



The Way It Was

BY HAZEL WEBB DALZIEL

These reminiscences may be of no concern to you now, but some day you may enjoy reading about "the way it was."¹ So I shall describe to you as best I can my childhood on a farm, acquired by my father partly as a tree claim from the United States government and partly by purchase.² The land was still a family possession when you were small and you may remember a little something about it, especially the huge trees and the long fields stretching down to the lake and beyond.

Hazel Webb Dalziel recently painted this watercolor of the house on her father's farm in Weld County.

¹ Hazel Webb Dalziel, who was born in 1890, spent the first ten years of her life on a farm in Weld County. Her father, Charles Benjamin Webb, came to Colorado in 1872 with the Chicago Colony. He married Millie Anne Kerby in 1880 and they became the parents of seven children, four of whom are now living: Hazel, Frances (1883), Edmund (1887), and Barbara (1894). Three sons, Walter (1881), Ralph (1885), and Myron (1888) are deceased; another son, Percy, was born in 1892 and died in infancy.

² Under the terms of the Timber Culture Act of 1873, a person who planted a certain portion of a quarter-section in trees (first forty acres, then ten acres under an amendment passed in 1878) would ultimately receive title to that quarter-section. See Benjamin H. Hibbard, *A History of the Public Land Policies* (New York: Peter Smith, 1938; first published New York, 1924), pp. 411-21.

Perhaps the most complete change in living habits from those days came with plumbing. Imagine if you can the simple matter of bathing. This was a Saturday night activity and started off immediately after the supper was cleared away. A wash boiler of water was put on the fire to heat, rugs and papers were spread on the newly scrubbed floor, and a galvanized tub was brought in and partially filled with warm water. The oven door was let down and a towel spread on it to warm. As I was next to the youngest I was second for the bath. My long braids were pinned on top of my head. (One's hair was washed in daytime so it would dry before night. To go to bed with damp hair was sure to bring on a cold or some other illness. I was a long time getting over this belief.) My clothes were removed and I climbed in the tub.

I don't know how long it took for the family to go through this process, as after the warm towel was wrapped around me and I was rubbed dry, I was dressed in a warm outing flannel gown and sent to bed. We learned very early to climb the pitch-dark steps, counting so as to know when we were up, find our own room, climb into bed, and cover ourselves up. None of this bedtime story or tucking-in nonsense. A mother hardly had time anyway if she had to see that three boys got their ears and their feet clean without making a lake in the kitchen and otherwise making a sport of the occasion.

I was the "odd" girl so I slept above in a single bed. There were no springs, just slats, a straw-filled tick, cotton blankets, and cotton batting comforts, also called comforters. These Mother made and they were very warm until they had been washed.

Making comforters was fun too, at least I thought so. The tops were pieced out of scraps of material, sometimes wool but mostly cotton, and the back was a length of lightweight cotton material. This was stretched over four long wooden slats which were made to form a square and nailed at the corners. These rested on the backs of four chairs and the under part or lining was sewn or laced onto them. Then the cotton batts were opened and spread on top, and care was taken to keep it a uniform thickness. The patchwork top was then spread over all and pinned securely to the lining. Then the fun began. A contrasting colored yarn was thread into a needle and the comforter was tied at intervals, usually at the corner of each patch, then cut an inch or so from the quilt which gave it a nice fuzzy look.

This chore was thoroughly enjoyed when a neighbor would come in to help with the tying. Two persons could tie one in an afternoon.

The Ladies Aid Society kept this as one of their regular projects for needy families. They could do two or more in a day. Quilts and quilting were quite a different thing, but I shan't go into that. A whole book could be written about quilts and perhaps it has been. My mother made a good many after she was eighty years old. One always used the prettiest for a coverlet on the bed in the spare room.

"Spare room" was the name of the extra bedroom. In those days travelers were always invited to put up their horses and spend the night. I'll never forget one such traveler. He was a religious fanatic, an odd and not too clean individual. We also had another visitor that night, a preacher. When father asked the preacher to ask the blessing at supper that night the odd one was much put out. He got even by preaching and praying for two hours when the meal was over.

My father and the preacher were obliged to listen; all the rest of the family were in the kitchen-dining room. The door between was not quite closed and we amused ourselves by peeking through the crack. At length the long harangue was over, and when we filed up to bed, the fanatic was making his bed on chairs strung out down the center of the living room. The real preacher had the spare room.

There were a great many hobos and men walking through the country looking for work. They would ask for "something to eat." A handout was usually given them; mostly it was a sandwich made of two thick slices of homemade bread, buttered, and with a slice of meat added. If they looked real deserving, they would get milk or coffee also. Sometimes we thought they left a mark on the gate as some days we would have several at intervals of a half hour or so. Perhaps it was the depression at the time which was throwing so many men out of work, or perhaps they just enjoyed tramping through our beautiful country, getting food for the asking and sleeping in straw stacks.

Our part of Colorado was a wheat-growing country then and the countryside was dotted with straw stacks. Most farmers had at least one stack near the barn where it was handy for use as bedding (in the house as well as the barn). Mother used it for padding under the carpets and also as filling for the ticks used as mattresses. It was used for scratch material and nests

in the hen house also. Father grew oats, which were used for horse feed. The straw was very superior to wheat straw and was used whenever it was available. The animals ate it, too.

Our horses were mostly draft animals, a good many of which were descendants of a stallion my father kept to improve his stock. He was named Elgin and was so gentle that we children played around him and with him. One time my brothers hitched him to a dump cart which they had so overloaded that it was too heavy for them to push. They were quite certain that "Ol Elgin" would be stuck this time and were much chagrined when he just walked away with it. The driving horse that I remember best was called Mosker. He had been bought in the town of Mosca, Colorado. "Mosker" was the New England way of saying "Mosca." (Dad was born in Maine.) Mosca is in the San Luis Valley where my father had taken his threshing crew and machines for the harvest, as that had been a bad year for wheat in our section. Then there was Fanny; she was just about square and filled the shafts of the buggy with scarcely an inch to spare. She was called on for buggy duty when the roads were hub deep in mud. Sometimes the mud would roll up on the wheels until they were six or eight inches across.

Fanny was used for plowing and cultivating the garden and for pulling the hay up on the stack. The hay stacker was a sort of mast with a yardarm swinging out from it. Ropes and pulley attached the tongs to the end of the yardarm and down the pole to a singletree to which Fanny was hitched. When the tongs had been securely clamped into a load of hay, it was raised to the stack by Fanny. She would settle into her collar and with that low crawl that's a joy to watch, move the load to the top of the stack. My father called on me a time or two to help with this part of the stacking, but I was no great help even though all that was required was to lift the singletree and carry it back while Fanny backed into her starting position. She obeyed the call of the men and knew what to do as well as I.

Stacking hay was one of the big operations on the farm, requiring a crew of eight or ten men—two men for each wagon to load the hay in the field and two or three men on the stack. The tongs of the stacker were guided into position on the stack and a trip rope released the hay. It then had to be moved to the edges by hand and well spread, so as to be always higher in the middle of the stack. A farmer took great pride in having his stacks uniform and straight and his hay still green and sweet-

smelling after a winter in the field.

Haying, especially the first cutting, was always done in the hottest weather and meant a great deal of extra work for the housewife. Eight or ten hungry men can eat great quantities of food. The neighbors were delighted to help at our house as the food was always ample and good.

Alfalfa hay was basic in farm life. Its high protein content made excellent feed for all the livestock, including the chickens and hogs. Having the hay crop destroyed by rain was almost disastrous but happened seldom in our semi-arid country. Alfalfa was introduced into the Colorado farm program before my time, but an "old timer" once told me that my father was the first farmer to break up a field of it. It was thought that because the roots were so deep and tough that plowing would have to be done as deeply as possible. Farmers came from miles around to watch. It looked fine at the time but in only a matter of days the alfalfa was growing more vigorously than ever. Later it was found that cutting just below the crown was all that was necessary. Alfalfa left the field rich in nitrogen and humus, both very beneficial to our heavy soil.

Potatoes grew and yielded very well at that time. These gave way to sugar beets, which were introduced to this section late in the nineteenth century. My father was among the first to grow them. A factory for making beet sugar was first built at Loveland. A railroad was built around through the beet-growing section and beets were loaded onto cars at "dumps" and hauled to the factory. The growing of sugar beets required a great deal of hand labor so our first immigrants were German-Russians from the Ukraine in Russia.

Father had a pair of beautiful dappled gray geldings which were our pride and joy, and a two-seated black carriage with mud guards. Ours didn't have fringe. The top was more like a cab. My younger sister and I were always taken on trips in this conveyance. It was used for all the church and community affairs and visits to relatives who lived in Berthoud and Loveland. The latter was eighteen miles from home and Berthoud was in between. I loved being out-of-doors and never tired of it. It was such fun when Dad would take the whip out of the stock and, giving me his fat "Elgin" watch to hold, would lightly touch the horses' backs. Immediately they would lengthen their stride into a fast trot. Faster and faster until they would almost break into a gallop. The dust would stream out behind us like a comet's

tail and we almost sailed. At the end of a mile when only four minutes had passed Father would look down at me with his eyes twinkling and give a nod of satisfaction. I rode with my father a good deal and often shared his lunch of doughnuts and cheese when a trip to town caused us to miss eating at home.

Another driving team that I only heard tell about was a pair of wild pinto ponies. They were hitched to a spring wagon, a vehicle that served the same purpose as the pickup truck. It usually took two men to hitch them, and then they were led from the barn up to the house. Father would get in, get a firm grip on the lines and say "Let them go, boys." With a lunge they were off on the dead run to round the gate on two wheels, cross the bridge with a clatter of hoofs and wheels, and disappear down the road in a cloud of dust. By the time they had run the eight miles to town they were quite docile and manageable and gave no trouble on the way home.

I didn't know much about the big work horses but I liked to hear the men talk and argue about which team could pull the greatest load and which could walk the fastest.

In those days neighbors were very important. One's whole life was tied, or perhaps interwoven would be a better word, with all the people around. If neighbors lived more than a mile away we didn't see them very often, only at church and community affairs.

Our church was called Mt. Zion and was built on a corner of land (donated) just a fourth of a mile from our house. We attended Sunday School regularly and a church service was held afterward. For a long time there was no resident pastor, and every week some member of the church brought a minister from town and kept him over the week end, taking him back to town on Monday. It seemed like we entertained him most often, and at the quarterly conference there were always two. The table conversation when they were there was my chief delight, subjects about which I was most ignorant.

One time we had black bass for dinner, caught from our lake that very morning. Our minister spoke of his enjoyment and my father said, "I'm afraid it was caught on Sunday." The hired man who had done the fishing that morning instead of going to church blushed a deep red, and everyone had a good laugh.

The Ladies Aid Society was paying for the church pews with all sorts of social affairs. In the summer we had lawn

socials, with ice cream and cake or watermelon. In the winter there were chicken pie or oyster suppers. These were always well attended as the men would get together for man talk while the children ran and played, and the women talked a mile a minute while they served the food.

The most exciting event the whole year was the Children's Day Exercises, held the second Sunday in June. A platform made with sawhorses to hold up a plank flooring was constructed under the trees and decorated in the back with branches from the trees and across the front with yellow roses and snowballs.

The girls had beruffled and beribboned white dresses, their hair done up in rags the night before so it hung in long curls



about their shoulders. A top curl would have a big ribbon bow tied on it. The exercises were songs and recitations, all well rehearsed. The preacher (that's what we always called him) spoke "a few well-chosen words."

Our little church was painted white, had a spire, and held ten pews with a bench along the back. In front was the rostrum with the organ to one side, on the other a potbellied stove. My father always tended to the heating and the fire. In coldest weather he would light a fire on Saturday and keep it going all night. The ladies kept the church clean. Eventually a parsonage was built and we had our own preacher, but it didn't ease the burden any as now, instead of having one or two for several meals, we had a family of nine for one meal. This happened quite unexpectedly one time when my little sister invited them, quite unknown to my mother, for Easter dinner. That occasion stands

out in my memory as though it were yesterday. Soon after the service the family came trudging up the road in twos and threes. It was one of our Colorado spring days—snow, rain, sleet, and bits of sunshine. Father had made a roaring fire in the big cast-iron range while Mother quickly made four mince pies and popped them into the oven. Frances started peeling potatoes. I set the table after it had been stretched full length and covered



with a white linen cloth. Dad brought in a home-cured ham and sliced it ready for the skillet. It seemed no time at all until everything was ready and all the grownups sat down to dinner. The children had to wait for the second table. I never minded the waiting too much if I could sit in a corner and listen to what was said. After dinner the children had a wonderful, messy time boiling and coloring eggs. We wasted literally dozens of them that day. At dusk the family departed and peace and quiet reigned.

The very most exciting time of the whole year was threshing. The threshing crew went from farm to farm with a well-worked-out itinerary and we knew about when to expect them. The cookhouse came first—a long narrow house built on wheels, with strips of screening covered with canvas curtains along each side which could be raised or lowered, and doors at both ends with removable steps for easy access. Under the windows

were long wooden tables and benches where the crew had their meals. At the front end there was a crude cupboard and a large cast-iron stove. Tin plates, steel knives and forks, tin cups and tin spoons, and white crockery pitchers for milk or cream with sugar bowls of the same material were all provided for the crew. The meals were pretty much the same, but if they were clean and well cooked, the men didn't grumble.

After the cookhouse arrived the men who had gathered the bundles from the fields drove in one by one, went directly to the new location, and started loading their racks. The water wagon would pull in and then we'd hear a whistle and the steam engine drawing the separator would come puffing up the road. Planks were usually placed across the bridge to reinforce it. The turn at the gate required some maneuvering as it was a sharp right angle and the road wasn't very wide. The whole business then moved on into the field and made the first set. The separator was drawn into position; then the engine turned and backed for some distance. A heavy belt extended from the flywheel of the engine to the separator. This was a little tricky. The distance had to be exact, as the belt was long, in order to allow the wagons to approach and unload the bundles of grain into the maw of the separator. Soon we'd hear a long toot, the machinery would start, and thus began an exciting time for all. Grain pouring from the side of the separator emptied into sacks one bushel at a time. There were two spouts. While one sack was filling the other was taken off and loaded into a wagon backed up close. Barbara and I were allowed to ride back and forth on these wagons, and sometimes we would help pull the sacks back into the farther bins in the granary where a man stood to dump them into a hole through the floor. The granary was a two-story structure and the wheat had to be boosted from the wagon to the platform and from the platform on up through an opening in the angle of the roof.

