A History of Fort Zarah, 1864-1869

Lawrence C. Hammer

Fort Hays Kansas State College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses

Part of the History Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses/816

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at FHSU Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of FHSU Scholars Repository.
A HISTORY OF
FORT ZARAH 1864–1869

being

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts

by

Lawrence Charles Hammer, B. S.
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date July 25, 1963

Approved Gordon W. Davidson
Major Professor

Approved Ralph V. Cook
Chairman, Graduate Council
ABSTRACT

A wheat field with remnants of crumbled, brownish stone, broken glass, and square-headed nails is the remains of Fort Zarah, abandoned over ninety years ago. For many years a mystery enshrouded the Fort's existence. The efforts of county historians to uncover documentary historical materials about Fort Zarah were only partially successful. It was the challenge of uncovering forgotten history that created the desire to write this thesis.

The early results of research were disappointing, as historical materials were extremely scarce and limited in content. The search for materials was expanded into the National Archives in Washington, the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka, and the Denver Public Library, as well as all diaries, journals, and newspapers available. In addition to these documents the writer visited the site of Fort Zarah and talked with local historians.

Troops had been stationed at the important Walnut Creek Crossing since 1853. Here the Walnut Creek was forded in order to follow the Santa Fe Trail. The growth of commercial intercourse and the discovery of gold in Colorado had brought an increase in the traffic on the Santa Fe Trail, and disturbed the hunting grounds of nomadic Indians, following their chief means of livelihood, the buffalo. In 1864, a general Indian War ensued and added protection on the Santa Fe Trail was needed to protect the fringe area of military posts already established in the region. As a result Fort Zarah, a one-company outpost was established in 1864 near the Walnut Creek Crossing.
The life and duty of the soldiers stationed at Fort Zarah was extremely hard and demanding, as Indian attacks were sporadic and the troops were quite busy escorting wagon trains to and from forts Harker, Larned, and the Cow Creek Ranch. In 1866, council was held at Fort Zarah with the Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Apache nations for the purpose of signing the amendments to the Treaty of the Little Wichita. Many prominent leaders of the Indian and Federal Government were present, but only two tribes signed the amendments. In 1867, an enlarged fort was built at a cost of $110,000, one mile from the original site. One year later the garrison at Fort Zarah successfully repelled an Indian attack of over 150 Kiowas. By 1869, Indian hostilities dropped to a minimum as warring tribes were driven south and westward. With the end of the Indian wars of 1864-1869, Fort Zarah was no longer useful or practical. In October, 1869, the fort was ordered dismantled, and the tin roof and other valuable parts of the structure were removed to Fort Harker.
PREFACE

A comprehensive history of Fort Zarah has never been written. For many years a mystery enshrouded the Fort's existence, and county historians searched for the history of the fort with little success. It was the challenge of uncovering forgotten history that created the desire for this thesis.

The first results of research were negative and disappointing as material in the area was extremely scarce. After much correspondence, material was found at the National Archives in Washington, the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka, and the Denver Public Library. A systematic survey of documents, general references, diaries, journals, and newspapers brought forth more information. I also visited the Fort site and interviewed local historians.

The Indian wars of 1864-1869 created the need for an additional outpost to police the Santa Fe Trail and protect the exposed fringe area of forts Harker and Larned. Fort Zarah, a one company outpost, was established in 1864, near the important Walnut Creek Crossing of the Santa Fe Trail. The life and duty of the soldiers stationed at Fort Zarah was extremely hard and demanding, as Indian attacks were sporadic and the outpost was quite busy escorting wagon trains. In 1867, an enlarged fort was built at a cost of $110,000, only to be dismantled two years later. The last large Indian attack was directed at the post in 1868, when a force of 150 Kiowas were successfully stopped. In 1866, a council was held at Fort Zarah with the Kiowa, Commanche, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Apache nations for the purpose of signing the amendments to the Treaty of 1866, but only two tribes signed. In October, 1869, the Fort was ordered dismantled, and the tin roof and other valuable parts of the structure were removed to Fort Harker.
I am deeply indebted to Mr. Gordon Davidson, who spent much time helping me with my thesis materials; Mr. Ray Shultz, who freely lent his manuscripts to me, and my wife, who patiently proofread and typed the final copies.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. EARLY HISTORY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF FORT ZARAH</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF FORT ZARAH</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. GARRISON LIFE AT FORT ZARAH</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. RELATIONS WITH THE INDIANS</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. ABANDONMENT</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF FORT ZARAH

Geographic conditions made the Santa Fe' Trail one of the great highways of the west. Although explorers had traveled portions of the trail at an early date, it was not until 1821, when William Becknell, employing the use of wagons, made trade with Santa Fe' commercially profitable. Santa Fe', a territorial capital with a population of three thousand inhabitants, supplied "villages and ranches for a hundred miles to the north of Santa Fe' and a hundred and forty to the south."¹ Formerly, goods were supplied from Vera Cruz and other cities along the coast at a great expense, but the geographic advantage of St. Louis, and its contact by water transportation with Independence, Westport, and Kansas City, made the Santa Fe' Trail a natural commercial route to Santa Fe'. Wagon traffic constantly increased on the Santa Fe' Trail. After 1826, the merchandise received at Santa Fe' averaged $116,000 per annum but it rose to $250,000 in 1831 and 1839, and to $50,000 in 1843."²

There were four distinct divisions of the trail. The region from Independence to Council Grove, a well-watered grassland, was comparatively free from Indian attack. Then a climatic change transformed the humid prairie from Council Grove to the Arkansas River into an arid plains. Here was the heart of the Kiowa and Comanche hunting ground.³ In the Cimarron Desert, the third division of the trail, a shortcut to Santa Fe' could be used if the wagon-master


²Ibid., 195.

had no fear of water shortage and menacing Indians. An alternative route, the mountain branch, led to Bent's Fort over Raton Pass and into Santa Fe. Although the mountain route was longer than the "shortcut", the danger from water shortage and Indian attack was not as great.

In 1825 a peace council was held at Council Grove, on the Neosho River, in which the chiefs of various tribes living in the region of the Santa Fe Trail agreed to let citizens of the United States and Mexico pass without interference. But by 1829, Indian depredations on Santa Fe traders had increased to the point that executive action by President Jackson ordered four companies of infantry under the command of Major Bennett Riley to escort wagon trains as far as the international border. Congressional action was sought by traders to insure the safety of traffic along the Santa Fe Trail by the establishment of cavalry units as escorts, however action on the subject was mainly in the form of senatorial speeches. By 1832, Santa Fe traders had successfully organized their wagon caravans in a military fashion so as to discourage Indian attacks.

With the influx of settlers into the trans-Mississippi west, and the growing hatred between the military and red man, it was felt that civilians might better understand the Indian problem. In 1849, the Indian Office was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior. A treaty with the Cheyenne and Arapahoes was signed at Fort Laramie in 1851. "Congress was to pay annuities to the several tribes, and they, in turn, were to allow the government to build military posts within their country and project roads across it."
The basin of the Arkansas River at the Big Bend of the Arkansas was rich in timber and prairie grass. Here at the famous Walnut Crossing was an important camping area for travelers along the Santa Fe, and Indians in their migration to and from their hunting grounds.

The first white men to establish any sort of settlement on the Great Bend were traders. One of the most important trading posts was the William Allison Ranch on the Arkansas River at the junction of the upper Walnut Creek and the Santa Fe Trail. Walnut Creek was referred to by the Indians as Tsodalhentedi P'a, "Armless Man's Creek" named for the trader, Allison, who had lost his right arm from a bullet fired by his stepfather. It is difficult to fix the exact date of the establishment of Allison's "Ranch" as primary sources are not in agreement. In any event Allison and Booth had been former conductors on the Santa Fe Stage line and, after establishing a permanent store, made their living by killing wolves for their skin and selling supplies to travelers.

In May, 1853, a post office was established near the mouth of Walnut Creek and Samuel G. Mason, former postmaster at Fort Atkinson was appointed postmaster. A military outpost was established at the Walnut Crossing in

---


817th Annual Report, 313.


10Ibid., 164.

11"Early Military Posts, Missions and Camps," Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society, I and II (1881), 265.
June, 1853, by Company D, Fifth Infantry, from Fort Atkinson. 12 From this date on troops were stationed periodically to protect Walnut Crossing. Colonel Henry Inman describes the Crossing:

The creek is fairly well timbered to-day, as it has been ever since the first caravan crossed the clear water of the little stream. It was always a favourite place of ambush by the Indians, and many a conflict has occurred in the beautiful bottom bounded by a margin of trees on two sides, between the traders, trappers, troops, and the Indians, and also between the several tribes that were hereditary enemies, particularly the Pawnees and the Cheyennes. It is only about sixteen miles east of Pawnee Rock, and included in that region of debatable ground where no band of Indians dared establish a permanent village; for it was claimed by all tribes, but really owned by none. 13

Various diaries add historic and geographic clarity to the area. A. E. Raymond reported in his diary that the Allison Ranch was a pole structure enclosed with sod and a flat roof about one story high. An acre of land was surrounded by a sod fence, which according to Mr. Raymond afforded a strong protection against Indians. 14 William B. Parsons described the area as follows:

Little Cow Creek is thirteen miles farther on, and Cow Creek two miles farther still. A moderate supply of wood will be found on both creeks and generally water in both. Plum Buttes, twelve miles from Cow Creek, can be easily recognized, being prominent, and plentifully inscribed with names and dates. No wood and very little stagnant water. After traveling thirteen miles farther we reached the Arkansas river, and fine wood and water in abundance. Five miles up the river is Allison's ranch, at the junction of Walnut Creek and the Arkansas. Mr. Allison has a strong house and corral, built of logs set in endways in the ground, forming a safe defense against the Indians. Arapahoes and Cheyenne will begin to show themselves; all will present papers, from which you will learn the "bearer is a Cheyenne Chief, intelligent and brave, and earnestly desires a little flour, sugar, and coffee." 15

Other "ranches" of importance existed in the vicinity. Beach's Ranch or trading post was built on Cow Creek, about one mile south of present day Lyons. In 1859 a post office was established there with Doctor Beach as post-

---

12Ibid., 265.
13Henry Inman, The Old Santa Fe' Trail (Topeka: Crane and Co., 1908), 134.
15Ibid., 177-178.
master. Beach also had on his property houses where buffalo meat was cured for eastern markets. The ranch was abandoned in 1864. William Mathewson, a close friend of Kit Carson, established a ranch on upper Cow Creek in 1853. Mathewson earned the Kiowa name Sillpah Sinpah, meaning "Long Bearded Dangerous Man," from his treatment of the famous Kiowa Chief Satanta. Satanta in attempting to steal Mathewson's stock was severely beaten by the latter. The result was a life-time friendship between the pair.

