushes, shaving,	Soap, issue,
Brushes, tooth,	Soap, shaving,
Buttons,	Thread,
Combs, fine,	Toilet paper,
Combs, horn,	Toweling, unbleached.

Also from the Army's Subsistence Manual, prisoners were allowed these items for those who were not receiving pay or allowances as long as it didn't mount up more than 50 cents per month. Even at the prices at that time, it didn't allow for much.



Being a prisoner at Fort McKavett, just like in any of the Indian Wars Posts, was not a desirable position. When you were not locked up in a tiny, poorly ventilated cell, you were on fatigue details, such as cleaning the outhouses, water detail, working on roads, mowing, cleaning and other jobs around the post.

Some uses for your Hardtack or Hard Bread

Hard-Bread Toast Water.—Two tablespoonfuls of powdered hard bread; 1 pint of boiling water; $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful of salt; add the powdered hard bread, after toasting or parching in an oven, to the salted boiling water; boil for 10 minutes; strain through gauze and serve hot or cold. The toast water may be flavored with sugar, condensed milk, or whisky.

Hard-Bread Mush or Porridge.—One cup of powdered hard bread; 4 cups of boiling water; 1 teaspoonful of salt; mix and boil for 10 minutes. The resulting mush may be eaten with condensed milk or stewed dried fruit. Care should be taken to prevent scorching by frequent stirring, and the water should be boiling in all cases before adding the powdered bread.

Hard Bread as Milk Toast.—Toast two or three pieces of hard bread to a good brown color by placing in an oven or over a clear fire on a toaster; when done, pour enough boiling water over them to soften thoroughly; dilute 2 tablespoonfuls of condensed milk in four times as much boiling water; drain off the water from the toasted bread and pour on the milk; serve hot.

From the Army Manual for Cooks for Hospital Patients on special diets. These recipes are apparently for individual servings.

APPROXIMATE MEASURES.

Four teaspoonfuls of liquid are equal to one tablespoonful. Three teaspoonfuls of solid material, as sugar or arrow-root, are equal to one tablespoonful.

One tablespoonful contains one-half a fluid ounce.

One coffee cup, Quartermaster's contains ten fluid ounces.

One coffee cup, usual size, contains eight fluid ounces.

One glass tumbler, usual size, contains eight fluid ounces.

Two coffee cups, or glass tumblers, usual size, are equal to one pint.

One tin cup, soldier's field mess outfit, contains one and one-half pints.

These measurements are for cooks assigned to the hospital. Most of the recipes use these measurements in the Cook's Manual.



The Army issue tin cup for soldiers had a multitude of uses, just like the WWII-Vietnam Era U.S. Army Helmet.

Shelter Halves for Enlisted Men

Description of Shelter Tent.

Dimensions of each half tent when finished:

Length, (measured along foot or top,) 5 feet 6 inches.

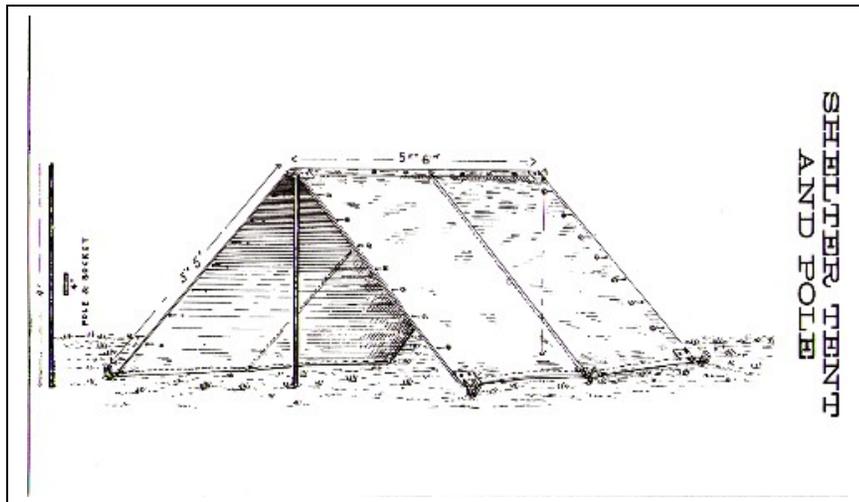
Width, (measured along seam,).....5 " 5 "

To be made of cotton duck $33\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, clear of all imperfections, and weighing eight ounces to the linear yard.

To be made in a workmanlike manner in every respect, with strong, well-worked button holes, made with waxed thread of sufficient size and strength to make them durable. All other holes to have good strong grommets well worked in them with waxed thread or twine.

Top Buttons.—Eight metallic (tinned, galvanized, or zinc) buttons, in a line parallel to, and four inches from, the upper edge or head of each half tent, at intervals of eight inches from centre to centre, the extreme buttons being one inch from the side edges or ends of each half tent.