The odor of the new wheat, the dusty grey appearance of the men, the noise, the bustle, and all the men working together in the joy of the harvest was an experience that a child could never forget. At dusk the whistle blew, and everything stopped. Horses, tired and hungry, were released from the wagons, watered, fed, and bedded for the night in new straw. Then the men filed up to the cookhouse and washed at basins handy to water and towels. By this time the lamps were lighted in the cookhouse. They climbed the steps, shooed the flies off the

screen door, filed down the narrow aisle, sat down, and silently ate as only hard-working men can. Then each with his own bedding would bed down in the straw. The ones who liked to be clean would walk down to the lake for a swim. At four o'clock the next morning the engineer, having been up at three to get up steam, blew the whistle. It was the start of another day.

The women of the house had their share of the work. All the neighbors who helped with the harvest ate with the family in the house. In the very early days it took several days to thresh all a man's grain. Usually there were up to twenty persons for the noon meal.

Preparing meals for ten to twenty persons was no small task, especially without any conveniences at all. Water had to be pumped from the cistern and carried into the house in buckets. Only a tea kettle and a reservoir were available for hot water. All used water had to be carried out again. In our kitchen a homemade bench, with a shelf underneath for pans, held the pail of water with a large quart dipper in it; a tin wash basin with a long linen towel hung from a roller at the side. The large table which seated eight or ten persons used half of the room. At the other side was a door leading into a small bedroom, the cast-iron stove, and then another door leading into the pantry. This pantry was about seven feet long and five feet wide with shelves built from waist high to the ceiling. Dishes, pots, pans, food, flour, sugar, and everything else for



cooking was kept here. For a cake, one went to the milk house for the cream, to the cellar for the eggs, to the wood pile for wood so the fire could be kept just right, to the bench for a mixing pan, to the bins for flour and sugar, and to a shelf for soda or baking powder. Iron cupcake pans were heated and greased and floured. Now imagine a whole meal being assembled with a similar amount of detail for each item and one begins to wonder how it was ever done. True, some canned foods were available. Dad bought crates (twenty-four cans) of peas, corn, and tomatoes. Most of our fruit came from our own orchard. Dad had set out apple trees that bore fruit from July on, and the long-lasting varieties kept until the next spring. We had currants, gooseberries, raspberries, cherries, plums, and pears. I can still see the glasses of jelly set up on the window ledge to catch and reflect the sun and be admired. Before the Mason jar, fruits were dried or preserved in sugar. Sugar and flour were bought in one-hundred-pound bags and lard in fifty-pound pails or tins. In the summer there was a large garden. One of my chores was to pick the peas or beans and get them ready for cooking. To pick and shell five gallons of peas was more than I could do alone so Mother always helped out. Sometimes I had to dig new potatoes too. These often were no larger than eggs. Scraping them was awful, not only tedious but oddly odorous. Gathering greens, washing and picking them over, washing beets, and peeling turnips kept me out of mischief all morning. Meal preparations were always so much easier when the lettuce, onions, and radishes were big enough to eat. From then on there was a procession of vegetables to the cantaloupe and watermelon, and finally the parsnips. Fresh fish from the lake, either bass or sunfish, was always a welcome change. Catching them was a job for the boys.

Dad had a unique arrangement for keeping milk and butter. An enclosed shed housed a long tank made of wood, which was insulated and lined with zinc. Two or three large cakes of ice were dug out of the cinders in the ice house, washed, and put in the tank. The milk was strained into tall cans and let down into the icy water. Fresh meat and butter were kept in it too. A tight lid, also zinc lined, kept the heat and dust out. Many a tasty dish resulted from this convenience: ice cream, lemonade, iced tea, pitchers of thick cream and milk, and pounds of sweet butter.

The ice was "harvested" in the winter. Our lake was a reser-

voir for irrigation water brought from the mountains via a canal. This is known as the Highland Ditch and was surveyed and built by the farmers using the water. My father, of course, was one of them. The water then was fresh and clean and the ice was cut from it when it attained a thickness of six to twelve inches. It was sawed out in blocks, loaded into wagons, stored in a deep hole, and covered with cinders. A house was built over the pit for protection from rain and sun. There was always enough ice to last all summer.

Another big chore was taking care of the milk. The cans and all utensils required washing, scalding, and sunning. Surplus milk was skimmed and fed to the hogs, and the cream was made into butter. It took at least two hours to prepare for, churn, wash, and salt the butter, which after being well cooked was pressed and worked until all the water was gone. Then it was shaped with pound-size molds and wrapped in wet paper which was bought for this purpose. The surplus butter went to the store along with surplus eggs and was traded for groceries and meat.

All the baking was done in the home—bread, rolls, cakes, pies, and cookies. Fresh cupcakes were made every night for our supper. This may seem a little unusual, but it was Mother's way of keeping a bargain that she and my father made when they were married. My father's request was that he would always have plenty of pie and cake; these items were very scarce in his boyhood. So Mother, in turn, asked that he never question the amount of soap and water she used. This agreement had a rather unexpected result one time when, after a severe drought, the little trees so carefully set out and tended were dying from want of water. Mother, remembering her bargain, washed all the bedding and household linens and then carried the used water to the thirsty trees. She saved her trees and avoided an argument.

If this all seems a carefree sort of life, it's because I haven't mentioned the other side. The worst time of all happened just at the time I was born. Four of the children were stricken with diphtheria. My oldest brother died, two were very ill, and my two-and-a-half-year-old brother, Ed, was paralyzed. Add to this the discovery my mother made, when she was well enough to care for me, that I was crippled. The soles of my feet turned in and pressed against the ankles.

My father's sister, "Auntie," and my mother's aunt were

both there at the time. Imagine, four children desperately ill, a new baby—crippled, everybody upset and worried, Auntie ordering the help about, and Aunt Sue starting trouble with the hired girl or anyone she could get to listen. When Mother was finally allowed to get up, she sent Auntie and Aunt Sue back to town and had Dad go get Ella. Ella was Mother's cousin and Mother had taken care of her when she was quite small.

Just to show how queer people could act even then, Mother went to the cistern for water one morning and heard what sounded like a child crying. On investigating she found this little girl about five years old. She coaxed her into the house and discovered it was Ella. She had been put out in the far corner of the yard and left there. Mother kept her and found she was a marvel with the baby who had been born prematurely and was so small that he was kept pinned to a pillow. Ella played with him like a doll and was so gentle that Mother trusted her completely, so Ella was sent for on this occasion. With Ella to look after the children she could cope with the work. Her good hired girl had left in the middle of the trouble. So Ella took entire charge of Ed. He had been fooled so many times by having medicine put in food that he wouldn't eat a bite unless he had watched the berries being picked and had seen the cream and sugar added from their containers on the table—then he was satisfied and would eat.

You may be sure that I wasn't neglected. Every time Mother picked me up she massaged and pressed the bones in my feet and legs. She made little shoes with whalebone in the sides for me until my feet were big enough to wear shoes. By fall I had stiff leather shoes, and Ed, after six months of paralysis, was found standing out on the porch after some excitement at the barn had drawn everyone away from the house. The cry, "Ed's walking," was like the dawn after a dark night.

Another very bad time occurred during an epidemic of typhoid fever. We had a family of real good people whom Father had engaged to help with the farming. There were ten children, eight of them at home. The youngest was just the age of my sister Barbara. That winter seven of them, one after the other, were stricken with typhoid fever. With only two of them able to do anything it was up to the neighbors. Mother spent days and nights too helping out. Tommy, the youngest, stayed with us a month. He was a sweet child and never a bit of trouble, and he and Barbara played together constantly. When

it was over three of the family were gone, the father, a daughter, and a son. No one was left who could work so they moved away.

Everyday living was not easy either. I don't think many women today could face a "gay nineties" wash day. Immediately after the breakfast was ready, the fire was replenished and a boiler of water set on to heat. By the time the breakfast was eaten and the dishes were washed, the machine (at that time a square tub with a hinged lid with a long handle which pushed back and forth) was filled with soapy water, more water was put on to heat, and other tubs (galvanized) were brought in and set on benches. From the machine the clothes went into the boiler, from boiler through two rinses; then they were starched and hung to dry. It usually took almost all day to do the eight or ten loads. Then the tubs had to be emptied and the kitchen scrubbed, supper prepared, dishes and milk buckets washed, the clothes brought in and dampened, all to be ironed the next day. The ironing was done on the dining table. If there were two to iron a pad was put on each end. We had two or three of the old three-corner irons and several which were rounded to a point at either end and had removable handles. Four or five long white linen cloths, a great many sheets and pillowcases, towels, long white starched petticoats—always with tucks and ruffles—aprons and shirts, and often stiff-bosomed shirts and collars for Father, were ironed. Napkins were not in everyday use—only for Sunday dinner or if we had company. The evening was spent mending and sewing the buttons back on that had been taken off with the wringer. It took more than one evening to do the mending.

The third day was spent baking, as was one other day in the week. There were always meals to get and milk to care for, churning, making butter, gathering vegetables and fruit, making jam and jelly and mincemeat, feeding and tending chickens, ducks, and turkeys. One wonders how they could possibly get it all done.

At house-cleaning time—both spring and fall—some of the carpets were taken up, ripped up, and washed, then resewn, with the worn pieces moved to the outer edge. The floor was scrubbed and covered with paper, then a thick layer of straw was laid, on top of which the carpet was placed, stretched, and tacked against the wall. Mother always laid the carpet and when she finished it was tight and true. We also hung our own wallpaper and did our own painting.



Sweeping with a broom on cleaning day was a trying thing. Carpets, both engrain and homemade rag carpets, accumulated a lot of dust, so the doors were opened and when the dust had settled back in a different place everything was wiped off thoroughly. This was one of my chores. The organ was the worst. It was decorated with all sorts of knobs, cutouts, and shelves for holding lamps and vases.

Most country people used rag rugs to some degree, and sewing rags for rugs and carpets was an Aid Society project. The rags would have been prepared beforehand by washing them and tearing them into strips. The ladies would begin arriving about one o'clock. After two or three hours and a great deal of chatter they were served pie or cake by the hostess and the treasury was enriched by a few dollars.

Taking down and putting up the heating stove was always the signal for house cleaning. I always dreaded it even though I had nothing whatever to do about it. After the long winter the pipe was always full of soot and the least little jar would send the stuff billowing over everything. We all sort of held our breath until it was safely out the door. Two of the men would grasp hold of the lower edge of the stove and carry it out. Under the stove was a piece of zinc, tacked at the corners to keep it flat, which also protected the carpet from any hot coals that might escape when the ashes were removed. Ashes were taken out every day or so through the door at the bottom of the stove. This was a horrible messy job also. No one could prevent the flurry of ashes from covering everything. Mother came nearest. One of my dearest recollections is seeing her down on one knee with the coal bucket on one side ladling them out, a shovelful at a time, and easing them into the bucket more carefully than if they were eggs. It was always Mother who polished the stove when it was set up again for winter. She really polished it too, every inch black and shining.

Bread was made two or three times a week. Yeast was sold in packages of small dried cakes and, after soaking in warm water to which a little sugar had been added, was turned into a thin batter made of flour and potato water. This was called a "sponge" and was always made up the night before baking day. After breakfast enough flour was added to make a firm dough and it was set out to raise. About mid-morning a piece of the dough was made into rolls and baked for dinner. The bread was baked in the afternoon. Nothing ever tasted quite so good as a heel of fresh warm bread spread with butter and honey and eaten in the middle of a long afternoon. I've known a whole loaf to disappear in this fashion.

The honey was another of Dad's projects. He kept several hives of bees. Alfalfa flowers make a clear, delicious honey. We never set the table without it.

My contribution to family meals in the summer was gathering peas or beans and getting them ready to cook. The peas usually came on at the first hay harvest and a five-gallon pail of peas was not too much for a meal. They were cooked in a big iron pot which was rounded on the bottom and set down over the hole in the stove. Nothing has ever been devised to equal this method of cooking. Only a little water was needed for cooking this way. A pot roast was just that. A good fatty

piece of beef weighing about six pounds and cut from the shoulder came out brown, tender, and delicious.

It was also my chore to "hunt the eggs." While we had a regular chicken house with nests for laying hens, in the spring the hens would steal their nests in the hope of later bringing off a brood of chicks. But my mother preferred setting the broody hens in a separate compartment where she could tend to a dozen or more and so have more and earlier chicks. A hundred or more chicks were raised, half for frying and the pullets for laying. Sometimes a setting of duck eggs or turkey eggs was hatched and the poor foster mothers to those little orphans seemed to develop advanced cases of frustration—the ducklings making for the nearest water, and the poults sneaking out into the weeds, hunting for bugs instead of scratching in the good earth for food. Nothing spoiled the happiness of those with chicks. The hen, scarcely able to keep up with her lively brood, could be seen almost any time of day clucking and bobbing in pursuit.

Our country schoolhouse was a two-room building with a little hall in front and doors leading into the separate rooms. Hooks, high and low, were placed on one side for our coats and caps. We left our lunch buckets and overshoes on the floor under our coats. The bell rang in the morning at nine o'clock, and we were dismissed at four with an hour for lunch at noon. We made the most of this hour for play. The school grounds were just a dry pebbly expanse, but close by was an irrigation ditch with willow trees lining its banks. They had been bent over across the ditch and made fine horses for excursions to the far reaches of the world where we bought treasures of laces and silks and diamonds and rubies.