One of the most interesting stories of the area dealt with the murder of George Peacock. Allison had died of a heart attack in Independence, Missouri, and his ranch was rented to George Peacock. Robert M. Wright reported in his book, *Dodge City, the Cowboy Capital*, that Satank, another Kiowa Chief, had a fondness for whiskey, and had been kept in supply by Peacock, who lived on Cow Creek. Satank had Peacock write credentials for him telling what a great chief he was in order to obtain provisions from passing wagon trains. Peacock wrote the following note:

This is Satank, the biggest liar, beggar, and thief on the plains. What he can't beg of you he will steal. Kick him out of your camp, as he is a lazy, good-for-nothing Indian.

Satank, receiving the treatment recommended, had William Mathewson read it. For revenge, he informed Peacock that soldiers were coming to raid his supply of illicit liquor. Peacock ran to his lookout, and was shot in the back by Satank.


19Robert M. Wright, *Dodge City, the Cowboy Capital* (Wichita: The Wichita Eagle Press, 1913), 49.
An examination of materials written about the incident show that not all authors are in agreement as to what happened and who was involved. George A. Root, Theodore Weichselbaum, and Paul I. Wellman all mention Peacock was living in Allison's Ranch on the Walnut. The burden of proof would seem to be on Wright as to the location of the incident. I would state that Wright was incorrect in his contention that Peacock lived by Cow Creek. As to who shot Peacock, this will remain debatable. Weichselbaum states Satanta, not Satank, murdered Peacock.

The Allison Ranch, under Peacock had accumulated a considerable amount of gold in trade with the Indians, trappers and overland freighters. The gold was buried within the stockage. A certain Charley and Chris Rath uncovered the gold, which enabled them to become important hay contractors and freighters in the area. Of greater historic contribution to the history of the Walnut Crossing was the forming of the first corporation under Kansas charter. On January 10, 1863, the Walnut Creek Bridge Company was formed. The incorporation papers were presented in the following form:

This is to certify that we, Charles Rath, John F. Dodds, James A. Robbins, F. Sedrick and A. O. Robbins have associated ourselves together, under the name and style of the 'Walnut Creek Bridge Company', with a Capital Stock of One Thousand Dollars which is divided into shares of six dollars each; for the purpose of building a toll bridge over Walnut Creek, in Peketon County, State of Kansas, where the Great Santa Fe road crosses said stream. The land on each side of said stream belongs to the Government of the United States, and we claim the exclusive right and privilege of said stream for that purpose to the exclusion of all others,
for the distance of five miles above and below said bridge.
Witness our lands and seals this tenth day of January, A.D., 1863.

Charles Rath SEAL
pr. A. D. Robbins his attorney in fact.
John F. Dodds SEAL
James A. Robbins SEAL
F. Sedrick SEAL
A. D. Robbins SEAL

During the early 1860's the Indian became a frequent menace to travelers in the Great Bend region. For this reason Fort Larned was established, thirty miles west of the Great Bend region to police the frontier and protect the traffic along the Santa Fe' Trail. In May, 1862, Major J. Hayden, Commander of Fort Larned, wrote a letter to the Assistant Adjutant General of Kansas to inform him of the frequent highway robbery engaged in by the Kiowas, Apaches, and Arapahoes, which was impossible to control from Fort Larned. He recommended the assignment of a company of mounted soldiers to patrol the Santa Fe' Trail between the Little Arkansas and Walnut Creek, to be encamped at or near the Allison Ranch. He also warned that the Indians had been receiving considerable liquor from "evil-disposed white men", and that this, too, could be controlled by troops on the scene. 25

On June 26, 1862, five companies of cavalry were sent from Fort Riley to Forts Larned and Lyon to garrison these posts and protect the Big Bend of the Arkansas. 26 Lieutenant William Wise was placed in charge of the "camp on Walnut Creek." 27 During the winter the tribes as usual returned to their

24Records of the County Clerk, Morris County, Kansas Vol. 1., January 14, 1863.


27Ibid., 547.
restricted areas, became peaceful, and received their annuities. In the summer of 1863 tensions again tightened. Colonel J. H. Leavenworth, commander of troops in the region wrote his subordinates on the Santa Fe Road:

We are surrounded by the Arapaho, Kiowa, and Commanche Indians in large numbers. This morning a sentinel shot and killed an Indian, but of which tribe I have not been able to ascertain. I have runners out in all directions for the Chiefs to meet me in council, and for all whites near here to come in. Upon receipt of this you will proceed without delay with any and all force you may have with you, to this post, for we are utterly unable to render any assistance outside of the post, should it be required. Prompt action is needed at this time.26

Thus the camp on the Walnut was again abandoned.

The commerce of the great plains reached large proportions by 1864, and immense caravans rolled day after day towards the blue hills of New Mexico. Their precious freight was a constant temptation to plunder by the savages.29

The Big Bend of the Arkansas again experienced Indian depredations. Several wagon masters at Cow Creek wrote a letter immediately published in an eastern Kansas paper on July 28, 1864.

We have been here three days, surrounded by a formidable and hostile foe, who are murdering indiscriminately every white man they find. They commenced their depredations on Sunday, last, at Fort Larned, by running off the horses. The next was to attack a Government train, bound for Fort Union - killing twelve men and destroying a great quantity of stores. They made their appearance at this place yesterday, attacking us from all sides. We rallied our forces and drove them back with the loss of one man. They surrounded us and made an attack upon a large train encamped a mile and a half below us, firing upon them, running off their stock and shooting them down on the prairie. They also took the stock belonging to the U. S. Mail Company.

We are, and have been for two days, completely surrounded - the Indians attempting to run off our stock, and to kill our men as they go for water. We are suffering extremely for water for our stock and men, and if we do not receive assistance shortly, we shall have to give up our trains.30

26 Colonel J. H. Leavenworth to Outpost along Santa Fe Trail, July 9, 1863, ibid., 361.

29 Irman, Santa Fe Trail, 434.

30 The Daily Conservative (Leavenworth, Kansas), July 28, 1864, p. 2.
Another tale of Indian hostilities along the Santa Fe Trail that summer was related by Henry Inman. On July 18, a caravan arrived near Fort Larned. Being close to the fort, the caravan became careless and camped some distance from the post at Cow Creek. About five o'clock in the evening a band of Sioux under the leadership of Little Turtle attacked the train, leaving only one survivor.31

This outbreak of violence can be traced to no one specific cause. The plains Indian and white man had long looked upon each other as enemies. Indian depredations during the Civil War caused both North and South to accuse each other of inciting the Indian to attack.32 The Cheyenne War of 1864 was said to have been caused by an overzealous action on the part of a certain Lieutenant Bayre who punished the wrong Indians for stealing cattle and then blundered by attacking a group of Cheyenne Dog Soldiers on the South Platte.33 A later expedition was forced back to Fort Larned upon the discovery of overwhelming odds in favor of the Cheyenne and a general Indian War resulted. The Kiowas and Comanches roamed south of the Arkansas, generally confining their depredations to the Santa Fe Trail.34

By July, the Indian hostilities had reached their peak in the neighborhood of Fort Larned. General Samuel R. Curtis was placed in command of the Department of Kansas during this time. The following is a report from Curtis to his superior, General Halleck, in Washington:

The Indian difficulties west of this point are serious, and I have come here [Fort Riley] to rally a force on the border fifty miles west

---

33 Ibid., 141.
34 Ibid.
of Salina for the purpose of suppressing the mischief. The stages not
coming through we have not definite intelligence. We only know they
have run off our stock from Larned and Walnut Creek, murdering some men,
and small parties of Indians have come within thirty miles of this place.
I have ordered the quartermaster at this post to buy horses to mount
dismounted cavalry, and requested militia colonels to call out 700 militia
to join me. In this way I hope to raise 1,000 men. I go over to Salina
tomorrow. I think stealing stock is the main object of the Indians. 35

While on his way west, General Curtis was informed of an attack on a
wagon train near Fort Larned. The report which followed listed ten teamsters
killed, three wounded (two of them scalped) and the loss of 500 head of cattle. 36
As part of this report, he issued the following orders for the expedition.