Each enlisted man was issued a shelter half (two men per tent) and this shows what the Army requirements were. One thing to note is the length, 5 feet, 6 inches. People were quite a bit shorter than today. These were kept in the Quartermaster's Storehouse on post until needed for field duty.



Above: 1875 Army Specifications for the Shelter Tent and Poles. This design was used from before the Civil War through 1904. The Inspector General inspected these tents four times per year at Fort McKavett.

Post Bakery

Post Bakeries.

331. Bread will be baked in post bakeries when practicable. At all permanent Posts a suitable building for the purpose, and the necessary utensils and furniture therefor, will be provided by the Quartermaster's Department. The Post Treasurer, under the supervision of the commanding officer, will have charge of the Bakery.

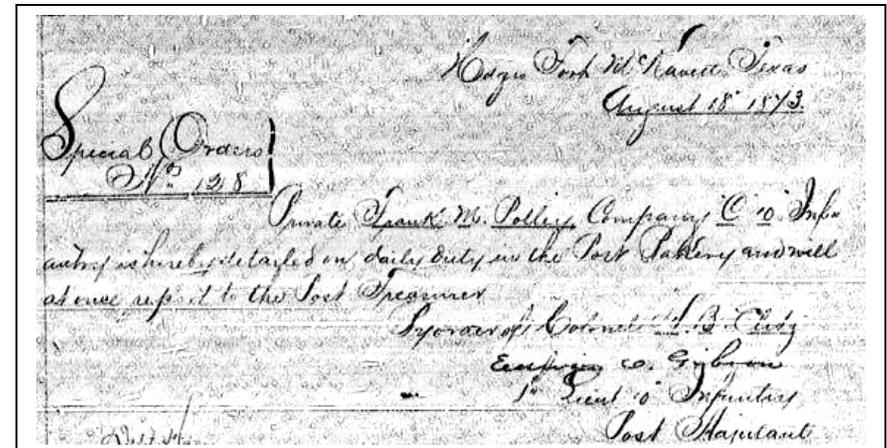
332. A competent enlisted man will be detailed as chief baker, and if necessary, one or more enlisted men as assistant bakers.

333. Extra pay to post bakers will be paid from the bakery fund, and the following daily rates are authorized: To the chief baker at a Post of two Companies or less, 35 cents; three Companies, 40 cents; four Companies, 50 cents. To each necessary assistant, 10 cents less than the chief baker, when the chief baker's pay is 40 cents or less, and 15 cents less, when the chief baker's pay is 50 cents. At larger posts the chief baker may be paid not to exceed \$1 per day and the assistants less amounts, the rates to be fixed by the post council.

334. The expenses of the bakery will be restricted to the extra pay of the bakers, the purchase of articles necessary for making bread, and utensils not furnished by the supply departments. These expenses must be paid from the bakery fund.

335. The chief baker will be inspected and mustered at the post bakery. He will be excused from ordinary post duties, but will attend target practice.

336. The baking of bread by Companies at Posts is expressly forbidden.



10th Infantry Pvt. Frank Polley is assigned to the bakery August 1873

Texas Archaeology Month at Fort McKavett

October is Texas Archaeology Month and one of the best ways to participate in this month's long celebration is to come to Fort McKavett on October 9, 2010 and attend our program. The program will be presented at 10 a.m. and again at 2 p.m. and will include general information about the site, archaeology that has been done on site, examples of artifacts uncovered, and some simulated archaeology digs for the kids.

In addition to these two program times, throughout the day we will have flint knappers creating the tools and weapons that the archaeological evidence shows the Native Americans in the area created and used hundreds of years ago. As with many springs in Central Texas, Fort McKavett's Government Spring was used by indigenous people for thousands of years, and their presence is still visible in the rocks close to the springs and on the hill tops nearby where deep round bottom holes in solid limestone and burned/scorched stones still exist. These holes were created over time by the repeated grinding of stone on stone when acorns were ground into meal by the tribes in the area.

The area along the San Saba River that the site occupies has been inhabited by non-Native Americans for three hundred years, with Fort McKavett being occupied consistently for 140+ years alone. A display showing some of the unique artifacts will be present during the programs.



Left: Fort McKavett hosted an Archaeology Workshop for the Boy Scouts in June, 2010.

Fall Star Party

Another activity planned for Saturday, October 9th is our fall star party, weather permitting. Members of the Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society will have their telescopes setup on the fort's parade ground. Their advanced amateur telescopes along with Fort McKavett's dark skies give some of the best views of planets, star clusters, nebulae, and galaxies available in the country.

There will be a short astronomy presentation of what to expect at the star party starting at 6 p.m. (time subject to change) in the fort's school house. The star party starts at dark. Please park in the fort's parking lot and bring a flashlight. Red cellophane will be available to cover your flashlight as white light will ruin your night vision and is not permitted. Admission is free after 5 p.m. Regular entrance fees apply before 5 p.m.



The star party is dependent on the weather. Overcast skies or rain will cause the star party to be cancelled. There is no rain date. You may call the fort at 325-396-2358 until 5:00 pm to check on weather conditions.