The schoolyard had a pole fence along one side. One year long pine slabs from the hills had been hauled for kindling wood. The pole fence was soon straddled with slabs and the children had a fine time seesawing until they got tired of it. In spring a favorite pastime for the girls was making mud pies. Colored glass was in great demand for frosting.

Our school had one or two entertainments a year—always one at Christmas. One teacher we had was very clever and wrote verses which were set to music and were sung by different groups dressed in costumes appropriate to the words. That is the way I stole a grade in school. Being only five years old I couldn't start to school until the next year, but the teacher

wanted another little girl so Mother let me go to school with the older children. When school convened again after Christmas I decided I'd go too, and started for school any time my mother wasn't watching. Finally, getting worn out with this, Mother appealed to Dad, so he said, "Let her go, she'll soon tire of it." But I never did.

This was a graded school, with two teachers, one for the primary grades and one for the others. We had good teachers and went on into high school in Longmont without any difficulty.

One privilege I had was the chance to take music lessons. My first teacher had a horse and a buggy (without a top) which she drove out into the country to teach music to the children. Nearly everybody in our neighborhood had an organ, and I learned to play hymns and songs. My sister Barbara and I had voices very much alike and I could sing a little alto; sometimes after supper my father would ask us to sing. This we were always delighted to do as then we didn't have to help with the dishes. Later on I had to ride into Longmont for my lessons. That is why I rode so often with my father. He took me in twice a week and I never missed a lesson the whole summer.

Clothing by this time was being manufactured in large quantities, especially for men and boys. But girls and women had to make their own clothes or hire a dressmaker. I have forgotten the lady's name who drove out and took orders for clothes which would be made and then delivered at her next coming. She had a large telescope bag in which she carried samples and "dress lengths," ribbon, lace, and embroidery, patterns and fashion books. The *Delineator* was one of them. I can just feel myself jumping with delight when she removed the straps, pulled off the top of the bag, and started to show her wares. The materials



were mostly gingham and calico and each of us made her choice. Then she measured us and jotted down the figures in her little book. For winter we wore all-wool dresses covered with gingham aprons. These were made with the fullness gathered onto yokes and were buttoned down the back. They had long sleeves and strings tied in bows behind our backs. Mother made these and I know many of her evenings were spent making buttonholes and sewing on buttons. Buttons were bought six dozen at a time. They were fine for playing games, too.

Mother's dresses were made with tight bodices and full skirts. She also wore checked gingham aprons. The number of things she could use these for was endless. One unforgettable sight was seeing her coming toward the house with the hem of the apron gathered in one hand. She might be carrying apples or plums or turkey eggs or baby chicks, or perhaps freshly picked corn or cucumbers. Indoors the apron was handy for grasping hot pans or taking something from the oven.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the lamps, never good at best, and always troublesome to keep clean and filled with oil, with wicks trimmed so they wouldn't smoke and the chimneys polished. But it must be said the oil lamp gave a soft yellow light that lent charm and coziness to the home.

I think I am now at the end of my saga for when I was ten years old we moved into town and so began a whole new life and a new century.

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Fort Massachusetts

By MORRIS F. TAYLOR

By orders of Lieutenant Colonel Edwin Vose Sumner, commanding the Ninth Military Department, dated from headquarters near Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 30, 1852, authorization was given for a new military post to be established on the Rio Grande in the country of the Utah Indians. The departmental orders, No. 24, also stated that the post would be named Fort Massachusetts and that its precise location would be determined by the departmental commander. In anticipation of its establishment, the fort was given a commandant in the person of Major George Alexander Hamilton Blake, First Dragoons, a veteran of the War with Mexico,¹ and the orders provided for a garrison to be comprised of F and I Companies, First Dragoons, and H Company, Third Infantry. Also assigned to duty there was Assistant Surgeon Horace R. Wirtz.² Lieutenant Colonel Sumner expected the Dragoon companies to be ready to start for the new location on March 15, and the infantry company would head for that place on April 25.³

A stern disciplinarian and an indefatigable planner of fortifications on the New Mexican Indian frontier, Lieutenant Colonel Sumner's best known achievement was the post of Fort Union, which he established in 1851 as headquarters and general depot.⁴ He was adamant against Santa Fe, "that sink of vice and



Edwin Vose Sumner later took part in several Civil War battles, including Antietam and Fredericksburg.

extravagance," and he insisted that garrisons generally should be removed from the towns.⁵ He located forts on the lower Rio Grande as well as in the vicinity of the Santa Rita copper mines and in the Navajo country.⁶ Also, he planned to establish one among the Utahs (Utes) in the fall of 1851,⁷ but his orders for it, as we have seen, were not issued until the following spring. Further delay was caused by demanding difficulties in the southern part of the territory, especially with the Apaches. To fend off the danger a "large camp of observation" appropriately called Camp Vigilance was organized near Albuquerque, command of it being entrusted to Major George A. H. Blake.⁸ On May 31, 1852, about a month after Camp Vigilance had been set up, Major Blake was ordered to turn over the post to another officer and take Company F, First Dragoons, to Taos. Shortly thereafter, Major Blake learned that his company and Company H, Third Infantry, which was at Taos, would be the only units in the garrison of the yet-to-be-constructed Fort Massachusetts.⁹

¹ Later Blake served during the Civil War, taking part in the Battle of Gettysburg. He died October 27, 1884. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, From Its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), I, 223, hereafter referred to as *Historical Register*.

² As a surgeon during the Civil War, Wirtz was given the rank of brevet lieutenant colonel. He died January 24, 1874. *Ibid.*, I, 1052.

³ Orders No. 24, March 30, 1852, General Orders of the Department of New Mexico (July 19, 1851-August 8, 1861), Vol. 36, p. 70, Records of the War Department, United States Army Commands, Record Group 98, National Archives. Hereafter reference will be made only to orders number and date.

⁴ William A. Keleher, *Turmoil in New Mexico, 1846-1868* (Santa Fe: The Rydal Press, 1952), p. 56; Robert M. Utley, *Fort Union National Monument, New Mexico* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 9-11.

⁵ Keleher, *Turmoil in New Mexico*, p. 56.

⁶ *Ibid.*; A. B. Bender, "Frontier Defense in the Territory of New Mexico, 1846-1853," *New Mexico Historical Review*, IX (July, 1934), 266-67.

⁷ Keleher, *Turmoil in New Mexico*, p. 57.

⁸ Orders No. 27, April 28, 1852, Vol. 36, p. 73, and Orders No. 28, April 30, 1852, Vol. 36, p. 74.

⁹ Orders No. 33, May 31, 1852, Vol. 36, p. 76, and Orders No. 35, June 7, 1852, Vol. 36, p. 77. The First Regiment of Dragoons was organized on March 2,

Sumner's plan to locate a fort in the great intermontane San Luis Valley was known among the Utes, who apparently did not regard it as a threat to themselves. In fact, according to Indian Agent John Greiner, the Utes looked upon it favorably as a guarantee against the northward encroachment of settlements in their country and as a protection against raids by the Plains tribes, who made sporadic incursions into Ute country.¹⁰

The new fort was officially reported as established on June 22, 1852.¹¹ It does not appear that Lieutenant Colonel Sumner was there in person, and the final choice of location probably was left to Major Blake. The name of the post, Fort Massachusetts, a designation completely irrelevant to the locale, was most likely picked by Lieutenant Colonel Sumner,¹² who was a native of Boston, Massachusetts.¹³ Major Blake described the site in his first monthly post return as situated on the west bank of Utah (Ute) Creek about eighty-five miles north of Taos and about fifteen to twenty miles east of the Rio Grande, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains in the Utah Indian country.¹⁴ His simple and direct words gave no idea of the remoteness of the place, which

1833, as the Regiment of Dragoons, but with the organization of an additional regiment, it became the First Regiment. Stephen Watts Kearny had been its colonel from July 4, 1836, to June 30, 1846. The Third Regiment of Infantry was organized November 1, 1796, and was reorganized on May 17, 1815, by consolidation of several infantry regiments. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 80, 85.

¹⁰ Annie Heloise Abel (ed.), "The Journal of John Greiner," *Old Santa Fe*, III (July, 1916), 195, 203, 219.

¹¹ Post Return for Fort Massachusetts, New Mexico, June, 1852. Records of the Office of the Adjutant General, Record Group 94, National Archives. Hereafter reference will be made only to Post Return and date.

¹² This point is supported by Robert Frazer in his *Forts of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), p. 40. There was a fort of the same name, dating from ca. 1745, in the western part of the province of Massachusetts. See the chapter entitled "Fort Massachusetts" in John Tebbel (ed.), *The Battle for North America* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1948), pp. 459-67; also Mason Wade (ed.), *The Journals of Francis Parkman* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), I, 335-36; and Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 523. The Fort Massachusetts in New Mexico Territory apparently was the second one of that name. In the late summer of 1861, the U.S.S. *Massachusetts*, with other ships, landed men to occupy an unnamed fort on Ship Island, Mississippi, recently abandoned by the Confederates; from the incident the place received the name of Fort Massachusetts. This, of course, was about three years after the New Mexican fort had been abandoned. This information was given to the writer by James Stevens, of Mississippi City, Mississippi, who has done much research on the Ship Island fort. For a while the name also applied to a fortification in the northern defenses of the city of Washington, D. C. During the Civil War, perhaps soon after the Ship Island incident, it was changed to Fort Stevens. Margaret Leech, *Reveille in Washington, 1860-1865* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), pp. 336-43; Heitman, *Historical Register*, II, 523, 548.

¹³ Thomas M. Spaulding, "Edwin Vose Sumner," *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), XVIII, 214. Sumner served with great distinction in the Civil War. He became a brigadier general, USA, March 16, 1861. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 936.

¹⁴ Post Return, June, 1852. These distances are estimates; both are short by about five to ten miles.

was the most northerly post in the Territory of New Mexico (the site is presently in the State of Colorado).

The company commanders, both veterans of the Mexican War, were Captain and Brevet Major Philip R. Thompson (a West Point graduate of 1834), First Dragoons,¹⁵ and Captain and Brevet Major William M. Gordon, Third Infantry.¹⁶ With Company H, Third Infantry, was Second Lieutenant Andrew Jackson,¹⁷ who served as acting assistant commissary of subsistence, acting assistant quartermaster, and adjutant of the post. Assistant Surgeon Horace R. Wirtz completed the roster of commissioned officers in the original garrison.¹⁸

Fifty-eight noncommissioned officers and men in Company F, First Dragoons, were available for duty, while Company H, Third Infantry, could muster 61. In other words, 121 men divided the jobs of building the log and adobe fort and maintaining the discipline and routine of garrison. Major Blake reported that the Dragoons needed 19 recruits and that two of its 31 horses were not serviceable; for the company of infantrymen, seven recruits were needed to bring it up to strength.¹⁹

Scenically, the site chosen for Fort Massachusetts was magnificently in keeping with the Age of Romanticism, but it may



be doubted that such qualities of the landscape were appreciated by the troops. Sweating toil amid hordes of mosquitoes was hardly idyllic, even though one could look up to towering Mount Blanca and its attendant peaks.²⁰ Then, too, it was Indian country, more specifically the habitat of the Mohuache Utes and their close associates, the Jicarilla Apaches. The Noble Savage could quickly create problems for the cavalymen at Fort Massachusetts in protecting settler and transient alike.

Less than a month after Major Blake and his men had set to work, Indian Agent John Greiner headed north from Santa Fe to Fort Massachusetts. Two Taos Pueblo Indian runners were sent ahead to tell the Utes, who were on the Conejos River, that Greiner wanted to meet them at the fort. He arrived at the post, which he described as six miles from the Sangre de Cristo Pass, in time for tattoo (evening) on July 21. His Taos runners reported that the Utes had broken camp on the Conejos and headed westward. None came in, and Greiner reported that "no Indians [were] ever seen at the fort they are afraid to come."²¹ Greiner did not say why this was the case, but the Utes evidently were much less sanguine about the effect of the new military post in their country than he had supposed.

Lieutenant Colonel Sumner probably paid a visit to Fort Massachusetts in early August,²² and later that month John M. Francisco, the sutler, was given a license to trade for six months with the Utes, who were reported to be behaving well.²³ Data detailing the progress of construction are lacking, but it was a matter of concern that winter was likely to appear early on Utah Creek. To have thirteen men sick, four in confinement, and twenty-one men away on detached service, as was the case at

Fort Massachusetts during August, 1852,²⁴ was a problem for a commanding officer who was trying to prepare for the onslaught of snow and cold with such a small garrison. Perhaps that was the reason that four men in confinement were awarded remittances of the balance of their sentences.²⁵

Some degree of pleasure must have been afforded by the arrival of the pay wagon from Fort Union in September,²⁶ although most of the men had little choice in spending their money—the sutler's store run by John M. Francisco was it. Taos (Don Fernando de Taos), the only town of any attraction, was about ninety-two miles to the south, while the nearest tiny settlement, on the Culebra River,²⁷ was thirty miles away in the same direction. This was the plaza of San Luis, which had its inception the previous year when a group from Taos, induced by Carlos Beaubien, owner of the Sangre de Cristo Grant on which the site allegedly was located, arrived. The settlement survived and was followed in the next two or three years by other little communities.²⁸ Mention of these raises the moot question of the importance of Fort Massachusetts in encouraging migration into the San Luis Valley. San Luis evidently was established prior to the fort, and the distance from the post to the settlements made immediate protection impossible. Certainly, the small size of the garrison could not have nourished the hope of frequent patrols in the region of the plazas. Perhaps fort and settlements were more coincidental than anything else, or, at most, the military presence, however poorly located, may have been psychologically impelling in some degree. Fort Union was 165 miles away through the mountains to the southeast.²⁹ The closest fort on the east was Fort Atkinson, about 500 miles away on the

¹⁵ Thompson was cashiered on September 4, 1855. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 957.

¹⁶ Gordon retired in 1863 with the rank of major. *Ibid.*, I, 465.