Hunters will be detailed for killing game, but the troops must not
scatter and break down stock to chase buffalo. Indians at war with us
will be the object of our pursuit and destruction, but women and children
will be spared. All horses, ponies, and property taken will be
placed in charge of Quartermaster P. Z. Taylor, who will have it properly collected, or sent back to safe places for future disposition.
This is necessary to prevent the accumulation of useless baggage. 37

Arriving at Walnut Creek, the following message was sent by Curtis:

I have arrived here, within thirty miles of Larned, with a force of
nearly 400 and two pieces of artillery. The Indians have scattered.
The 400 wagons which were besieged at Cow Creek are with me all safe,
excepting the loss of 2 men and some 300 head of stock belonging to
Mexican teamsters. I go to Larned to-morrow, when I will prescribe
further measures of caution and security for the trains and travel
and safety of the settlements on the frontier. 38

This message was addressed from "In the Field, Walnut Creek, N. Bend Arkansas."
The same day two more dispatches were sent from the Walnut Creek crossing, but
addressed from "Camp Zarah, North Bend of the Arkansas," and "In the Field,

35 General Samuel Curtis to General H. W. Halleck, Washington, D.C.,
July 23, 1864, ibid., 368.
36 Ibid., 413.
38 Curtis to Major General Henry W. Halleck, Washington, D.C.,
July 28, 1864, ibid., 445.
Fort Zarah, North Bend of the Arkansas. Thus he had named the post shortly after arrival. Fort Zarah was named in honor of General Curtis' son, Major H. Zarah Curtis, who was General Jas. G. Blunt's Assistant Adjutant General, and was shortly afterward killed at the famous Baxter Springs Massacre by Quantrill's army on October 4, 1864.

Major-General Curtis proceeded to Fort Larned on July 30, 1864. The following day Captain Backus, commander of Fort Larned was ordered to establish at or near the Cimarron Crossing an outpost, in command of a competent officer, and re-enforce the post at Walnut Creek, Fort Zarah. Captain Jacobs reported to Colonel Price, and accompanied him in his movements on the south side of the Arkansas.

In the field at Cow Creek on August 3, 1864, Captain Jacobs was directed to move, with the Colorado troops to Fort Zarah, in place of Backus.

---

40Special Field Order No. 3, Fort Larned, July 31, 1864, ibid., 491.
41Special Field Order No. 4, Cow Creek Station, August 3, 1864, ibid., 545.
CHAPTER II

THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF FORT ZARAH

Basically there were, in this period, two types of military establishments; the command which consisted of temporary housing such as tents, and the cantonment which had permanent buildings. On the prairie the lack of timber imposed special hardships on the quartermaster in erecting lodging, but Fort Zarah rapidly grew from command to cantonment (Illustration I). The "quarters" which soldiers occupied at the outset were holes dug in the ground with a covering of dirt and brush. "There is nothing tasty nor fanciful about them, but they are comfortable", Ellen Williams quotes from one of the soldiers.¹

H. Ryus, former express messenger on the Santa Fe' Trail, gives the following description of the officers quarters at Fort Zarah in 1864.

Their quarters was a little dugout in the side of the hill along the river bank. They had a gunny sack for the door, and I went into the first room, which was used for a kitchen, and the cook told me to go to the next room, it had a gunny sack door, too, the First and Second Lieutenant were in the other room.²

Henry Inman saw the outpost a few months later, as rude but comfortable. The dugouts were constructed in the right bank of the Walnut with the officers quarters consisting of tents, a few rods in the rear of the line of "huts" (the dugouts referred to by Ryus). A stockade stable with a capacity for two hundred and fifty horses had been built in the immediate area.³ In 1865, an eastern newspaper correspondent toured the region and reported on the outpost.

¹Ellen Williams, Three and a Half Years in the Army (New York: Fowler and Wells Company, n.d.), 142.
Illustration 1 - Early Fort Zarah, 1864

Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas
Leaving Fort Ellsworth and the Smoky we proceeded over and through the snow for twenty miles, breaking our own road until we met a returning escort, and had but little difficulty to Fort Zarah. This Fort is built principally of caves dug in the ground, covered with logs and thatched with hay, making comfortable and novel quarters. We found Capt. Green, 2d Colorado Cavalry, commanding, with four companies of his regiment. He is now at work erecting a suitable block-house for defensive operations. This post being eighty miles from any frontier settlement, and at the junction of the Santa Fe, Kansas City and Fort Riley roads, is one of great importance, and a good, substantial fort should be erected here.

Paintings also help to document the physical development of the post. A sketch of Fort Zarah in 1867 by Ado Hunnius, with penciled-in descriptions represents a vivid picture of the Fort (Illustration 2). It shows a pentagon shaped guardhouse with a diameter of fifteen feet. Also in this picture are the famous wood bridge, the adobe express and stage station, and the stone guardhouse. Fort Zarah proper was adobe with a mud roof having inside dimensions of twenty by fifty feet. To one side of the fort is a thirty by forty foot adobe corral. A sentinel is shown walking his "watch" on a board on top of the roof. An Indian trader's adobe ranch is located near the post. The house is partly underground, with a fence surrounding it. One might speculate by recalling the early descriptions of the Allison Ranch, which was in the immediate vicinity of Fort Zarah, that this was that building. Another sketch by the same artist, (Illustration 3), substantiates the first.

The journalist-traveller, Henry Stanley, visited Fort Zarah in April, 1867, and described the post as "Two houses... built of adobe with brown stone, roughly hewn. Their low, flat roofs are covered with earth, like the houses of Syria and Palestine."  

---

1The Daily Conservative (Leavenworth, Kansas), March 8, 1865, p. 2.
2See illustrations on pages 13, 15, and 17.
3Henry M. Stanley, My Early Travels and Adventures in America and Asia (n.p. April 5, 1867), 12.
Illustration 2 - Fort Zarah, 1867

Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

Illustration 3 - Fort Zarah, 1867

Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas
In 1867, a new building was completed a mile north of the Walnut Crossing and east of the Walnut Creek. The main body of troops were moved to this new location, (Illustration h). B. B. Smyth described the new Fort as

...built of sandstone, quarried on the neighboring bluffs about three miles off. The rocks were mostly of a deep purplish brown varying to a light brown. They were usually hewn to a pretty smooth face, and laid up in the rough, in good solid mortar. The outer walls were about 16 inches thick, the inner walls one foot. The walls inside were all well plastered. The roof of the building was of tin.7

The following General Order was issued pursuant to fort construction during 1867.8

1. ... In future no stone will be cut or dressed within the limits of this Department for public purposes, without special authority from these Headquarters.
2. ... All stone hewn for building quarters, barracks, sod-houses & c., will be laid up roughly, and no labor expended on the buildings beyond what is necessary to make them comfortable.
3. ... The attention of all Commanding Officers, and Officers of or acting in the Quartermaster's Department is called to the necessity and importance of great economy in building at their respective posts. They will see that no elaborate work of any kind is done under their jurisdiction or control.
4. ... All buildings will be completed in a plain and comfortable manner, without ornament or decoration of any kind, both inside and out.

A long and complete description of the new $110,000 structure and its surroundings is contained in the Records of the War Department.9 The main part of the fort was a parallelogram in shape with pentagonal shaped towers at its northern and southern corners. Its walls were ten feet high for the main building and fifteen feet high at the towers. The sides were one hundred and six by sixty feet and the towers were seventeen feet on each side. This was considered

---


8Headquarters Department of the Missouri, "General Order No. 17, November 5, 1867, General Orders and Circulars, Department of the Missouri, 1867 (n.p.: Government Printing Office, n.d.).

9Records of the War Department, Office of the Adjutant General, Medical History of Fort Zarah, Kansas - Vol. 357. No. 9. The diagram referred to is illustration h on page 17.
Illustration 4 - Fort Zarah, Rebuilt, 1867-1869

Courtesy of The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

Floor Plan - Fort Zarah, Rebuilt, 1867-1869

Courtesy of the National Archives, Washington, D.C.
company of one hundred men with their officers and the necessary stores and provisions within the structure, although there were seldom more than one-half or two-thirds that number domiciled there. The main portion of the building had board flooring, no ceiling and was not plastered, as were the towers. The roof was of tin but leaked in rainstorms. There were five doors to the outside twenty-three windows and forty-eight loopholes. The cellar, containing a soon-dry well, was fifteen by fifty feet, the whole width of the space under the soldiers' mess-hall and kitchen. The furnishings were crude; wooden bunks around the four sides, two stoves for heat, chests to serve both as personal storage and seats; the mess-room had one table and no benches; and the kitchen was unprovided with furniture. Some rooms, built for stables, were used as store-rooms. The northern tower served as officers quarters, the other served as commissary and medical dispensary.

For a guardhouse, a hospital tent was pitched about forty yards to the western side of the fort building, and was ordinarily surrounded by a six-man guard. There being no quarters near the fort for married soldiers and their families, two "A" tents were provided about sixty yards behind the fort. Between them and the fort were located the bakehouse, with its kneading trough and few common utensils, and the blacksmith shop, with its handful of smelting tools. The horses were corralled about one hundred and twenty yards to the rear and west of the fort. A hospital building had been begun in 1865, but work proceeded slowly; the outer walls were finally completed in mid-April, 1869, only to be completely demolished in a violent storm the night after completion.

The Fort Zarah Military Reservation boundaries were announced in General Order 22, Department of the Missouri, on November 25, 1867. The reservation was established by Executive order on January 3, 1868. Thomas Donaldson describes the processes involved in the establishment of a military reservation.
The commanding officer of a military department recommends the establishment of a reservation with certain boundaries; the Secretary of War refers the papers to the Interior Department to know whether any objection is known to the General Land Office and it is so reported, the reservation is declared by the President upon application of the Secretary of War for that purpose, and the papers are sent to the General Land Office, through the Secretary of the Interior, for annotation upon the proper records. If upon surveyed land the United States land officers are at once instructed to withhold the same from disposal and respect the reservation. If upon unsurveyed land the United States surveyor-general is furnished with a full description of the tract and is instructed to close the lines of public survey upon the out-boundaries of the reserve; the United States land officers are also instructed not to receive any filing, of any kind for the reserved lands.10

Fort Zarah Military Reservation was five square miles, containing 3,698 acres. As happened in other military reservations "squatters" began to plague the reservation property. A General Order was issued restricting such homesteading to government employees.11 The commander of Fort Zarah issued the following Special Order:

S. O. 17 - April 1, 1869
All citizens residing within the limits of the Military Reservation at this post are hereby directed to report at the Office of the Post Adjutant to register their names, and apply in writing to the Post Commander for permits to remain, and hereafter no person or persons will be permitted to camp or build ranches or dwellings within the limits of the Military Reservation at this Post, who have not duly registered their names and obtained permits, owners of ranches or dwellings will report now and hereafter all person in their employ or residing with them on penalty - of expulsion.