¹⁷ Jackson was dismissed from the service on June 6, 1861, presumably because of pro-Southern sympathies, and he served as a lieutenant colonel in the Confederate Army's Fifth Cavalry from 1861 to 1865. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 566.

¹⁸ Post Return, June, 1852. Wirtz achieved the rank of brevet lieutenant colonel as a medical officer in the Civil War. He died January 24, 1874. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 1052.

¹⁹ Post Return, June, 1852.

²⁰ The assistant surgeon at Fort Massachusetts in the summer of 1856 commented that "these torments are so thick at our post that you can almost cut them with a knife. . . . We are almost eaten up." DeWitt C. Peters' letter to his sister, July 15, 1856, Peters Correspondence, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (microfilm).

²¹ Abel (ed.), "Journal of John Greiner," pp. 229-32.

²² *Ibid.*, 233.

²³ *Ibid.*, 238; Annie Heloise Abel (ed.), "Indian Affairs in New Mexico Under the Administration of William Carr Lane: From the Journal of John Ward," *New Mexico Historical Review*, XII (April, 1941), 217.

²⁴ Post Return, August, 1852.

²⁵ Orders No. 41, August 7, 1852, Vol. 36, p. 102; Special Orders No. 58, September 1, 1852, Special Orders of the Department of New Mexico (July 19, 1851-September 19, 1857), Vol. 27, p. 46, Records of the War Department, United States Army Commands, Record Group 98, National Archives, referred to hereafter by number and date.

²⁶ Special Orders No. 56, August 28, 1852, Vol. 27, p. 45.

²⁷ This description is taken from the report of Colonel Joseph K. F. Mansfield, Inspector General, concerning his visit to Fort Massachusetts in 1853. It probably refers to the settlement of San Luis de Culebra. Report of Inspection of Department of New Mexico, 1853, Office of the Adjutant General, Miscellaneous File No. 282, Record Group 94, National Archives. See also Robert W. Frazer (ed.), *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts, 1853-54* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 17-19, and Colonel M. L. Crimmins, "Fort Massachusetts, First United States Military Post in Colorado," *The Colorado Magazine*, XIV (July, 1937), 128-35. A photostatic copy of the Mansfield report is in the State Historical Society of Colorado Library, hereafter referred to as Mansfield Report.

²⁸ Francis T. Cheetham, "Early Settlements of Southern Colorado," *The Colorado Magazine*, V (February, 1928), 5-7.

²⁹ Mansfield Report, 1853.

Arkansas River,³⁰ and then there was Fort Laramie some 800 miles to the north.³¹

Perhaps arriving with the pay wagon, Brevet Second Lieutenant Robert Johnston, a young Virginian only two years out of West Point,³² came from Fort Union to take command of Company F, First Dragoons, relieving Captain and Brevet Major Thompson, who had been given a six-month leave of absence.³³ That fall an exchange of surgeons was made, with Horace R. Wirtz going to Cantonment Burgwin³⁴ and David L. Magruder transferring from that post to Fort Massachusetts.³⁵ And in September the ranks of the enlisted men were somewhat augmented; one recruit joined the Dragoon company and nineteen newcomers rounded out the complement of Company H, Third Infantry.³⁶

Communications reaching Major Blake on September 2, 1852, informed him that Camp Vigilance was to be disbanded and that Fort Massachusetts was to have a military reservation two miles square, measured from the center of the post.³⁷ Probably his most pressing concern was the failure to secure sufficient grain from local sources (meaning within a radius of thirty to fifty miles, so scattered were the few tiny settlements) to take the Dragoons' horses through the winter. Grain was not sent in; rather, orders came from headquarters of the Ninth Military

Drawn in somewhat distorted perspective, this 1867 map shows both Fort Massachusetts and Fort Garland, established in 1858.

³⁰ Peters Correspondence, March 3, 1855. Originally known as the New Post, established September 12, 1850, and renamed Fort Atkinson in June, 1851, it was located by Lieutenant Colonel E. V. Sumner before he came to the Department of New Mexico. Fort Atkinson was about twenty-six miles east of the Cimarron Crossing of the Arkansas; it was finally abandoned on October 2, 1854. Leo E. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), pp. 95-103.

³¹ Peters Correspondence, March 3, 1855.

³² Johnston later served as colonel of the Second Virginia Cavalry, CSA, 1861-1865. He died July 8, 1902. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 578.

³³ Special Orders No. 56, August 28, 1852, Vol. 27, p. 45; Post Return, September, 1852.

³⁴ Cantonment Burgwin was established August 14, 1852, about ten miles south of Taos. It was named in honor of Captain John H. K. Burgwin, First Dragoons, who was mortally wounded in the Taos uprising and died February 27, 1847. The post was abandoned on May 18, 1860. Frazer, *Forts of the West*, p. 96.

³⁵ Special Orders No. 63, October 21, 1852, Vol. 27, p. 48; Post Return, November, 1852.

³⁶ Post Return, September, 1852.

³⁷ Orders No. 41, August 7, 1852, Vol. 36, p. 102; Post Return, September, 1852. The reservation was leased by the government from Carlos Beaubien, claimant of the Sangre de Cristo Grant. U.S., Congress, Senate, *Letter From the Secretary of the Interior, Transmitting, In response to Senate resolution of the 28th ultimo, the report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office concerning a tract of land in Colorado patented to Charles Beaubien*, 47th Cong., 1st Sess., 1882, Senate Ex. Doc. 142, pp. 24, 25, 35, 38.



District stating that most of the horses would be sent to Fort Union for the winter. On November 9, twenty-seven horses started under escort for Fort Union, and ten were left at Fort Massachusetts.³⁸

That first winter at Fort Massachusetts was not an easy one for the garrison. Snow was deep.³⁹ Toward the end of the season vegetables were extremely scarce,⁴⁰ but Major Blake's reports do not show an unusually high incidence of illness. Both companies stationed there were enlarged during that fall and winter. Company F, First Dragoons, averaged through those months a membership of between sixty and sixty-five men, and the roster of Company H, Third Infantry, showed between eighty and eighty-five.⁴¹ The latter company was temporarily commanded by West Point graduate (1845) and First Lieutenant William H. Wood,⁴² who transferred in from New Port Barracks, Indiana, and relieved Captain and Brevet Major Gordon, who was on the sick list. Gordon was able to resume his command in February, and he was commandant of the post during part of March and April,⁴³ while Major Blake was a member of a court-martial assembled at Albuquerque.⁴⁴

A sign of spring was the return of the horses from Fort Union in April.⁴⁵ And with the general improvement of the weather, Brevet Captain John Pope, Topographical Engineers,⁴⁶ was ordered to examine the country between Forts Union and Massachusetts for locating a good (and presumably more direct) wagon road to connect the two posts.⁴⁷ The summer of 1853 brought interesting developments for the officers and men in the peripheral post at the foot of Sierra Blanca. In July a party headed by Edward F. Beale, newly-appointed superintendent of Indian affairs for California and Nevada, arrived on its

journey westward; Beale's kinsman, Gwinn Harris Heap, kept a journal which yields some information.⁴⁸ They rode into Fort Massachusetts late one afternoon and were cordially welcomed by Major Blake, Lieutenant Jackson, Lieutenant Johnston, and Surgeon Magruder. Beale's group had ridden 25 miles that day, which made a total of 693 miles from Westport, Missouri. Beale, Heap, and two others were given quarters in the fort, while the rest camped two miles down Utah Creek in a beautiful grove of cottonwoods. Around the camp was excellent pasturage for the mules, and the men received a tent, meat, and fresh bread from the fort.

It was Heap's opinion that the fort was not close enough to the general Indian trail to protect settlers in the San Luis Valley, and it was his recommendation that a post be built at the head (northern end) of the valley to control the mountain passes giving access to it, such as the Cochetopa and Poncha. In describing the fort, he said that it was "a quadrangular stockade of pine log pickets, inclosing comfortable quarters for one hundred and fifty men, cavalry and infantry."⁴⁹ In a letter to Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, dated from Fort Massachusetts June 8, 1853, Heap spoke of it as "a well-built stockade of pine logs, ten feet in height, pointed at the end, and enclosing very comfortable quarters for one hundred and fifty men."⁵⁰ Picket-type construction was used on the east and west walls of the fort, and probably the north wall; it is curious that Heap made no mention of the south wall (with the fort's main gate) as having horizontal logs, a fact which the archaeological excavations clearly show.⁵¹

Of the seventy-five cavalrymen (Dragoons) at the fort, according to Heap, forty-five were mounted.⁵² Either Heap was in error or that number simply indicated official intent, because the post return for June shows that only thirty-seven horses were fit for service, and two were not.⁵³ His observations about the horses evidently were based on comments made to him by men at the post. After remarking that the animals were "excellently

³⁸ Post Returns, October and November, 1852.

³⁹ Mansfield Report.

⁴⁰ Special Orders No. 9, March 23, 1853, Vol. 27, p. 58.

⁴¹ Post Returns, December, 1852, and January, February, March, 1853.

⁴² Wood saw service in the Civil War, attaining the rank of brevet colonel on March 13, 1865. He retired June 26, 1882 and died January 1, 1887. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 1056.

⁴³ Post Returns, March and April, 1853.

⁴⁴ Orders No. 9, March 8, 1853, Vol. 36, p. 160.

⁴⁵ Post Return, April, 1853.

⁴⁶ A West Point graduate (1842), Pope was a veteran of the Mexican War and attained the rank of captain on July 1, 1856. He became a brigadier general in 1862, serving as chief of topographical engineers for the Department of New Mexico. After service with the Army of the Mississippi, he assumed command of the Military Division of the Missouri in 1865. He was given the rank of major general in 1882, and retired March 16, 1886. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 798; Oliver L. Spaulding, Jr., "John Pope," *Dictionary of American Biography*, XV, 76-77.

⁴⁷ Special Orders No. 23, April 26, 1853, Vol. 27, p. 65.

⁴⁸ W. J. Ghent, "Edward Fitzgerald Beale," *Dictionary of American Biography*, II, 88.

⁴⁹ Gwinn Harris Heap, *Central Route to the Pacific* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, and Co., 1854), pp. 32-33; Crimmins, "Fort Massachusetts," pp. 133-35.

⁵⁰ *St. Louis Evening News*, August 9, 1853, copy in the State Historical Society of Colorado Library.

⁵¹ See the final archaeological report on Fort Massachusetts by Galen R. Baker in this issue.

⁵² Heap, *Central Route*, p. 33.

⁵³ Post Return, June, 1853.

groomed and stabled," he said that they were inferior to Indian horses because the army mounts were fed on corn; they broke down in pursuit of grass-fed Indian ones, which were accustomed to gallop "at half speed up or down the steepest hills."⁵⁴

A forecast of things to come was implicit in an exploratory expedition searching for a feasible railroad route through the mountains along the thirty-eighth parallel. Captain John W. Gunnison, Topographical Engineer,⁵⁵ commanded the surveying party with its wagons and military escort, which came to the fort briefly via the Sangre de Cristo Pass.⁵⁶ And a most exciting occurrence was the August 18-21 visit by Brevet Colonel Joseph K. F. Mansfield, Inspector General.⁵⁷

One can easily imagine Major Blake, with his officers and men, busily refurbishing the fort, their equipment, and the horses in preparation for the visitation. Unfortunately, Colonel Mansfield reported nothing in detail about the structural characteristics of Fort Massachusetts; his description was simply the remark that "the buildings are good and suitable as well as abundant," whatever that meant. Other data are more plentiful, ranging from the fact that the fort was 8,000 feet above sea level in latitude 37° 30' north to the observation that each company had a good bakery. He found the discipline good, although there had been little instruction in military drill because the men had been so fully engaged in building the post. Arms and equipment were in serviceable order but much worn, and there was a deficiency of spurs for the Dragoons. The troops were still wearing old-style uniforms, and they had to buy shirts, drawers, socks, and shoes at exorbitant prices from the sutler's store because the government had failed to have them on hand for several months. The men had not been paid for five months. Mansfield commended the post hospital and noted the adequate corral for horses, mules, and cattle.⁵⁸ Attempts at farming (presumably for grains) had not been successful, but a vegetable garden had met with better results.

⁵⁴ Heap, *Central Route*, p. 33.

⁵⁵ Captain Gunnison was killed by Mormons and Indians near Sevier Lake, Utah, on October 26, 1853. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 483.

⁵⁶ James H. Baker and LeRoy R. Hafen (eds.), *History of Colorado* (Denver: Linderman and Co., Inc., 1927), I, 346-47.

⁵⁷ Mansfield, a West Point graduate of 1821 and a veteran of the Mexican War, was appointed Inspector General on May 28, 1853. He died on September 18, 1862, from wounds received at the Battle of Antietam. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 688.

⁵⁸ The corral was a very short distance southwest of the fort on the other side of a small tributary of Utah Creek. It was picket-type in construction and in area was almost equal to the fort itself (see Baker's archaeological report in this issue).

Mansfield condemned six horses as unfit, and he found one six-pound gun and carriage unserviceable.⁵⁹ But the Inspector General's main criticism was leveled at the location of Fort Massachusetts, an objection similar to that made by Gwinn Harris Heap about two months earlier. It was, Mansfield felt, too close to the spur of the mountain for good defense; a site to the south on the Culebra River would have been better because it would be closer to the settlements and less susceptible to isolation by the Indians. He thought that the San Luis Valley in time would become a good summer route to the States, and he believed it to be an excellent path of communication between New Mexico and northern California via the Great Salt Lake.⁶⁰ A map of the post, including the corral and sutler's store, was appended to his report.⁶¹

That summer Lieutenant Colonel Sumner relinquished command of the Ninth Military Department to Brevet Brigadier General John Garland.⁶² Also, a system of mail delivery to Fort Massachusetts was devised, presumably to make it more dependable and regular. An express rider was to take the mail from the fort to Cantonment Burgwin, arriving there on the twenty-first of each month. At Burgwin the combined mails from both posts were to be taken to Santa Fe by another rider, reaching that place on the evening of the twenty-third and returning at once with the mail for the posts. Meanwhile, the Fort Massachusetts rider was to wait at Burgwin until the rider from Santa Fe came in, when the mail would be carried at once to Fort Massachusetts.⁶³

The first general court-martial to be held at Fort Massachusetts assembled on September 30, 1853. President of the court was the post commander, Major Blake, and its other members

⁵⁹ This is the only source found which mentions artillery as part of the equipment of Fort Massachusetts; it may be inferred from Mansfield's statement that at least two such guns were there, but it is not conclusive. In the Peters Correspondence, April 5, 1855, there is mention of two cannon as part of Colonel Fauntleroy's column against the Mohuache Utes and Jicarilla Apaches, but it does not indicate whether they were part of the fort's regular armament or belonged to Company D, Second Artillery, which became part of the garrison in May, 1854. Post Return, May, 1854.

⁶⁰ Mansfield Report; Crimmins, "Fort Massachusetts," pp. 131-32; Frazer (ed.), *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts*, pp. 17-19, 40-41.

⁶¹ Colonel Crimmins' map in "Fort Massachusetts," p. 130, is not an exact replica of the Mansfield map. Crimmins mislabeled the sutler's store as barracks.

⁶² Post Return, August, 1853. Garland was commissioned a first lieutenant, Thirty-Fifth Infantry, in 1813. He was promoted to brigadier general on August 20, 1847, for outstanding service in the Mexican War. He died June 5, 1861. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 447.

⁶³ Orders No. 35, September 12, 1853, Vol. 36, p. 195.

were Captain and Brevet Major William H. T. Brooks, Third Infantry; First Lieutenant and Brevet Captain George Sykes, Third Infantry; Second Lieutenant Andrew Jackson, Third Infantry; Second Lieutenant J. C. Moore, Second Artillery; and Second Lieutenant Robert Johnston, First Dragoons. Assistant Surgeon David L. Magruder was the judge advocate of the court.⁶⁴ Brooks, Sykes, and Moore were from other posts. Non-commissioned officers and privates—twelve in number—from Fort Massachusetts, Fort Union, and Cantonment Burgwin were tried. The range of charges included disobedience of orders, desertion, violation of the Ninth Article of War by physically assaulting an officer, and insubordination and disrespect. Two men were acquitted, and punishment of the others ran the gamut including reduction in rank, forfeiture of pay and allowances, fifty lashes on the bare back well laid on with a rawhide, an indelible letter "D" two inches long on the right hip for desertion, shaved head, confinement on bread and water, and confinement at hard labor for one year, the man wearing a ten-pound iron neck ring with three prongs and a ball and chain on each leg.⁶⁵

At times the morale of the enlisted men at Fort Massachusetts was poor, and discipline may not always have been of the good quality reported by Colonel Mansfield. It was alleged that Major Blake was absent from the post excessively, much of his time being taken up with private rather than public matters in Taos. When at the fort, Blake was said sometimes to curse and abuse his noncommissioned officers and men to the extent that he induced discontent and insubordination. Also, it was claimed that Major Blake was cognizant of ardent spirits (liquor) being easily obtainable by the troops so that on occasion as many as half of his command were drunk, unfit for duty, and riotous on the garrison parade. When such a situation developed on October 25, 1853, it was alleged that the Major shut himself in his quarters and made no attempt to stop the brawl. In fairness to Blake, it must be pointed out that he was later exonerated from these charges by a court-martial in Santa Fe, June 6, 1856, but it must also be noted that dismissal of the

charges seems to have been based on technicalities more than on their substance.⁶⁶

On October 23, 1853, orders were issued that the garrison of Fort Massachusetts be withdrawn, with the exception of two noncommissioned officers and ten men who were to stay on as guard. Company F, First Dragoons, was ordered to Cantonment Burgwin, where Major Blake was given command, and Company H, Third Infantry, was sent to Albuquerque for further instructions.⁶⁷ Although the orders gave no reasons, certainly the remoteness, the rigors of winter, and the difficulties of provisioning the post for the long winter months provided ample explanation. The riot on the garrison parade, mentioned above, occurred two days after the orders were given. Was the drunkenness for joy and relief that the men were not going to have to endure a second winter at Fort Massachusetts?

The post was reoccupied on April 30, 1854, by Company F, First Dragoons, commanded by Captain and Brevet Major Philip R. Thompson. That the unit had sustained four desertions, that it needed thirty-six recruits, and that only ten out of thirty-two horses were serviceable, suggests that the winter at Cantonment Burgwin had not been easy or pleasant. Major Blake resumed his old command on May 9, and a few days later Assistant Surgeon Magruder returned. Company D, Second Artillery, became a part of the garrison on May 9, joining it from Fort Union, and for the first time in a post return, civilian employees such as a guide and herders were listed.⁶⁸

Captain and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Horace Brooks,⁶⁹ Second Artillery, took over command of Fort Massachusetts on June 29, 1854. Major Blake, from that date, was in command of an expedition against the Jicarilla Apaches, having with him on this detached service Captain and Brevet Major Thompson, Assistant Surgeon Magruder, and forty men of Company F, First Dragoons. Blake was under orders to again take command of Cantonment Burgwin upon completion of his mission against the Indians,⁷⁰ which was accomplished by July 6.⁷¹

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Orders No. 39, October 23, 1853, Vol. 36, p. 197.

⁶⁸ Post Returns, April and May, 1854; Circular, November 10, 1853, Vol. 36, pp. 222-23.

⁶⁹ Brooks had seen service against Indians in Florida in 1835, when he received his brevet lieutenant colonelcy. During the Civil War he was promoted to brigadier general on March 13, 1865. He died January 13, 1894. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 249.

⁷⁰ Post Return, June, 1854.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, July, 1854.

⁶⁴ Orders No. 34, September 6, 1853, Vol. 36, p. 192. Magruder attained the rank of colonel in 1882. He had served in the Civil War, and retired April 23, 1889. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 684.

⁶⁵ Orders No. 41, September 20, 1853, Vol. 36, pp. 199-210. The intention here is simply to list the kinds of charges and punishments (some in combination) without detailed reference to specific cases, so as to give an idea of the military discipline of the time.

That left Company D, Second Artillery, as the only unit in garrison at Fort Massachusetts, and it was brought to a total of eighty-six men with the arrival of nineteen from the General Recruiting Depot in late October. On the same date, October 26, 1854, Assistant Surgeon Magruder was replaced by Assistant Surgeon DeWitt C. Peters,⁷² the man who would become the friend and biographer of Christopher (Kit) Carson.

Surgeon Peters walked into some circumstances which seemed to him a bit odd, to say the least. There were only two other commissioned officers at the post—Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Brooks and First Lieutenant Lloyd Beall,⁷³ both of the Second Artillery—and they were not on speaking terms.⁷⁴ In early December, Peters went with Kit Carson to see the sights of Taos. While he was absent, some drunken soldiers broke into his quarters, stole about \$150 worth of his property, and killed a few of his chickens. (The intruders had secured a key from his orderly after getting the man drunk.)⁷⁵

It was a very cold season; a reading of 16° below zero on January 7, 1855, as Peters related to his family in a letter, with which he enclosed a sketch of Fort Massachusetts drawn by him and tinted by Lieutenant Colonel Brooks.⁷⁶ Several stran-

DeWitt Peters drew this sketch while he was stationed at Fort Mass.



gers appeared at the post about January 10, after a four-day ordeal on muleback from the eastern side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains through bitterly frigid weather, made more miserable by strong winds. The news they brought was of the recent Christmas Day massacre of the inhabitants of Fort Pueblo, a trading post on the Arkansas, by Mohuache Utes and Jicarilla Apaches.⁷⁷ Later that month Utes (the band was not identified) made some sort of threat against Fort Massachusetts, and the post "was in imminent danger for the want of being built in a good place & not being well defended by fortifications. By hard labor the latter defect has been remedied."⁷⁸ Surgeon Peters was no more explicit than that. Except for that brief excitement, life at Fort Massachusetts continued awhile longer in its monotonous isolation. Old newspapers from distant places were eagerly read, and the Mexican who came to the fort selling chickens and eggs was "pumped" for news. On Saturday nights, at least, Peters' orderly brought half a vinegar barrel full of warm water for his bath. Inspection was held on Sunday morning, and, except for those on guard duty, the men of the garrison had the rest of the day to themselves. Full-dress inspection and roll call for officers and men took place on the last Sunday of each month, and this general muster provided the pay list that was sent to Washington.⁷⁹

In February, the imminence of a campaign against the Indians became obvious. Company D, Third Infantry, with Captain Nathaniel C. Macrae⁸⁰ and First Lieutenant and Brevet Captain George Sykes,⁸¹ marched into the log and adobe post from Fort

⁷² Peters became a medical officer on August 15, 1854, and resigned in 1856. He returned to the service in 1856, and he was promoted to brevet lieutenant colonel on March 13, 1865. Peters died April 22, 1876. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 786.

⁷³ Interestingly enough, Beall served as a private in the Confederate Army, 1861-1865. *Ibid.*, I, 202.

⁷⁴ Peters Correspondence, December 20, 1854. Lieutenant Beall had been absent without leave from August 31, 1853, to September 22, 1854, when he reported to Fort Massachusetts. He was tried by a general court-martial sitting in Taos, December 22, 1854, at which time he was sentenced to suspension from rank, forfeiture of pay, and confinement to the post for one year. Orders No. 39, December 22, 1854, Vol. 36, pp. 328-33.

⁷⁵ Peters Correspondence, December 20, 1854.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, January 14, 1855.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, February 3, 1855.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, January 20, 1855.

⁸⁰ Macrae was a graduate of the U. S. Military Academy, class of 1826, becoming a captain in 1839 and a major in 1857. He retired September 25, 1861, and was given the rank of brevet colonel in 1865; he died February 5, 1878. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 682. As Robert Utley points out in his *Fort Union*, p. 66, Macrae's thirty-five years in the same regiment is a good example of the slowness of promotion in the army on the frontier. DeWitt C. Peters described Macrae in 1855 as a twenty-nine-year veteran who had lost a leg in the service. Peters Correspondence, March 3, 1855.

Union on February 21, 1855.⁸² The new arrivals were to constitute the garrison of Fort Massachusetts, thereby releasing Company D, Second Artillery, for service in the field with other units, both regular army and New Mexico volunteers, being assembled under the command of Colonel Thomas T. Fauntleroy of the First Dragoons, commandant of Fort Union.⁸³ The posts of Fort Union, Fort Massachusetts, and Cantonment Burgwin were under the command of Colonel Fauntleroy for the duration of the campaign against the Utes and Jicarilla Apaches.⁸⁴

Successful operations in the San Luis Valley and east of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains were conducted in two parts. The men of Company D, Second Artillery, left Fort Massachusetts on March 15 and returned early in April, leaving again through the spring snows on April 23 and completing their detached service on May 9.⁸⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Brooks and Company D, Second Artillery, were on detached service from the fort for a third time from June 1 to July 20, 1855, having been ordered to Fort Union.⁸⁶

Captain Macrae was in Santa Fe in June as a member of a court-martial. Since his absence would leave Fort Massachusetts without a commissioned officer (no mention was made of Captain Sykes' whereabouts), Lieutenant Lloyd Beall, Second Artillery, was sent from detached service to take command.⁸⁷ Evidently, Beall's December court-martial sentence for being absent without leave had been suspended because of the urgent need for officers during the recent campaign.⁸⁸ Of course, when Brooks returned on July 20, he relieved Beall from command, and in July, Captain Macrae and Company D, Third Infantry, were transferred to Cantonment Burgwin.⁸⁹

⁸¹ A West Point graduate of 1842, Sykes was a veteran of the Mexican War. His Civil War record was distinguished. In 1865 he was made a brigadier general for his service at Gettysburg and a major general of gallant and meritorious service in the field during the war. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 941-42.

⁸² Post Return, February, 1855.

⁸³ Utley, *Fort Union*, p. 63. Fauntleroy was a brigadier general of Virginia Volunteers, CSA, 1861-1865. He died September 12, 1883. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 415.

⁸⁴ Special Orders No. 12, February 5, 1855, Vol. 27, p. 140. For a detailed study of this campaign see Morris F. Taylor, "Action at Fort Massachusetts: The Indian Campaign of 1855," *The Colorado Magazine*, XLII (Fall, 1965), 292-310.

⁸⁵ Post Returns, March, April, and May, 1855; Peters Correspondence, April 5, 1855, and May 10, 1855.

⁸⁶ Post Returns, June and July, 1855.

⁸⁷ Post Return, June, 1855.

⁸⁸ Beall learned in July that his unexpired sentence had been remitted. Post Return, July, 1855.

⁸⁹ Post Return, August, 1855; Special Orders No. 86, September 2, 1855, Vol. 27, p. 203.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

That left the artillery company as the sole detachment at Fort Massachusetts. Lieutenant Colonel Brooks remained there less than two months, when he was transferred out of the department. That put Lieutenant Beall in command once again on September 11.⁹⁰ Company D, Second Artillery, was strengthened to eighty-six men that same month with the assignment of fourteen recruits,⁹¹ and Second Lieutenant John R. Smead joined it from Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.⁹² Later it was reported that Captain and Brevet Major Samuel S. Anderson, Second Artillery, was on his way to take command of the post,⁹³ but this did not occur because Anderson, then ill in Brooklyn, New York, was given a four-month leave for reasons of health.⁹⁴

The winter of 1855-56 was the coldest known in the area. Lieutenant Beall and Surgeon Peters started for Santa Fe on December 18, and they were joined at Taos by Kit Carson, Ceran St. Vrain, Moses Carson, and several army officers. En route, the mercury dropped to 32° below zero, and the return trip was just as unpleasant. At five o'clock on the morning of January 3 the thermometer was down to 40° below zero, and several cattle froze to death in the barnyard (corral) of the fort.⁹⁵ The severe weather kept most of the men indoors. Mail service was interrupted, but a rumor seeped through telling of a Cheyenne Indian sack of Bent's New Fort at Big Timbers on the Arkansas River.⁹⁶ There still was no mail service by the middle of March, so it was concluded that the mail party had perished somewhere on the Plains. Scurvy broke out at Fort Massachusetts; among the sufferers was Surgeon Peters, who managed to keep his case under control by eating pickles. Medicine and anti-scorbutics such as dried apples, molasses, and pickles were not a cure; eradication of the disease would have to wait until spring vegetation, when something like wild greens and vinegar would stop it.⁹⁷

Whenever First Lieutenant Beall was absent, Fort Massachusetts was commanded by Second Lieutenant Smead;⁹⁸ poor

⁹¹ Post Return, September, 1855; Special Orders No. 79, August 23, 1855, Vol. 27, n.p.