Employees of the Quartermaster Department at this Post are alone exempted from compliance with this order

NICHOLAS NOLAN
Captain 10th Cavalry
Brevt Lt. Col of A
Commanding, Post.12

11Headquarters Department of the Missouri, "General Order No. 44, September 18, 1869," General Orders and Circulars, Department of the Missouri 1869 (St. Louis: Government Printing Office, 1870).
12Records of the War Department Post Order, Fort Zarah, Kansas, 1868-1869.
Periodically, civilian teamsters violated this order and had to be warned and perhaps ejected.¹³
Soldiering at Fort Zarah was lonely, hard, and demanding. One soldier’s account of the Second Colorado Cavalry includes the following statement of duty at the Post.\(^1\)

The duty of this Post is very heavy for the amount of men stationed here. We escort the mail-coach from here to the Smoky Crossing, between this post and Fort Larned, and about twenty-five miles of the road to Council Grove; also, all government trains passing by the Post in either direction. The guard details call for four and five men also per day from each Company.

An example of escort duty in an ordinary month at Fort Zarah is included in the Records of the War Department.\(^2\) On January 1, 1865, a typical day, one sergeant and twelve men escorted a coach to Fort Ellsworth and back, one lieutenant and twelve men escorted a coach to Fort Larned, and one lieutenant and twelve men escorted coach from Cow Creek. The distance, round trip, from Fort Zarah to Fort Larned was seventy miles, from Ellsworth ninety miles, and from Cow Creek, twenty miles west from the Post, and Plum Buttes, fifteen miles east of Fort Zarah. In the month of January, troops traveled 1,220 miles in the performance of their duty.\(^3\) General George A. Forsyth wrote the following opinion of escort duty.

Escort duty was always distasteful, and of all escort duty that with a "bull" or "ox train" was the worst. Man was subordinated to the beast, because the distance made, the time of starting, the length of the stops, the situation of camps, everything connected with traveling depended upon grass, the animal’s sole food.\(^4\)

---

\(^1\)Ellen Williams, Three and a Half Years in the Army (New York: Fowler and Wells Company, n.d.), 113.

\(^2\)"Records of Scouts and Escorts in the month of Jan. 1865," Records of the War Department, Returns and Trimonthly Reports, National Archives, 1953.

\(^3\)Ibid.

A General Order issued in 1867 described the various duties of the escort detachments as follows:

... All persons traveling across the Plains, except those belonging to the military service of the United States and such as are transported in the mail coaches or other conveyances on the overland routes, must join themselves together in military organization, consisting of not less than thirty armed men, or must connect themselves with some train.

... Whenever a military escort is thought necessary, the commanding officer of the Military Post beyond which such escort may be required will notify Captains of trains of the fact, and will furnish a sufficient escort in addition to the force with the train, to protect it to the next Military Post, when, if necessary another escort will be furnished. ...

... Whenever an attack is made by Indians upon any train pursuing the overland routes, or traveling elsewhere on the Plains, the commanding officer of the nearest Military Post will furnish prompt assistance. ...

... It is not practicable, with the military force within this department to render every foot of the overland routes entirely secure against Indian hostilities; and, whilst the troops will be disposed and used in the manner which seems best adapted to protect parties of travelers such parties must, between the Military Posts, rely much upon their own organization and means of defense. As the Government provides such protection for emigrants and trains as it is practicable to do without ruinous expense, and as the military authorities are largely responsible for any misfortunes which may befall such parties from Indian attacks, they claim and will exercise the right to lay down such rules for jurisdiction, as may be considered necessary to provide against danger and at the same time, not be oppressive or embarassing to emigration or travel. ...

By command of Major General (W. S.) Hancock:

CHAUNCEY McKEEVER,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Secondary duties for soldiers at Fort Zarah, included that of teamster, acting Hospital Steward, Post Butcher, Post Gardener, Post Baker, carpenter, mechanic, messenger, and hay cutter. 5

The "Calls of the Day" were usually sounded as follows: Reveille at daybreak, Stable call at fifteen minutes after, Sick call at 8 o'clock, Guard mount one hour later, Water call at 9:30, Orderly call at noon, Stable call at 4 p.m., Retreat at sunset, Tattoo at 8 p.m., and Tapps fifteen minutes later. 6


6Post Orders, Fort Zarah, 1864-1869, Vol. 59, National Archives.
The pay for soldiers was very poor. A first year private received thirteen dollars per month; for the third year fourteen dollars; for the fourth year fifteen dollars per month. After sixteen years of service a private would receive eighteen dollars a month pay. Corporals received from fifteen to twenty dollars a month. First sergeants' pay ranged from twenty-five to thirty dollars a month. 7

Clothing allowances were more liberal. Total clothing allowance for a private, enlisting for three years, would include:

One overcoat, two uniform dress coats, three woollen blouses, three canvas fatigue blouses, seven pairs uniform trousers, seven pairs jersey trousers, three pairs canvas fatigue trousers, three pairs overall, seven dark blue woollen shirts, nine undershirts, nine pairs drawers, thirty-six linen collars, twelve pairs cotton and twelve pairs woollen socks, nine pairs shoes for the infantry and two pairs boots and five pairs shoes for the cavalry, four fatigue caps, three campaign hats, two helmets, two pairs woollen blankets, twenty-four pairs white gloves, three pairs suspenders. In addition to the above the cavalry have furnished them two pairs leather gauntlets and two stable frocks. 8

Although there is no concise report of food rations at the post, Dr. Raymond Welty has established the daily allowance of food for one person in the army at this time as: "Twelve ounces of pork or bacon, or canned beef (fresh or canned), or one pound and four ounces of fresh beef, or twenty-two ounces of salt beef; eighteen ounces of soft bread or flour, or sixteen ounces of hard bread, or one pound and four ounces of corn meal." In addition, for every one-hundred men, allowances included "fifteen pounds of peas or beans, or ten pounds of rice or hominy; ten pounds of green coffee or eight of roasted (or roasted and ground) coffee, or two pounds of tea; fifteen pounds of sugar, four quarts of vinegar; four pounds of soap; four pounds of salt; four ounces of pepper; one pound and eight ounces of adamantine or star candles." The

7Forsyth, Story of the Soldier, 94.
8Ibid., 95.
troops in the field received, when necessary, four pounds of yeast powder to one hundred rations of flour.\textsuperscript{9} Although these allowances of food were authorized, it is highly improbable that full rations were available at all times, and during the summer months buffalo was quite often the source of meat.\textsuperscript{10}

Post gardening was encouraged in order to provide the soldier with fresh vegetables. In April, 1868, a General Order of the Army instructed the following method of gardening.

I. . . . Commanding officers of posts, at or near which suitable public lands are available, will set aside for company or post gardens such extent of those lands as may be necessary for the production of vegetables for the command, and will cause the same to be duly cultivated by the garrison, and such varieties and quantities of vegetables to be raised as may be necessary for the subsistence or health of the troops.

II. . . . On requisitions from company or post commanders, approved by the commanding officer of the department or division, the Subsistence Department is authorized to procure for sale to such company or post, seed potatoes, garden seeds, and agricultural implements necessary for establishing, cultivating, and perpetuating company or post gardens.

Fort Zarah was continuously supplied with a post gardener.

On the plains, special problems often existed concerning the supply of wood and hay. During the summer months hay was cut in pasture areas surrounding the Arkansas.\textsuperscript{12} The rest of the year hay and wood were bought at auction in the prescribed manner.

The wood to be of the best quality growing in the vicinity of the posts, . . . to be cut full four feet long, split to convenient size, and free from small limbs and brush. Bidders will state the kind or kinds of wood, and quantity of each kind they propose to furnish. . . .

\textsuperscript{9}Raymond L. Welty, "Supplying the Frontier Military Posts," \textit{Kansas Historical Quarterly}, II (1938), 161.

\textsuperscript{10}Post Orders, 1864-1869.

\textsuperscript{11}Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, "General Order No. 114, May 12, 1868," \textit{General Orders and Circulars Department of the Missouri, 1868} (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Government Printing Office, 1869).
A cord to be 128 cubic feet.

The delivery of the wood to commence on or before August 1st, and to be continued at the rate of at least one-fifth of the quantity contracted for per month.

The hay to be good, merchantable, prairie hay; to be well and securely stacked by the contractor, and in such manner as to be impervious to heavy rains or snow. A clause will be inserted in each contract providing that any damage which may result to the hay from imperfect stacking must be made good to the Government by the contractor. The hay must be cut before August 31st. A ton to be 2,000 pounds.

Proposals are also invited, for furnishing hay in bales -- the bales to be well compressed and securely bound.

The delivery of the hay to commence on or before August 1st and to be completed on or before October 31st, 1874.