⁹² Smead was graduated from West Point in 1854. He was commissioned a captain in the Fifth Artillery in 1861, and was killed in second Battle of Bull Run in August, 1862. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 893.

⁹³ Post Return, September, 1855; Anderson later served as a colonel in the Confederate Army and died February 23, 1901. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 165.

⁹⁴ Post Return, December, 1855.

⁹⁵ Peters Correspondence, January 18, 1856.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, February 15, 1856.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, March 15, 1856.

⁹⁸ Post Returns, January, February, March, April, May, June, July, and August, 1856.

Captain and Brevet Major Anderson was still trying to get there, but in May, 1856, he was reported ill in Dresden, Tennessee.⁹⁹ On July 18, Beall received a most important communication ordering that a new post be built near Fort Massachusetts. It seems likely that the rigorous winter contributed to that decision, although the defensive weaknesses of the old location had been a matter of general agreement for a long time. At any rate, work began on the new one almost immediately. During the last ten days in July, a boss and four laborers were employed at digging an aqueduct for the projected fortification, the site for which was about six miles to the south in open country on the floor of the great San Luis Valley. It was not expected that the new post would be ready for occupancy that winter, so it was ordered that Fort Massachusetts be made comfortable for the approaching cold weather.¹⁰⁰

Before the advent of winter, basic personnel changes occurred at Fort Massachusetts. Lieutenant Beall was transferred,¹⁰¹ and Company D, Second Artillery, left on October 24 to take up quarters at Fort Stanton in south-central New Mexico.¹⁰² Replacements had arrived in the persons of the men of Company A, Third Infantry (from Fort Stanton), commanded by Captain Andrew W. Bowman,¹⁰³ who became the new commandant.¹⁰⁴ Assistant Surgeon DeWitt C. Peters resigned and left the post,¹⁰⁵ his place being taken temporarily by the civilian medic, Dr. E. J. Barry.¹⁰⁶ And at the top rank of the department, Brevet Brigadier General Garland gave over his command to Colonel Benjamin E. Bonneville, an 1817 graduate of West Point and another veteran of the War with Mexico.¹⁰⁷

In November, a new schedule of mail delivery was promulgated. A monthly express left Fort Massachusetts at six in the

morning on the fourth day of each month to make connections in Taos two days later. Each express was comprised of two mounted men, one of whom carried official army matter from post to post, the other civilian mails, calling on postmasters along the route. Riders and horses were changed at every post, and Forts Massachusetts, Defiance, and Stanton and the town of Tucson in Arizona were given special authorization to provide such escorts as would ensure safety.¹⁰⁸ About the same time, the reappointment of John M. Francisco as sutler at Fort Massachusetts was approved by Secretary of War Jefferson Davis.¹⁰⁹

With the turn of the new year, hostilities with the Indians or at least some Indian depredations were expected. Post commanders were alerted to the possibility of field service in the spring, or as soon as grass would permit,¹¹⁰ and they were ordered to do everything possible to recover property (mainly livestock) stolen by Indians from settlements near the posts.¹¹¹ Dr. Barry died at Fort Massachusetts on March 25, 1857, and the post did not have a physician until early August, when Acting Assistant Surgeon Ambrose E. Kellogg arrived; there was, however, a hospital steward on duty from the middle of July.¹¹²

Only a single company of fifty-four enlisted men was stationed at Fort Massachusetts from October, 1856, to June, 1857,¹¹³ and apparently no sizable civilian force was employed during that time. It may be surmised, therefore, that construction of the new fort was not rapid. In the latter month, the garrison was augmented by seventy-five men from Company E, Mounted Riflemen, commanded by First Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Robert M. Morris, who came in from Cantonment Burgwin.¹¹⁴ The company of Mounted Riflemen and Company A, Third Infantry, together provided the main source of labor for building the new post.¹¹⁵

⁹⁹ Post Return, May, 1856.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, July, 1856.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, August, 1856; Special Orders No. 93, July 22, 1856, Vol. 27, p. 322.

¹⁰² Fort Stanton was established May 4, 1855, and was named for Captain Henry W. Stanton, First Dragoons, who was killed near the site in a fight with Apaches on January 19, 1855. Frazer, *Fort of the West*, p. 103. Captain Stanton and Surgeon Peters had come west in the same group; Peters' sister and Stanton's wife were acquainted. Peters Correspondence, March 3, 1855.

¹⁰³ Bowman was a West Point graduate, 1841. He was a veteran of the Mexican War and reached the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1867. He died July 17, 1869. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 234-35.

¹⁰⁴ Return of Captain Andrew W. Bowman, September, 1856, en route to Fort Massachusetts; Post Return, October, 1856; Special Orders No. 108, September 1, 1856, Vol. 27, p. 333.

¹⁰⁵ Post Return, October, 1856.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, November, 1856; Special Orders No. 153, November 9, 1856, Vol. 27, p. 354.

¹⁰⁷ Colonel Bonneville retired September 9, 1861. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 230; Post Return, November, 1856.

¹⁰⁸ Orders No. 15, November 3, 1856, Vol. 36, pp. 375-76.

¹⁰⁹ Appointment, November 4, 1856, J. M. Francisco Papers, State Historical Society of Colorado Library (microfilm).

¹¹⁰ Circular, January 13, 1857, Vol. 36, p. 381.

¹¹¹ Orders No. 2, January 24, 1857, Vol. 36, p. 381.

¹¹² Post Returns, March-August, 1857.

¹¹³ Post Returns, October, 1856-June, 1857.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, June, 1857. The Regiment of Mounted Riflemen was organized May 19, 1846. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 143. Robert M. Morris attended, but did not graduate from, the U. S. Military Academy, 1841-1842. He was a Mexican War veteran. Later he was promoted to major, February 21, 1862, for service in the Battle of Valverde, New Mexico, and during the Civil War he became a lieutenant colonel. He died August 7, 1896. *Ibid.*, I, 728.

¹¹⁵ U. S. War Department, Surgeon General's Office, *A Report on Barracks and Hospitals, With Descriptions of Military Posts* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 320.

In late May, two men from Company A, Third Infantry, stole mules, saddles, bridles, and weapons from the government corral at Fort Massachusetts and deserted, but they were soon captured nearby. A third man tried the same thing on June 16, and he made it to the other side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, in the vicinity of the Greenhorn Mountain, before he was apprehended four days later. A much more serious incident, however, happened in the latter part of July. A group of deserters from Cantonment Burgwin was reported to be near the settlement of Culebra, southeast of Fort Massachusetts. First Lieutenant and Brevet Captain Morris and ten enlisted men of Company E, Mounted Riflemen, were ordered to assist in the pursuit, and when they came upon the deserters, Corporal LeRoy Dillner was killed in the action which captured them.¹¹⁶

There was no chaplain assigned to Fort Massachusetts, but it is likely that Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen came to the post on occasion. One visitation, probably in 1857, is of record. Father Joseph P. Machebeuf, vicar general of the diocese of Santa Fe, went to the fort. The morning after his arrival, the Roman Catholic soldiers, numbering twenty-five, were released from duty. The men decorated the altar, and two of them served the mass "as well as the best altar boys."¹¹⁷

In October, the Mounted Riflemen were ordered to take post at Cantonment Burgwin as soon as the working season ended at Fort Massachusetts; it was expected that some work would continue on the new post through the winter, however, because it was also ordered that one noncommissioned officer and such mechanics as might be in the company remain at Fort Massachusetts to assist in construction at the new site.¹¹⁸ One corporal and three privates from the Mounted Riflemen stayed along with Company A, Third Infantry, which was joined by Second Lieutenant Cornelius D. Hendren.¹¹⁹ The Mounted Riflemen were, of course, a cavalry unit, and when it is recalled that the Dragoons' horses were taken to Fort Union for the winter 1852-53, we have two examples of perhaps the most difficult

problem at Fort Massachusetts—supplying enough forage to get horses and mules through a long, snow-packed winter. Taking the animals out was one solution.

Sentinels at the main (south) gate of Fort Massachusetts were startled in very early January, 1858, to see two bedraggled men on exhausted mules approaching through the junipers and leafless cottonwoods along the bottoms of Utah Creek. Soon Captain Andrew W. Bowman, the commandant, learned that they were guides from a military party under Captain Randolph B. Marcy, Fifth Infantry,¹²⁰ who were in desperate circumstances in the frigid fastnesses of the San Juan Mountains after having left Fort Bridger, Utah Territory, on the previous November 24 with orders to procure supplies in New Mexico. They were part of the force which was being led by Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston against the Mormons.¹²¹

Captain Bowman ordered fresh horses for the two guides and dispatched three wagons with supplies to relieve the beleaguered detachment, sending a jug of brandy along as a special courtesy to Captain Marcy.¹²² On January 19, the ragged Marcy force of forty men of the Fifth and Tenth Infantries and twenty-nine Quartermaster's men marched into the welcoming warmth and comfort of Fort Massachusetts. Two days later Captain Marcy and his men were on their way south to the settlements.¹²³

Second Lieutenant Herbert M. Enos,¹²⁴ Company E, Mounted Riflemen, rode into Fort Massachusetts with five privates one day in late February, a few days before the rest of the company returned from Cantonment Burgwin on March 3, under the command of Captain Thomas Duncan.¹²⁵ The Captain had been commandant at the Cantonment, and he now took over at Fort Massachusetts from Captain Bowman, who, with Company A, Third Infantry, went on detached service with Captain Marcy.¹²⁶ A new medical officer in the person of Acting Assistant Surgeon E. F. de Graffenried took up his duties in late May.¹²⁷

¹¹⁶ Special Orders No. 15, January 30, 1858, Vol. 39, pp. 84-101.

¹¹⁷ Rev. W. J. Howlett, *Life of the Right Reverend Joseph P. Machebeuf, D.D., Pioneer Priest of Ohio, Pioneer Priest of New Mexico, Pioneer Priest of Colorado, Vicar Apostolic of Colorado and Utah, and First Bishop of Denver* (Pueblo: n.p., 1908), pp. 237-38. A little over ten years later Father Machebeuf was consecrated Bishop and Vicar Apostolic of Colorado and Utah.

¹¹⁸ Post Return, October, 1857; Special Orders No. 107, October 11, 1857, Vol. 39, p. 10.

¹¹⁹ Post Return, November, 1857. Hendren resigned his commission June 30, 1860. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 522.

¹²⁰ Marcy was graduated from West Point in 1832. After a distinguished military career, he retired in 1881. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 689.

¹²¹ Post Return, January, 1858; Colonel R. B. Marcy, *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1866), pp. 224-25, 242-43.

¹²² Marcy, *Thirty Years of Army Life*, p. 244.

¹²³ Post Return, January, 1858.

¹²⁴ Enos was graduated from West Point in 1856. He later served with distinction in the Civil War, being given the rank of colonel on March 13, 1865. He retired May 29, 1876. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 407.

¹²⁵ Post Returns, February and March, 1858. Duncan was commissioned a captain in 1848. On April 8, 1862, he was given the rank of brevet lieutenant colonel for service against Confederate forces near Albuquerque, New Mexico. Duncan died January 7, 1887. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 388.

¹²⁶ Post Return, June, 1858.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* Acting Assistant Surgeon Kellogg joined the staff on August 3, 1857.

Since the seventy-six Mounted Riflemen had only fifty-seven horses, eighteen of which were not fit for service,¹²⁸ it was obvious that they were not to be used for immediate service in the field. The final stages of construction of the new post were the responsibility of Captain Duncan and his men. General Orders No. 7 from the Adjutant General's office in Washington, dated June 24, 1858, announced that "the new post recently established near Fort Massachusetts, will hereafter be known as FORT GARLAND."¹²⁹ Brevet Brigadier General John Garland, who was for the second time in command of the Military Department of New Mexico, was the recipient of the honor of having the new post named for him.

And so the short-lived post of Fort Massachusetts, New Mexico Territory, was abandoned to the exigencies of time, weather, and man. Its garrisons had experienced the monotony, the risks, and the simple pleasures of life in a remote mountain post during six years that began in the presidential administration of Millard Fillmore, spanned that of Franklin Pierce, and ended during that of James Buchanan. More than anything else, a poorly-chosen location made its moment in history relatively brief.

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J. Cooper McKee was assigned to the post in February, 1858, and he was succeeded by de Graffenried. Post Returns, August, 1857, February and May, 1858. McKee saw service during the Civil War and retired in 1891. Heitman, *Historical Register*, I, 671. In 1886, McKee published an account of the surrender of Fort Fillmore, New Mexico, to the Confederates in July, 1861. He was the surgeon there. His account was reprinted in 1960. See Major James Cooper McKee, *Narrative of Surrender of a Command of U. S. Forces at Fort Fillmore, New Mexico in July, A.D., 1861* (Houston, Tex.: Stagecoach Press, 1960).

¹²⁸ Post Return, May, 1858.

¹²⁹ General Orders No. 7, June 24, 1858, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Record Group 94, National Archives; Post Return, July, 1858.