Payment of the first one-tenth (1/10) of the wood and one-fifth (1/5) of the hay delivered will be withheld until the contract is satisfactorily filled.13

Civilian employees were often hired to perform labor that the troops could no handle and in February, 1868, a General Order stated the policy for hiring such employees and gave the salaries to be paid. Of course, not all of the occupations listed below were pursued by civilians at Fort Zarah. Civilians engaged at Fort Zarah were primarily mechanics, bricklayers, teamsters, and interpreters.14

When enlisted men cannot be detailed without manifest injury to the service, to perform the necessary labor in the Quartermaster's Department, and civil employees are authorized at any station in the Military Department of the Missouri, the rate of pay or compensation for the respective classes or grades shall not exceed the following:

Clerks, 1st class, $150 per month -- but clerks of this class will not be authorized except for the Chief Quartermaster of the Department, the Chief Quartermasters of Military Districts and the Quartermasters of General Depots.

Clerks, 2d class, per month $125.00
Clerks, 3d class, " " $100.00
Clerks 4th class, " " $75.00
Master Mechanics, " " $100.00
Blacksmith, day $ 2.75
Assistant Blacksmith, " month $ 50.00

13Headquarters Department of the Missouri, "Circular, May 13, 1874," General Orders and Circulars, Department of Missouri, 1874.
14Post Orders, 1864-1869.
Wheelwrights, per Day $2.75
Carpenters, " " $2.75
Saddlers and Harnessmakers, " " $2.75
Painters, " " $2.75
Masons, " " $3.00
Storekeepers, " " Month $75.00
Latchmen, when specially authorized
at general depots " " $35.00
Overseer of Laborers, " " $45.00
Laborers, " " $50.00
Depot Train Master, not to exceed one
to each depot, " " $55.00
Depot Teamsters, " " $60.00
Overseers in charge of Depot Stables " " $65.00
Depot ostlers, " " $70.00
Chief Herders, " " $75.00
Herdsmen, " " $80.00
Train-Masters, " " $85.00
Assistant Train-Masters, not to exceed
one to each train of 25 wagons, and
not to be kept in service, except
when the train is employed upon the
plains away from its station " " $95.00
Teamsters with trains, " " $100.00

The foregoing are established as the maximum rates to be allowed, but they will be reduced from time to time to correspond with the rates paid for like services in civil establishments, when the latter shall fall below the rates above specified, and nothing in this order shall be construed as authorizing any increase in the pay of persons already employed at lower rates than those mentioned in this order. Officers also are reminded, that it is their duty to procure the necessary labor for the public service at as low rates as possible. 15

Scant information exists on the health conditions at Fort Zarah. In 1867, a cholera epidemic struck the plains and most certainly affected some of the troops stationed at the Post. Welty reports the most dreaded attack on the health of the soldiers of the frontier was scurvy, which occurred most frequently during the winter months, when there was a lack of proper

15 Ibid., February 28.
nourishment. A shortage of proper washing facilities also posed a problem for health precautions. During the summer months soldiers were required to bathe in Walnut Creek at least twice a week.

Soldiers often owned and raised their own livestock. Orders finally were issued to dispose of such privately owned animals. This was probably due to their nuisance value, their demands on the soldier's time and their consumption of an already short supply of forage.

Indians and traders plagued army life at Fort Zarah. On August 26, 1868, soldiers were forbidden to trade with the Indians. The garrison was made off limits to these "Prairie nomads." Living a monotonous existence, the soldier at Fort Zarah often drank alcoholic beverages while on duty. On March 29, 1865, Special Order 9 stated the following policy.

Complaints having been made at these Headqrs. by Non "Com" officers in command of Escorts to U. S. Mail, that men in charge of mail stations are in the habit of selling liquor to men comprising the escorts, to the prejudice of Discipline and good order, endangering the lives of passengers and the safety of the mail.

It is therefore strictly forbidden for any Ranchman or Mail Station keeper to sell or furnish any liquor to escorts from this Post under the penalty of confiscation of his property and arrest and confinement.

In August, 1869, the policy towards the sale of whiskey was tightened.

S.O. 38

III From and after this date no whiskey or other intoxicating liquors will be sold within the limits of the Government Reservation at this Post without special permission from the Post Commander.

---

16 Welty, "Supply of Frontier Posts", 16h.
17 Post Orders, 1868.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., 1865.
21 Ibid., 1869.
Not all of the soldier's time was spent on duty. Many hunted, fished, or read. As information is scarce on the subject, only the pictures of the post in 1867 reveal details of off-duty activities. The most publicized celebration that the Fort experienced took place in 1865. William Darnell, a teamster, recalled that day:

I was nearing Fort Zarah on a return trip from the west in April, 1865, when we received word that the war had come to a close. There were about twenty wagons in this train, mine being fourth from the rear. When about half a mile from the fort "Wild Bill" Hickok, on a dandy horse came riding by on a run shouting out as he rode by: 'Lee's Surrendered! Lee's surrendered!' . . .

As our wagon neared the fort the soldiers having a few minutes before obtained word of the surrender of Lee, decided to celebrate the good news. Dragging out their small brass cannons, they loaded them with a good charge of powder and crammed them to the muzzle with wet gunny sacks. As soon as the lead wagon of our train came within shouting distance of the outpost the gunners pointed their cannon up into the arc and fired. The firing alone possibly would not have frightened our mules, but when those gunny sacks hurtled up into the air, were caught by the wind and opened up, and then went floating off, they were enough to startle the dead . . .

Colonel Henry Inman was well acquainted with the troops of Fort Zarah, and has written the most vivid description of the recruits stationed there.

Coming fresh from some large city probably, as soon as he arrived at his station he was placed on the back of an animal of whose habits he knew as little as he did of the differential calculus: loaded down with a carbine, the muzzle of which he could hardly distinguish from the breech; a sabre buckled around his waist; a couple of enormous pistols stuck in his holsters; his blankets strapped to the cantle of his saddle, and, to complete the hopelessness of his condition in a possible encounter with a savage enemy who was ever on the alert, he was often handicapped by a camp-kettle or two, a frying-pan, and ten day's rations.

A different description of this "fresh soldier" is evidenced by the heroic actions of the troops of Fort Zarah in the Indian Wars of 1864-1869, described in the next chapter.

23 Inman, The Old Santa Fe Trail, 453.
CHAPTER IV

RELATIONS WITH THE INDIANS

Fort Zarah was constructed, it will be recalled, as a result of the Indian hostilities which reached a climax in July, 1864, in the vicinity of Fort Larned. The present chapter will cover the Indian relations from that period on.

Indian raiding shifted to northern Kansas and southern Nebraska. The Platte Trail was "seriously checked." Governor Evans of Colorado Territory, issued a proclamation ordering warring Indians to be hunted down and destroyed. Major Wyncoop, commander at Fort Lyons, took the chiefs of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe to Denver for a peace council with the Governor, who refused to compromise. As winter set in, the Cheyenne went into camp at Sand Creek. Meanwhile at Fort Zarah, word was received of a wagon train attack. Search parties were dispatched and the garrison alerted for a march, when the true situation was discovered. A "green" driver mistaking buffalo for Indians had fled to Salina. On November 29, Colonel Chivington attacked and slaughtered 150 Indians at Sand Creek, destroying two-thirds of the women and children. The remainder of the tribe fled eastward to the Smoky Hill River in western Kansas within the area of responsibility of the command at Fort Zarah.

1Marvin Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier 1864-1865," Kansas Historical Quarterly, I (February, 1932), 143.
2Ibid., 144
3Ibid., 145.
On December 3, 1864, a body of men, while enroute from Fort Ellsworth (Fort Harker) to Fort Zarah was attacked. The attack took place at 8 o'clock that evening in camp at Cow Creek, fifteen miles east of Fort Zarah. One teamster was killed and several of the escorts wounded. A large supply of ammunition was stolen. A patrol of twenty-five men sent from Fort Zarah the next day, failed to find the raiding party. In February, 1865, the Second Colorado Cavalry at Fort Zarah was again to feel the wrath of Indian depredations. A small party, detailed to cut wood on an island in the Arkansas about one mile from the post, were fired upon by a small Indian band and one of the soldiers was severely wounded. The Indians quickly vanished leaving no trail.

In the winter of 1864-1865, the conflict between the Indians and the military quieted down considerably, permitting the conflict concerning the treatment of the Indians, between military and civilian agencies, to flare forth again. The following report of General W. T. Sherman is a consensus of military opinion toward Indian policy.

... the entire management of the Indians should be controlled by the military authorities, and ... the commanding officers of the troops should have not only the surveillance of these Indians, but should supervise and control the disbursement of moneys and distribution of presents to the tribes under past and future treaties. Indians do not read, and only know of our power and strength by what they see, and they always look to the man who commands soldiers as

---

1Post Returns Fort Zarah, December 1864, National Archives.

4Ibid.


7Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 116.
the representatives of our government. The complaints of short payment by Indians are universal, and the Indians themselves would be more likely to receive the ample annuities appropriated by congress if the agents were required to make the semi-annual payment subject to the inspection and control of the military commanders, who, as a rule, are not so liable to be corrupted by the chance of gain and speculation as temporary appointees.

the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, Kiowas, Commanches and Apaches, Navajoes and Utes, though supposed to be restricted to reservation, will not settle down, but they roam, according to their habits, over the vast plains, and they too have done acts of hostility, though the old men and chiefs of the tribes deny the acts altogether, or charge them on their young men, who when absent on the hunt, are beyond their control.