EXCAVATING FORT MASSACHUSETTS / 2

BY GALEN R. BAKER

Fort Massachusetts is situated at the base of the northern foothills of the Sierra Blancas which dominate the San Luis Valley. It is possible that the post was built on an old Ute trail facilitating movement from the San Juan area east to the Great Plains and west to the San Juan Mountains. La Veta Pass is about twenty miles to the west, and there is some indication of a road leading from La Veta Pass down across the low plateau, then dropping into Ute Creek and moving directly from the position of Fort Massachusetts west toward the area of present-day Alamosa, following what may have been an earlier trail.

Underlying the whole fort area is evidence of Pleistocene river gravels, which were deposited prior to man's occupation of this part of the world. These gravels are sometimes seen on the surface, and may have presented problems during the building of the post. It was necessary during the fort construction to bring in sand and dirt to cover the exposed gravel areas in order to develop a level living surface. The fort is located on the river flood plain, but the river waters have cut some eight or more feet below the fort occupation level. Thus the fort occupation zones, surprisingly, were never flooded during or after occupation.

Until excavations on Ute Creek began, the exact location and remains of Fort Massachusetts had long been a matter of speculation among historians and archaeologists. The fort's approximate position was determined in the summer of 1964 with the use of photographs taken in the early part of the twentieth century by O. T. Davis. Extensive excavations began in August, 1964, and continued during the following two summers, with each dig lasting four to six weeks. The work demonstrated the

precise location of the buildings, stockade structures, and other features.¹

The field and laboratory work during the three seasons was a cooperative project between the State Historical Society of Colorado and Trinidad State Junior College. Further analysis was continued in the laboratory during the winter months. This was accomplished at Trinidad College during 1964, 1965, and 1966, and at Otero Junior College, La Junta, in 1966 and 1967.² Those participating in the excavations included both students enrolled in the Trinidad Junior College archaeology course and work-study students from two- and four-year institutions located in various sections of the country. A field laboratory was maintained at one of the unused barracks of the headquarters at Fort Garland, a museum of the State Historical Society of Colorado. Here artifacts were processed and analyzed and field maps and drawings remade for inclusion in this report. Final laboratory analysis and report preparation occurred during the 1967 field season at the site of Fort Vasquez near Platteville and at the Otero Junior College Archaeology Research Laboratory in La Junta.

Limited time and finances prevented the entire fort from being completely excavated, but large sections were uncovered and new information was obtained relating to the occupation of Fort Massachusetts and its role in the development of New Mexico and Colorado. In preparation for the excavation of Fort Massachusetts, extensive clearing of the site was necessary. This was a very rigorous process and was almost impossible with hand tools as the site was covered by heavy sagebrush which had entirely taken over the area. Probably the heavy growth was due to extensive grading and clearing of this bottom land by various people attempting to improve the grass growth. With the use of both hand tools and a bulldozer, strips of sagebrush some ten feet wide were removed. This work revealed low mounds which gave some indication of the location of major features still to be found at the site. Excavation of these mounds revealed fireplaces, walls, living and working quarters, associated artifacts, and other features.

The site of Fort Massachusetts was divided into five-foot

grids which were then grouped into a number of separate areas to facilitate archaeological study. Designating areas by letter was the primary field technique employed in order to refer to and interpret materials and remains from any related set of grids. The sutler's store, for example, was referred to as Area A. This is located some one hundred feet south of the garrison stockade in the area where a twentieth-century cabin is standing.

The principal excavation technique used consisted of cutting trenches across the major features of the site such as living quarters, storage rooms, guardroom, hospital, blacksmith shop, and officers' quarters. A two-foot trench directed in either a north-south or east-west direction was found to be the most

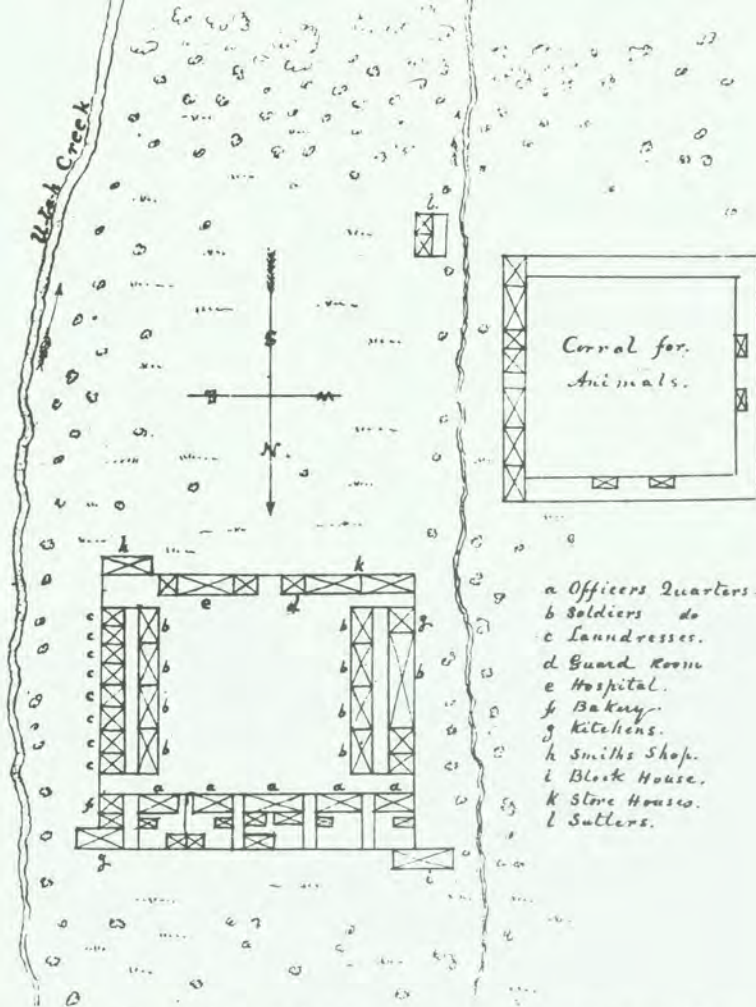


adequate means of determining the extent and depth of occupation and the breadth of any one feature. Once the dimensions of the various features had been located, then other techniques, such as stripping back five-foot squares down to the levels of occupation, were used to measure the remaining evidences of the fort's make-up. The very extensive nature of the site and the limited funds and help, however, did not allow the opening of large sections of the fort as would have been desired for further site analysis.

The size, shape, and distribution of the fort remains turned out to be much different than was anticipated from a study of the historic documents. The available sketches indicated only one stockade and one corral, but in fact the corral was equally as large and important as the stockade. It is perhaps surprising

¹ Galen R. Baker, "Excavating Fort Massachusetts," *The Colorado Magazine*, XLII (Winter, 1965), 1-15.

² The author, who previously taught at Trinidad State Junior College, became a member of the Otero Junior College faculty in the fall of 1966.



Mansfield included this plan of the fort with his 1853 report.

that there is little mention of this structure in the historic documents of the period. The report of Inspector General Joseph K. F. Mansfield in 1853 merely shows its location and general outline, whereas excavation revealed features which were relatively important in the life of the fort.³ Other excavated features also gave more detailed information on the construction and use of the garrison and corral stockades.

In the garrison stockade excavations along the north wall brought to light more information about this area of the fort. On the east side of the main gate were the hospital rooms and blacksmith shop as indicated by the Mansfield sketch and also

confirmed to some degree by archaeological excavation. The blacksmith shop, referred to as the "smithy," stood as an offset in the southeast corner; it may have been used also as a block-house and lookout point extending above the height of the picket wall. The outside wall of the smithy was constructed of



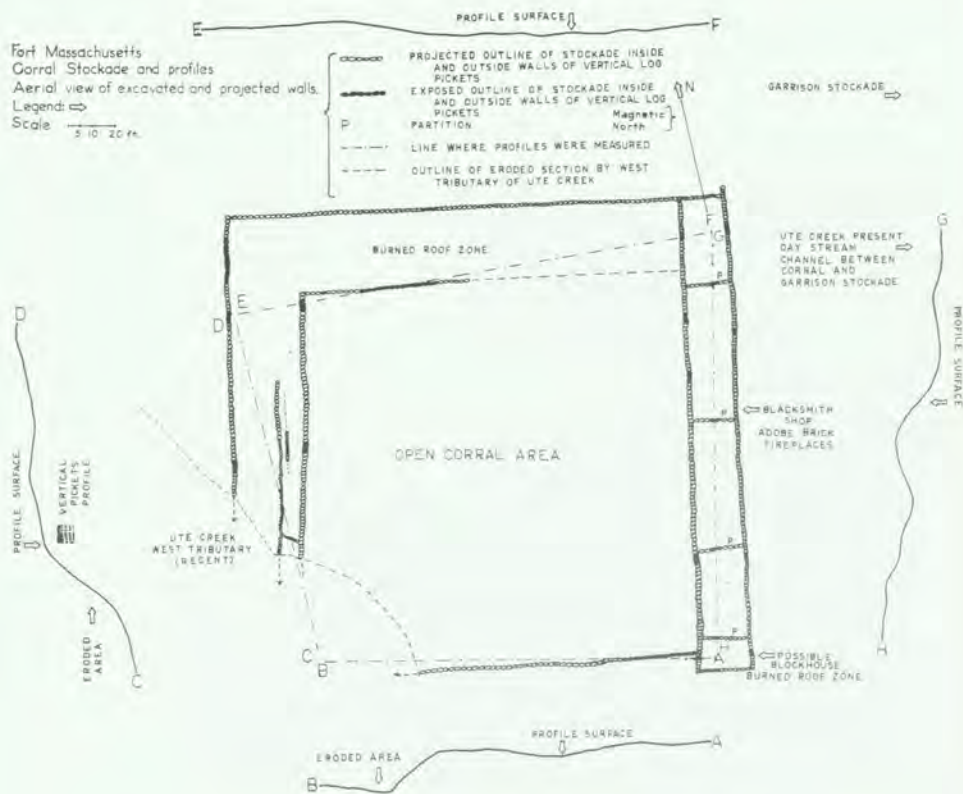
The foundation log rests on the riverine gravels in this view of the north wall, interior structure, garrison stockade, east side.

horizontal logs. The roof logs were found almost completely intact, as though they fell together and were burned.

Some Indian artifacts were found at the site but were present only in small numbers. There is some evidence which indicates that Indians camped here prior to the construction of the fort. Also, the Indians may have used the fort after it was abandoned. This is indicated by the worked glass fragments, used as cutting tools, found in the trash area. In addition, a few small glass Indian beads were recovered in the quartermaster area, suggesting that some kind of Indian garments or materials were left there. (I do not think, however, that this indicates the quartermaster's rooms were also used for trade.)

Archaeological evidence indicates the corral stockade encompassed almost as large an area as the main garrison stockade,

³ See Robert W. Frazer (ed.), *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts, 1853-54* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 17-19, 40-41.



located three hundred feet east of the corral stockade. Excavations in the corral began in the summer of 1966. Four large and extensive trenches, some two hundred feet long and two or more feet wide, were cut into the features of the corral. One trench was put down on each side of the stockade in order to cut across the major features in the compound or, more precisely, the living area of the compound on the inside of the defense picket walls. Here the blacksmith shops, living quarters, storage areas, and repair shops were found.

Like the garrison stockade, the corral stockade was built in the form of an enclosed quadrangle, open in the center with a high picket fence for an outside defensive wall, with buildings and shelters contiguous to the inside of the outer protective wall, or the west, north, and east sides. There was some evidence to indicate a roof shelter was present on the north side extend-

ing outward from the inside of the stockade wall to protect horses, men, and equipment. This may have been put there to furnish protection from the elements and perhaps also to provide cover against sniper shots coming from the adjacent hills on the west side of Ute Creek. All of the features of the west side and north side of the corral could not be determined, however, because part of the southwest corner of the stockade has been washed away by a west branch of the creek.

In the sutler's area (Area A), the boulder foundation was found four to six inches below the surface; a modern log cabin has been built on top of this stone foundation at the southern end. The boulders seem to have been set into a trench, which may have acted as a guideline and also provided a firmer foundation for an adobe brick structure in association with the width of these boulders. However, in some places vertical posts of ponderosa pine (four to six inches in diameter) were still extant beneath the surface adjacent to the boulders. They were found outlining the boulders only in part and are not believed to have been the main source of wall structure, but may have been part of a corral contiguous to the sutler's store.

Numerous logs were found lying on the living and working areas of the guardroom and quartermaster room, oriented in a north-south direction. These presumably were fallen roof beams which showed little or no burning. Other areas of the fort showed extensive burning to none at all. This indicates partial, probably intentional, burning of the fort after abandonment.⁴ These logs averaged six inches in thickness. All of Area D was not excavated because of lack of time, facilities, and labor, but large areas were trenched using two-foot-wide trenches in order to cover and reach those features of possible significance. In the guardroom there apparently were both inside and outside walls, evidently for greater security. In many of the remaining logs large 10d (10 penny) or greater nails could be seen still embedded where they were used to construct corners or other features.

Some evidence of a wooden floor is indicated by the presence of flat planks found twelve to fourteen inches below the surface in Room 8, the east quartermaster room. Notched logs were

⁴It has been reported also that a fire occurred in 1891, which perhaps destroyed some of the fort, although it is evident from the excavations that complete destruction did not occur. Baker, "Excavating Fort Massachusetts," p. 5.