J. H. Leavenworth, United States Indian Agent stationed at Fort Larned, submitted a different view to his superior.

Sir: I have the honor to enclose herewith papers relating to the late massacre of friendly Indians by Colonel J. M. Chivington, near Fort Lyons. It is impossible for me to express to you the horror with which I view this transaction; it has destroyed the last vestige of confidence between the red and white man. Nearly every one of the chiefs and headmen of the Arapahoe and Cheyenne tribes who have remained true to the whites, and were determined not to fight the whites, were cruelly murdered when resting in all the confidence of assurances from Major Wyncoop, and I also believe from Major Anthony, that they should not be disturbed. Those that did escape can never have any influence with their tribes; and now the question is, what can be done? Nothing; unless the department takes the matter up in earnest, and demands that the parties who were the cause of this wicked treatment of the Indians be properly dealt with; Major Wyncoop, of the Colorado Cavalry, was doing all that it was possible for an officer to do to pacify the Indians, and had restored comparative peace to this frontier, when all his work was destroyed, and an Indian war inaugurated that must cost the government millions in money and thousands in lives.9

A specific example of this ideological controversy involved General James H. Ford, who was planning a move against the Indians, and Indian agent Leavenworth, both of Fort Larned. General Grenville M. Dodge, commanding


Department of the Missouri, assured the Indian agent that the military did not fight friendly Indians. However, the scalping of four Mexicans and an attack on United States mail horses caused General Dodge to act otherwise. General Ford received department orders "... to proceed with all his forces in active hostilities against the Indians, and to pay no attention to any peace movements or propositions." A vicious triangle was forming. In one corner was General Ford preparing to move against the second corner, the Indian. Leavenworth, the third corner, was trying to buy time before the campaign against the Indians was carried out, in order to secure a treaty with the tribes. Senator J. R. Doolittle, member of the committee investigating the Indian problem, was contacted and convinced by Leavenworth of the necessity of avoiding war by treaty. The President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, then authorized Doolittle to direct the making of a treaty with the Indians, which would be subject to Presidential approval.

On May 15th, General Dodge, proceeding with his designs, requested 800 ponies for the protection of the Santa Fe Trail. Three days later, General Ford was informed that "The Thirteenth Missouri Cavalry, well mounted and 1,000 strong, are on the march to report to you." Two days later Fort Zarah reported the death of Private Joseph Kuhn, Second Colorado Cavalry. A few

10Report Indian Affairs, 573.
11Ibid.
12Ibid., 575.
14General G. M. Dodge to General Ford, St. Louis, May 18, 1865, ibid., 500.
miles west of Fort Zarah, Kuhn and his companion were hunting stray horses when set upon by Indians. Kuhn's horse was killed and he was scalped. On May 31, Ford's orders were reversed. General Dodge stated his reasons for the abandonment of the expedition:

First. He has not men enough to accomplish anything, and I think could but act on the defensive were he in the Indian country. Second. The Comanches have not committed any known acts of hostility, and a war with them is not desirable. Third. If the Campaign is not made the Indians can be placed on the reservation south of the Arkansas and East of Fort Bascom. Fourth. An extensive war with them Indians would require 6,000 men and cost millions of money. Fifth. If the campaign is made the road will be poorly protected. These (are) other reasons which will readily suggest themselves in objection to their campaign.

June 9, 1865, Lieutenant R. W. Jenkins, commander of Fort Zarah, received a report from Chavis Creek about ten miles from the post stating that stock had been run off by fifty or sixty Indians. After arriving on the scene and escorting the United States mail-coach towards Fort Zarah, Jenkins and his six troopers were attacked about four miles from the former place by about one hundred Indians.

Ordering the coach back Lieutenant Jenkins and his little party heroically stood their ground and fought the bloodthirsty savages, who charged up within ten feet, slightly wounding two men... in the fight one Indian and one pony were killed. On the arrival of the coach at Cow Creek, Captain Hammer, of the Seventh Iowa, immediately started with fifty-five men to the scene of action. The Indians had moved in a south-west direction; chase was then given and although they had two miles the advance, our force succeeded in overtaking them as they were crossing the Arkansas River, killing and wounding at least fifteen Indians.

______________________________
15Williams, Three Years in the Army, 145.
16General A. McCook to General John Pope, Fort Larned, May 31, 1865, Records War Rebellion, 708.
17Williams, Three Years in the Army, 146-147.
The pursuit was continued for three miles, but being unable to overtake the fleeing Indians, the chase was abandoned. About the same time Company I, of the Second Colorado, was escorting a train near Plum Buttes, some ten miles away, when set upon by Indians, who killed one man. The Indians were driven across the Arkansas. On June 10, the following report was filed:

Two messengers, Corporal Hicks and Private Huestis, Company K Second Colorado Cavalry, arrived at this post [Fort Larned] on the evening of the 10th instant from Fort Zarah with dispatches from district headquarters, and left at 9 a.m. on the morning of the 11th (yesterday) with return dispatches. On my way out to the relief of Lieutenant Hennion, Huestis' body was found lying near the road four miles this side of Ash Creek, scalped, stripped and otherwise mutilated. Near the crossing of Ash Creek Corporal Hicks' body was found in the road, stripped, his head, feet, and hands entirely severed, and his body mutilated in a most shocking and barbarous manner.

The same day, another escort out of Fort Zarah was attacked while camped near Pawnee Rock by over one hundred Indians without suffering a single loss. June 11, Lieutenant Jenkins, with seven men, were escorting a mail-coach from Cow Creek to the Post, when about 100 Indians ambushed the group and wounded two soldiers with lances. Re-enforcements arrived and the Indians were driven across the Arkansas. Seventeen Indians were killed and many wounded. A large number of Indian ponies were captured and many blankets, robes and goods were taken when the soldiers found and destroyed their camp.

---

18 Ibid., 147.
19 Report of Captain Theodore Conkey, Fort Larned, June 12, 1865, Records War Rebellion, 315-316.
20 Williams, Three Years in the Army, 147.
21 Ibid., 147-148.
Meanwhile the conflict between the government Indian agents and the military was still growing. In a letter to James Harlan, General Dodge attacked J. H. Leavenworth: "Colonel Leavenworth, who stands up so boldly for the Southern Indians, was dismissed from the U. S. Service. He 'blows hot and cold' with singular grace. To my officers he talks war to the knife, to Senator Doolittle and others he talks peace. Indeed, he is all things to all men." 22

The investigating committee of Senator Doolittle was getting results. General John B. Sanborn, Commander of the District of the upper Arkansas, arrived at Fort Larned on August 1, for a scouting mission south of the Arkansas. His troops were to be temporarily quartered at Forts Larned and Zarah. Due to a lack of ammunition, severe summer rains and swollen streams, the expedition was never undertaken. 23 J. H. Leavenworth issued the following report from the mouth of the Little Arkansas in August.

General: I have the honor to inform you that a party of Kiowa and Apache Indians arrived here day before yesterday, of some seventy-four or seventy-five individuals, of which number the head chiefs of the Kiowas and Apaches are here with six or eight of the other chiefs. They express themselves as very anxious for peace, and assure me there is not a war party out from the south. . . . It is my intention to have the Indians meet the commissioners near the Big Bend of the Arkansas if possible, but cannot tell until I see the Comanche chiefs. 24

On the 15th and 18th of August, Commander Sanborn and Indian agent Leavenworth

---

22 General Dodge to James Harlan, St. Louis, June 22, 1865, Records War Rebellion, 973.

23 General John B. Sanborn to General Dodge, Fort Larned, August 3, 1865, ibid., 1162.

24 J. H. Leavenworth to General Sanborn, Fort Larned, August 4, 1865, ibid., 1164.
met in council with the Apache, Comanche, Iowa, Arapahoes, and Cheyennes at the mouth of the Little Arkansas. Two treaties were negotiated with the Indians in the following form:

Be it known to all, that we, the chiefs and headmen of the Apache, Comanche and Kiowa tribes of Indians of the Upper Arkansas, and the Arapahoes, south of the Arkansas river, have agreed and do hereby agree with our agent, Colonel Leavenworth, and Brevet Major General John B. Sanborn, commanding the district of the Upper Arkansas, to cease all act of violence or injury to the frontier settlements, and to travellers on the Santa Fe road, or other lines of travel, and to remain at peace. We further agree to meet in council on the fourth day of October, 1865, at Bluff creek, about forty miles south of the Little Arkansas, with such commissioners as the President of the United States may appoint, for a perpetual peace between the government of the United States and our various tribes; and we further agree to use all our influence with the Cheyenne Indians now south of the Arkansas river, to induce them to join us in this perpetual peace, and if they do not we will compel them to cease all acts of violence towards the citizens of the United States or runners from our country.

Leavenworth would have preferred the council to meet at the Big Bend, near Fort Zarah. There are several reasons why the Indians preferred the Little Arkansas. With the memory of the Sand Creek Massacre still fresh in their minds, they had little desire to expose themselves to the military posts of Harker, Larned, and Zarah. Also at this time the Indian bands were far to the south and would have consumed too much time traveling with their entire tribes.

Four concessions were given by the Indians at the Little Arkansas. First, the Cheyenne and Arapahoe were to go to a permanent reservation south of the Arkansas River in Indian territory. Second, the Kiowas and Comanches would go to the region in northwest Texas. Third, when the tribes were absent from their reservation they were to stay ten miles away from

---

25Report of Senator J. R. Doolittle, Fort Lyons, June 20, 1865, Report Indian Affairs, 578.
main-travelled roads. Fourth, all claims by the Indians to the area between the Arkansas and Platte were given up. Annuities would be given to compensate for the loss of lands. The following May, the Senate ratified the treaty but added four amendments. The most important was the second article which provided that no Indian reservation could be located within the boundaries of the State of Kansas. The treaty had evident shortcomings. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes were now left without a reservation. A problem also existed in relying upon the Indian to keep the specified distance from main-travelled roads.

In 1866, Congress created a peace commission with four main objectives. First, to stop the cause of Indian wars. Second, provide security for border settlements. Third, end the frequent interruptions in the building of the transcontinental road. Fourth, prepare a plan for peaceful removal of the red man to permanent reservations.

The year 1866 was comparatively peaceful. Indian depredations were still occurring but not nearly to the degree as in the previous year. The center for hostilities in this general area was now the Smoky Hill region. The main raids were upon wagon trains and mail coaches, so that by February orders were issued requiring a minimum number of twenty wagons and thirty troops per train.

26Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 151.
27Ibid.
28Ibid., 132.
30Marvin Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier, 1866-1867" Kansas Historical Quarterly I (July, 1932), 326.
While dispensing annuities to the Indian at Fort Zarah in July, 1866, Major I. C. Taylor, Indian Agent, was informed by Black Kettle that the latter was to sit in council with the Cheyenne Do. Soldiers. It was Black Kettle's wish to prevail upon them to return to Fort Zarah and talk of relinquishing their title to the Smoky Hill country. The Do. Soldiers informed him that they would fight to the last man rather than leave the region. 31

On September 9th, a Kiowa chief came to Fort Larned to inform the post commander of a raid on a settlement in Texas by the Kiowas and Comanches. Major Taylor immediately left Fort Zarah for Fort Larned to try to secure a release of the five captives taken by those Indians. Taylor refused to pay Satanta, chief of the Kiowa, for the prisoners, pointing out that it violated their treaty and the chief returned to his camp. Later the post commander at Fort Dodge undertook to secure the prisoners for two thousand dollars.

Taylor, shortly after, submitted a report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

I have had considerable trouble suppressing the liquor trade among the Indian. Large quantities have been smuggled into the country and buried, and traded to them secretly. I have burst up the business of several of them, and at present time I think there is but little of it done. My Indians have and still are behaving themselves admirably, and I have no fears of an outbreak if the Dog Indians leave them and go north, which I presume will take place in a few days. As soon as I give them their autumn annuities, they are to go to their hunting ground, one hundred and twenty miles south of the Arkansas, at which they will remain until I send for them. I think about two-thirds of the Cheyenne nation are disposed to live up to the treaty, and the remainder which composed the Dog Soldier Indians, are opposed to the

treaty. The Arapahoe Indians are all well disposed, and tell me they intend to live up to the treaty, and remain at peace with the United States if all the Indians of the Cheyenne nation should go to war; and I have confidence in what they tell me, as they appear to be very submissive.32

August 11, 1866, E. W. Wynkoop recorded a council held at Fort Ellsworth with chiefs Black Kettle, Little Wolf, Big Head, Roman Nose, White Beard, Sitting Bear, Little Black Kettle, and The Man that Shot the Rea. Leavenworth stated in his report:

I consider this council a very important one on account of the representation on the part of the Indians, all of them being chiefs who exercise considerable authority, and many of them having control of the fighting element of the tribe.33

The importance of this council is not in what was actually settled while it was in session, but rather in its position as a stepping stone to the council held at Fort Zarah in November, 1866.

Present at the November 12-28 councils at Fort Zarah were William Mathewson, Walter Irwin, professional Indian agent, J. H. Leavenworth, Colonel William W. Bent, E. W. Wynkoop, Charles Bogy, brother of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and John S. Smith, interpreter.34 The first council, November 12, 1866, was held six miles south of Fort Zarah with the Comanche Indians. The chiefs in council, Ten Bears and Shaking Hand, represented the following Comanche bands, whose populations were roughly:

---

32Ibid., 261.

33Report of I. C. Taylor, Fort Zarah, October 1, 1866, ibid., 282.

34"treaties XXX (unrat.)," files of the Upper Arkansas, M-856, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington D. C. No secondary historical account of Indian treaties, forts, or the central Kansas area mentions the convening of these significant councils.
The Indians offered a gesture of good intentions by giving up a small boy hostage. One of the bands, however, still had in its possession three white prisoners. To force their return, the band's annuities were withheld and further council was held in abeyance. The next day the Cheyenne Chiefs took their place at the council table, representing 4,500 suspicious savages. The Sand Creek Massacre was still in the minds of Black Kettle, Little Robe, Black White Man, Eagle Head, Big Head, Bear Killer, and White Buffalo. Previous to the council one of the band killed a Mexican herder under the employ of William Bent, and they were fearful of another massacre in retaliation. However, provisions were distributed among the tribe and the talks remained on a friendly basis. The tribe openly disapproved the killing of the Mexican but refused to surrender the offender, using the excuse that two children taken by the American troops at Sand Creek had not been returned. The council broke up in a friendly atmosphere. The next day the children were returned and annuities were promised. The amendments to the treaty of October, 1865, were signed. The same day annuities were distributed to the Arapahoes. The next three days were employed in informal discussions with the Indians, distributing premiums and presents to various bands of Cheyenne and Arapaho.


36 "Report of a Council held at Fort Zarah, Kansas, November 13th, 1866, with the Cheyenne Indians of the Upper Arkansas," ibid.
and taking the testimony of white men.\textsuperscript{37} William Mathewson, trader and Indian friend, stated that he believed the Indians' intention was to band together for general hostilities the following spring.\textsuperscript{38} He also stated the purchase of prisoners at Fort Dodge would tend to encourage kidnapping in Texas. Dissatisfied with the present military set-up in the Indian country, he proposed heavily garrisoned military posts, commanded by "judicious officers", as the only method of insuring peace. A statement of L. B. Hickok, another Indian trader, protested the trading of goods for Texas cattle by the commander of Fort Dodge.\textsuperscript{39} W. R. Irwin, Indian agent, and William Bent, Indian trader, reported that annuities exchanged at Fort Harker, November 8, were inferior goods and lacking in the quality agreed to in the previous treaty. "The coffee was damaged, the sugar was inferior, and the Indians refused to accept the blankets in particular."\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{40}} In reply, Colonel Leavenworth insisted the supplies had been withheld due to Indian forays.\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{41}}

Around 600 Apaches were represented on November 18 at council by The Wolf Sleeve, The Crow, Iron Shirt, The Left Hand, and The one who approaches his enemy.\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{42}} A medal was then presented to The Wolf Sleeve, chief of the tribe. The Apaches signed the Amendments to the Treaty of October, 1865.

\textsuperscript{37} "Report of Commissioners Charles Bogy and W. R. Irwin," \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{38} Statement of William Mathewson, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{39} Statement of L. B. Hickok, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{40} Statements of W. R. Irwin and William Bent, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{41} Letter to L. V. Bogy from J. H. Leavenworth, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{42} "Proceedings of a Council held at Fort Zarah, Kansas, November 20th, 1866, with the Apache Indians of the Upper Arkansas," \textit{ibid.}
Conversation which followed involved the possibility of separate reservations for Kiowas and Apaches, and promises were made for annuity goods.

On the 20th, council was held with the Cheyenne Dog Soldiers.\textsuperscript{43} This tribe consisted of about 600 persons represented by Bull Bear and Tall Bull. The Indians were enjoined to stay away from military posts, roads, bad men, and whiskey. The Chiefs were warned that the Great White Father could match fifty warriors to each of theirs. The Indians listened and after a short time withdrew without signing the amendments or replying.

On November 24-26, a council was held with the Kiowa (estimated strength, 2000 persons),\textsuperscript{44} considered the meanest and most troublesome tribe on the plains. Colonel Leavenworth told the assembled Indians, Lone Wolf, Heap of Bears, Black Eagle, Timber Mountain and Red Hat, that the Great Chief in Washington, Captain Bogey's brother, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, was very disappointed with their behavior, and that if depredations continued, more soldiers would be sent. The Kiowas were informed that all the peaceful Indian tribes were angry with them and that the Great White Chief would not purchase prisoners. Then the discussion centered around the cattle previously stolen from Texas and exchanged for goods at Fort Dodge. This concluded the series of Indian-government conferences at Fort Zarah in 1866.

Apparently these conferences had little effect, for in 1867, General Hancock began a campaign, with six companies of infantry and artillery, to

\textsuperscript{43} "Proceedings of a Council held at Fort Zarah, Kansas, November 20th, 1866, with the Dog Soldiers of the Cheyenne Indians of the Upper Arkansas," ibid.

\textsuperscript{44} "Proceedings of a Council held at the Big Bend of the Arkansas River in the State of Kansas, with the Kiowa Indians of the Upper Arkansas, November 26, 1866, ibid."
bring the Indians under submission. It was felt that, the pen having failed, it was time to try the sword. 45 At Fort Riley, Hancock's troops were re-enforced by General George A. Custer with four companies of the 7th Cavalry and one company of infantry. April 7, the expedition arrived at Fort Larned, having picked up two additional companies at Fort Harker. About thirty miles northwest of Fort Larned, the Cheyenne and Sioux were camped, after refusing to sign a treaty at the Fort. Hancock marched towards their camp; fearing another massacre, the Indians fled towards the Smoky Hill region committing atrocities along the way. General Sheridan relates the following picture of these hostilities:

Leaving the Saline, this war-party crossed over to the valley of the Solomon, a more thickly settled region, and where the people were in better circumstances, their farms having been started two or three years before. Unaware of the hostile character of the raiders, the people here received them in the friendliest way, providing food, and even giving them ammunition, little dreaming of what was impending. These kindnesses were requited with murder and pillage, and worse, for all the women who fell into their hands were subjected to horrors indescribable by words. Here also the first murders were committed, thirteen men and two women being killed. Then, after burning five houses and stealing all the horses they could find, they turned back towards the Saline, carrying away as prisoners two little girls named Bell, who have never been heard of since.

It was probably the intention to finish, as they marched back to the south, the devilish work begun on the Saline, but before they reached that valley on the return, the victims left there originally had fled to Fort Harker, as already explained, and Captain Benteen was now nearing the little settlement with a troop of cavalry, which he had hurriedly marched from Fort Zarah. 50

The Indians dispersed leaving no visible trail for the military to follow. The War of 1867, according to Garfield, might have been precipitated by

45 Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 329.

General Hancock himself.\textsuperscript{47} E. W. Wynkoop’s annual report of August 13, 1867, charged that due to the nomadic state of the Arapahoes, Cheyennes and Apaches, it was impossible to run the Indian agency of the Fort Larned area with any regularity.\textsuperscript{48} On August 22 the Battle of Beaver Creek was fought. The Kiowa led by Satanta met part of the 18th Kansas Cavalry in a decisive battle. The result was an effectual break up of Indian concentration.\textsuperscript{49}

In October, another Peace Commission assembled, at Medicine Lodge. Present were the Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache. The Cheyenne and Arapahoe arrived two weeks later. The terms in their simplest form were the withdrawal of opposition to the construction of the railroad, relinquishment to claims between the Arkansas and Platte rivers, and the withdrawal to reservations.\textsuperscript{50} In return they were promised large reservations with enormous annuities, the right to hunt south of the Arkansas River, and the exclusion of white settlement on the area for a period of three years.\textsuperscript{51} The fall of 1867, Indians attacked a mule train en-route to Mexico, near the mouth of Walnut Creek, barbarously killing two persons.\textsuperscript{52} Shortly after, within

\textsuperscript{47} Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 330.
\textsuperscript{49} Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 340.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 343.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Bernard Bryan Smyth, The Heart of the New Kansas (Great Bend, Kansas: B. B. Smyth, 1880), 79–80.
sight of Fort Zarah, Indians attacked a wagon train killing ten and wounding five. 53

October 1, a hay-party was attacked six miles from the post, killing one man, capturing another and running off sixteen mules. When word reached Fort Zarah a body of twenty-six soldiers pursued the Indians to the bank of the Arkansas, where a short skirmish ensued. Approaching darkness was responsible for the abandonment of the chase and the return of the soldiers to the fort. At daybreak 150 Indians attacked under the cover of a heavy fog. The soldiers quickly arose from their beds to drive the savages off and followed them for some distance. From the appearance of the bloody trail, many were killed or wounded. 54

Later this same day the Indians also attacked a government train about three miles from the post. 55 The next day, Lieutenant Bassett, of the Seventh Cavalry, on the way to Fort Harker, encountered a large body of Indians at Cow Creek and was forced back. Lieutenant Kaiser, with a body of troops, set out immediately for that area. Arriving at the camp they found two wagons and seven men who had been surrounded by Indians for several hours. The Indians retreated, keeping a "respectful distance" from the troops. 56

The last Indian fight in what is today Barton County, occurred four miles

54 The Times and Conservation (Leavenworth, Kansas, October 6, 1868.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
below where the city of Great Bend is now located. Following the murder of a Negro servant by Indians three days earlier, Homer Kidder describes the fight that ensued:

We numbered twelve men and the Indians about seventy-five. We fought them for three hours, killing six and wounding several, also killing several ponies. We lost two men in the engagement: shot with both bullets and arrows. The Indians finally left the battleground carrying off their dead and wounded.57

November 27, 1868, Black Kettle was killed at the Battle of the Washita. The year ended with the prospect for peace improved and Fort Zarah in decline. On May 21, 1869, the Sioux and Cheyenne raided the future Republic Country area. This was 100 miles north of Fort Zarah. Later Tall Bull's village at Summit Spring, Colorado, was destroyed by Major Frank North, of the 5th Cavalry.58 The Indians were being driven far to the west of the Great Bend. The area was now made safe for the influx of white settlers. The land had been "purchased" from the red man with blood, money, and sorrow.

57 Smyth, *Heart of Kansas*, 81.
58 Garfield, "Defense of the Kansas Frontier," 469
CHAPTER V

ABANDONMENT

October 6, 1869, only five years after its establishment, Special Orders No. 185, Department of the Missouri ordered the complete abandonment of Fort Zarah. The post had outlived its usefulness, the Indians were gone, never to return. Captain Nicholas Nolan, the last commander, set the following reply to Brevet Colonel W. G. Mitchell.

Special Orders No. 185 Current series Dept. Mo. has been received by me, but the transportation required will exceed the supply now at Fort Harker, Ks, if the Commanding General designs the dismantlement of the Post, and transfer of all public property, including roof and flooring, etc. now at this Post.

The roof is of tin and very valuable and the flooring has been all placed within two years, and is almost new, and both can be used with the windows again, without any expense except transportation and the necessary mechanical aid which I can supply from my troops; and in my estimation if the Post be left in status quo it will become a rendezvous for horse thieves and prairie robbers.²

Brevet Lieutenant General L. A. Easton, Chief Quartermaster of the Department of the Missouri directed in instructions for the removal of all "serviceable material" from Fort Zarah to Fort Harker.³ All public buildings were dismantled by Captain John Rodgers of Fort Harker.⁴ The valuable tin roof, which originally cost $20,000, was removed from Zarah to Fort Harker at an expense of $10,000. According to B. B. Smyth, this

---

⁴Letter from F. H. Haihawif to the Chief Q. M. Dept. Mo., ibid.
created "fat jobs for some poor contractor." The receiver at Fort Harker wouldn't accept the roof, so it was removed to the prairie a short distance from the fort and used as a shelter by settlers. A lieutenant, ordered to survey the remains of Fort Zarah in May, 1871, wrote that all that was left of the post were the walls of the blockhouse erected by Captain Inman, not a plank or piece of timber remained.

On March 25, 1871, the reservation was transferred to the Department of the Interior. A commission was appointed by the General Land Office in 1873 to appraise the 3247.6 acre reservation. July, 1874, the reservation lands were sold at public auction, at Salina, Kansas, at an appraised value from three to ten dollars per acre. In July, 1874, 2,242.51 of these acres were sold at public auction in Salina, Kansas for an average price of $3.76 per acre. Previous to the land sale the ruins had become a meeting place for thieves and robbers and a den for bats.

When settlement commenced on the reservation the stone of the remaining building began to disappear. "Captain E. V. Rugar was appointed a

5 Bernard Bryan Smyth, The Heart of the New Kansas (Great Bend, Kansas: B. B. Smyth, 1880), 83.
6 Ibid., 87.
7 "Reply to Leavenworth Kansas, May 17, 1871," Records of the General Land Office, Record Group 49, National Archives.
8 "Abandon Reservation File," Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 B. B. Smyth, Heart of the New Kansas, 87.
12 B. B. Smyth, Heart of the New Kansas, 88.
marshall to take care of it, which he bravely did by going to California in 1874, and letting the fort take care of itself. 13 After his purchase of the Fort site, E. C. Soay issued a warning forbidding the removal of any more stone, but the surrounding residents continued to haul the remaining stone away. 14

In 1933, Miss Grace Gunn donated land west of the Walnut Creek for use as historic Zarah Park. 15 That same year, a Major Cockrill of Fort Riley dug up the remains of the following seven soldiers buried at the post cemetery, for transportation to Arlington National Cemetery.

Charles Dorherty - Private, Co. C 2nd Colorado Cavalry, March 1, 1865
Joseph Kuhn, Private Co. C, 2nd Colorado Cavalry March 30, 1865
James L. Graves Private /sig/ Co. C, 2nd Colorado Cavalry March 1, 1865
James Graham, Private, Co. G 7th Iowa, Sept. 8, 1865.
Casper R. Leach, Private Co. I 14th Mo. Cavalry Volunteer Dec. 11, 1865
Thomas Z. Simms, Private Co. M, 13th Cavalry R. Mo. Volunteer Dec. 11, 1865

That same year marked the dedication of Fort Zarah Park. It was not until the 1961 Kansas centennial year that Ray Schutz, prominent lawyer and local historian, brought to the attention of the public, the fact that Fort Zarah Park is not at the same location as Fort Zarah. Fort Zarah was located three-tenths of a mile east of the Park. A wheat field with remnants of stone, nails, and broken glass is the last remainder of a splendid little outpost, Fort Zarah.

Fort Zarah's strategic location near the important Walnut Creek

13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Great Bend Tribune (Great Bend, Kansas), May 7, 1961.
16 Ibid., 11.
Crossing was an outpost area of Forts Larned and Ellsworth and contributed to the protection of the Santa Fe Trail and the Great Bend region. Many wagon trains were rescued from complete destruction due to the heroic efforts of the soldiers from Fort Zarah. Possibly the mere presence of the fort and escort troops caused many warring Indians to modify their repredation plans. The establishment and dismantlement of Fort Zarah encompassed the period of Indian wars between 1864 and 1869. The end of the Indian Wars brought an end to the military usefulness of the fort for the region.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. MANUSCRIPTS


"Records of Scouts and Escorts in the month of Jan., 1865," Records of the War Department, Returns and Trimonthly Reports. National Archives, Washington, D. C.


Records of the War Department, Post Orders, Fort Zarah, Kansas, 1864-1869. National Archives, Washington, D. C.

"treaties XXX (unrat.)," "Files of the Upper Arkansas," M856, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

B. DOCUMENTARY COLLECTIONS


Headquarters Department of the Missouri, General Orders and Circulars, Department of the Missouri, 1867. n.p.: Government Printing Office, n.d.

Headquarters Department of the Missouri, General Orders and Circulars, Department of the Missouri, 1868. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Government Printing Office, 1869.


C. CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPERS

The Daily Conservative, Leavenworth, Kansas, July 28, 1864, March 8, 1865, October 6, 1868.


D. ARTICLES


Garfield, Marvin. "Defense of the Kansas Frontier, 1864-'65," Kansas Historical Quarterly, I (February, 1932), 140-152.


E. SECONDARY SOURCES


Wright, Robert M. *Dodge City, the Cowboy Capital*. Wichita: The Wichita Eagle Press, 1913.