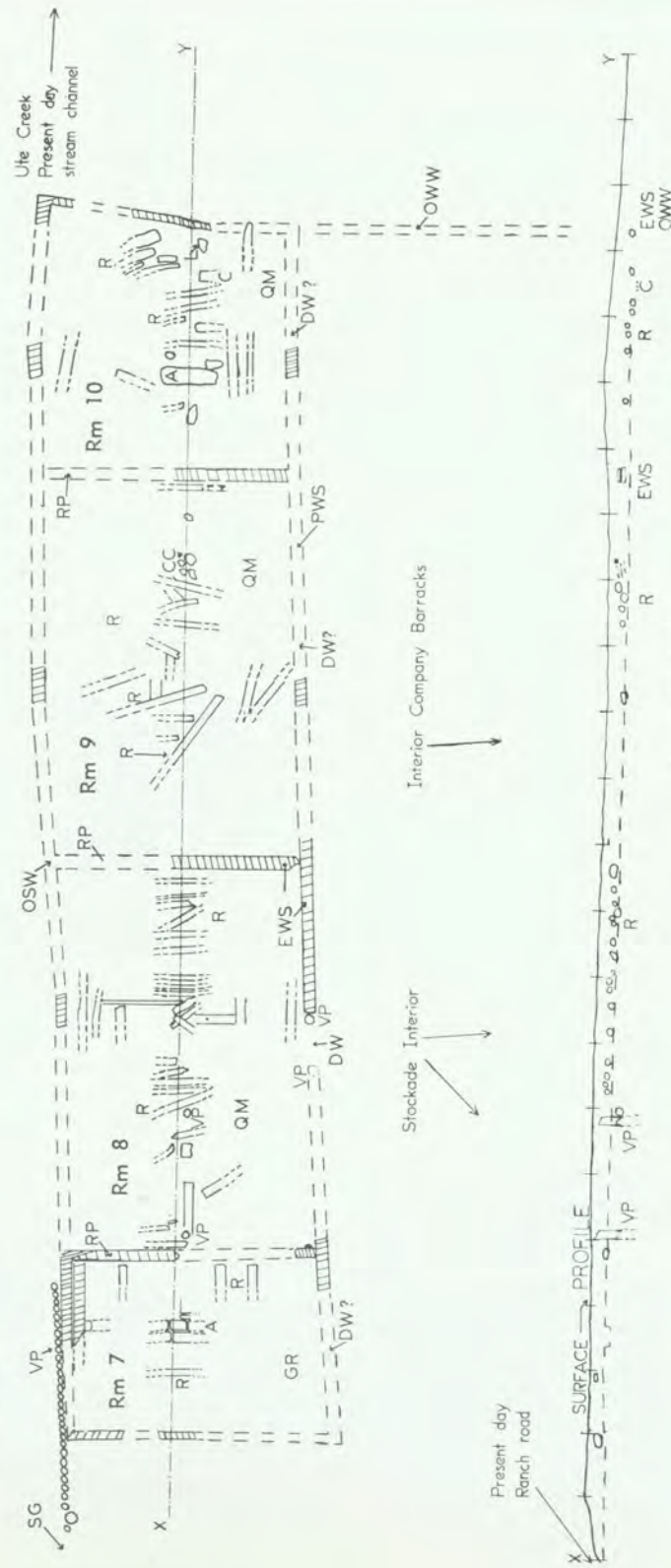
Vertical post foundations on the stockade's outside west wall. The top posts are probably the original surface during the fort occupation period.

also found that were part of a wall or roof support section. Generally, the roof logs were two inches smaller than the support beams and walls. In some sections wall logs could be seen that had either fallen away from a tiered position or perhaps had been pulled down. Many of the vertical posts extended up almost to the surface in long lines; it appears that they were cut off at or near ground level and then later covered by erosion and deposition. The presence of upright posts in the north wall of Area D (center of Room 8 or east quartermaster's room) may indicate the presence of a doorway into this structure. In studying the remaining wall sections in Area D some evidence was found to suggest that mud was used as a filler between the tiered logs. Occasionally pieces of partially folded or crumpled canvas were found on the floor level of Room 9 (center quartermaster room), which were evidently discarded or forgotten during abandonment.

One of the first areas to be excavated in 1964 was that referred to as Area D.⁵ This comprised the interior quarters west of the south gate and the quartermaster rooms west of and contiguous to the guardroom, extending therefrom to the south-

⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

Fort Massachusetts
South End, West Side
Guard Room and Quartermaster Rooms
Outline of excavated and projected features
Scale 1/2" = 4ft.



- A—adobe bricks
- C—corn cobs
- CC—cloth with canvas in between
- DW—doorway
- EWS—exposed wall section
- GR—guardroom
- OSW—outside south wall
- OWW—outside west wall
- PWS—projected wall section
- QM—quartermaster room
- R—fallen roof log
- RP—room partition
- SG—south gate
- VP—vertical pickets (log walls)

west corner of the stockade. No offset was detected at the position and therefore no blockhouse or tower is believed to have existed at this corner.

The south wall of the stockade proved to be constructed of horizontal logs. Room partitions running into and joining this south wall were found which divided this area into Rooms 7 (guardroom), 8, 9, and 10 (quartermaster rooms). It is possible that Room 8 was part of the guardroom complex, but not enough evidence was recovered to be completely positive. The logs used in construction were of ponderosa pine with the bark still present, which preserved them in almost perfect condition. The bottom logs acted as the support foundation; they were evidently set into a shallow trench in some but not all cases. In some places two or three horizontal log tiers were still extant in

In this photograph illustrating typical foundation remains exposed at the site, the strips of bark under the foundation logs can be seen about six inches above the arrow in the center of the picture.



their original positions. Central vertical posts (eight to ten inches in diameter and extending six inches or more below surface) were also used in the center of these south rooms to act as a support base for the roofs.

An unusual feature was found in the center of Area D, the guardroom. Here was found a series of adobe bricks. The remains did not clarify their exact use, but I assume that probably the adobe was employed to construct interior walls and perhaps also to divide the room into smaller cells. The other possibility is that here is a very firm adobe brick foundation for a tower that perhaps stood just to the west of the gate.

A distance of about ten feet separates the east side of the guardroom from the west side of the gate. This area was found to be filled with an east-west vertical picket log wall. The original gate, although unexcavated, is believed to be about ten to twenty feet wide, but its exact size could not be determined because of its location under the present-day ranch road.

To the east of the south-central gate a two-foot test trench was cut through portions of what Mansfield designated as the hospital rooms and blacksmith shop, comprising the southeast corner of the stockade. This trench also followed very closely and in part uncovered the south wall of the stockade. This wall is oriented at an angle of about three to five degrees to the north of our east-west grid line system but is still in a general east-west direction.

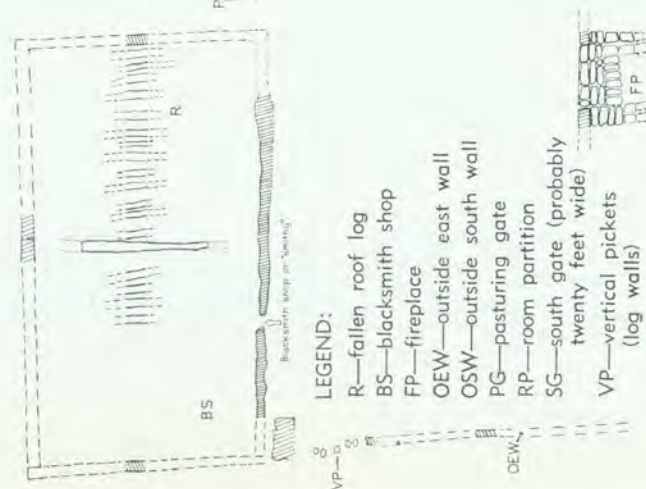
Test trenches have shown that some of the foundation logs for the stockade wall and the attached buildings were cut into sterile river deposits about four inches. The present surface is extremely variable but the bases of the foundation logs all occur between thirty-three and thirty-six inches below the present east-west horizontal datum line. The surface of the site is irregular where foundations of log walls and fireplaces still remain in relatively good condition. Where the log walls and adobe brick features remained standing above the occupation level, small mounds of wind-blown sand developed over the years.

Area M (which contained the hospital and smithy areas) includes the section from the south wall fifty feet north into the compound. Vertical excavation was accomplished by parallel levels measured with reference to a horizontal east-west datum level line followed by the east-west trench grid line. Variation can be seen in the present surface topography in the form of mounds and ridges. These ridges are the remaining fireplaces

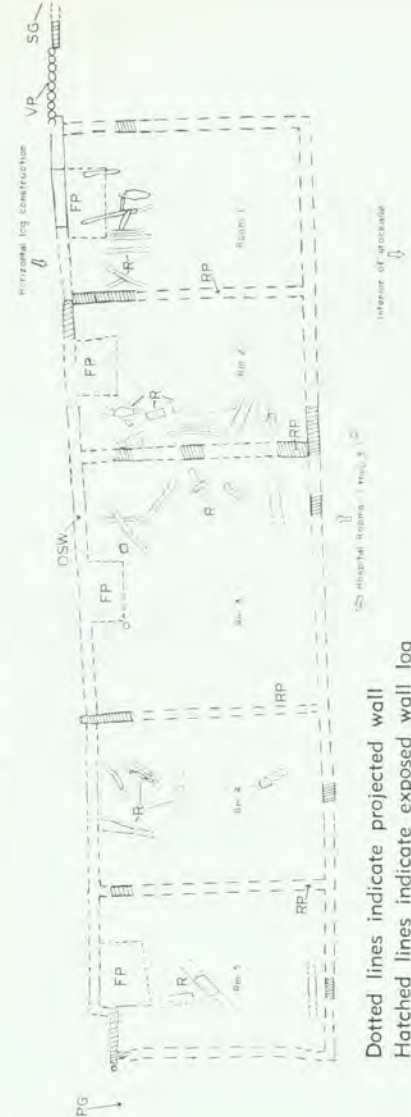
and log walls of the stockade and are better preserved in some of the more central parts of the various structures.

A coarse sand lense (one to three inches in thickness), which was apparently laid down during and after the construction of the fort stockade, is seen in profile. This lense extends from twenty feet east of the north-south line underlying Room 1 up to its east wall (in grid 240 QQ). The erosion of the ranch road by vehicle use and by natural forces cutting through the fort has presumably carried away the sand layer in that area. Excavations west of the road determined the presence of this layer on the west side of the central gate, extending outside the west wall. This sand lense was also apparently laid down in the stockade quadrangle area. Test excavations have shown the lense to extend from the north wall of the hospital rooms north for at least twenty feet into the compound but not throughout the open area of the stockade. Excavations adjacent to the structures uncovered a distinct white sand lense which is believed to have been laid by occupants of the fort to help cut down the accumulation of mud and to facilitate the movement of horse and troop formations. At least two separate sand lenses could be distinguished, indicating that a resurfacing occurred some time after the original layer had been put down and partly covered by mud.

The outside defensive walls of the stockade are composed of ponderosa pine logs nine to ten inches in thickness. Architectural features indicate that the method of construction within the stockade was the usage of ponderosa pine logs placed horizontally one on top of another in typical log cabin fashion, with the use of square-cut nails of various kinds and sizes on the south and east outside walls and on all of the interior structures. It has been determined that at least six rooms, five hospital rooms and the smithy, were located on the east side of the wall. These findings do not agree with Mansfield's 1853 map which indicated only three such rooms and a smithy. An eight-inch log wall was encountered about twenty-eight feet east of the north-south datum line. This is probably the east side of the south gate and the west wall of the west room of the hospital barracks; it was designated Room 1, east side. This room is fifteen feet long from the west to the east wall with a three-foot adobe fireplace located in the center of the south wall. Burned adobe sections have been uncovered but a complete fireplace in this area was not outlined.



FORT MASSACHUSETTS
GARRISON STOCKADE
SOUTHEAST CORNER
ROSENZAL ROOMS AND
BLACKSMITH SHOP
SCALE—1:2 4 ft.





This fireplace is believed to be part of an officer's house at the north end of the garrison stockade. The arrow rests on the back wall, and the firebox is located in the center just to the left of the arrow.

Room 2, contiguous to Room 1, is also fifteen feet long with a fireplace in the center of the south wall. Room 3 (R3E) is contiguous to Room 2 (R2E), but is larger than Rooms 1 and 2. It extends twenty-five feet from the west to the east wall and has a fireplace in the center and two vertical room supports, of ponderosa pine, each about eight feet from the adjacent east-west walls and about three or four feet from the fireplace. The designated east and west walls of this room are four inches in thickness (about five inches per wall thinner than found elsewhere), leading to speculation as to whether they are indeed the wall partitions. However, no other more likely wall logs were found.

Room 4 is a fifteen-foot room without any definable fireplace at the present time. It was perhaps a small room used for storage, closet facilities, or other such function. The west wall is nine inches in thickness. Room 4 is contiguous to Room 5. Farther east and separated from the hospital rooms was found evidence of the smithy structure.

Areas E, F, and G were found to be the remains of an enlisted men's barracks on the west interior side of the garrison stockade. These areas were excavated in the first season (1964) and a good outline of the major features could be distinguished in fireplaces for four contiguous squad rooms.⁶ Square-cut nails were prominent in the remains of this structure as they were in other structures. Although not extremely common, they were found in sufficient number to indicate that they were used to carry out the major building activities of the fort.

At the north end of the excavated enlisted men's barracks was found evidence of a room which may have been used as an orderly room or a room with some other special function. Here

The whitened area in the center indicates the presence of an adobe brick fireplace. The foundation logs on the interior east side of the garrison stockade can be seen in partial profile.



there was evidence of a fireplace on the south wall of the structure in contrast to the west wall of the squad rooms. Excavations of the enlisted men's barracks also recovered square nails, broken wine bottles, and clay pipestems and bowls.

Of particular interest are the square-cut nails. The type of nails used at Fort Massachusetts include the following:

1. Three-inch screw fragments. This may represent one of the earliest uses of this type of fastener developed in the 1830's and 1840's, not common in the West until probably the latter part of the century.
2. Staples. These are not common and we are not sure that they belong to the 1850 period.
3. L-shaped nails. These are very rare; fragments two to three inches long have been recovered.
4. Tacks. These are present but not in great quantity. They have a broad head and about a two-inch spike.
5. Horseshoe nails. These include the #3 and #6 types, evidently indicating the presence of riding and drill horses.

Finishing nails included sizes 10 and 5; brad sizes included 8, 6, 5, and 4d (this type of nail was used for all finishing work inside the buildings). The heads are extremely small so that the nail may be countersunk into the wood. Common nail sizes included 20, 12, 10, 9, 6, 5, 4, and 3d. All of the common nail sizes have beveled shanks and are rectangular in cross section at the point. Common nails are used more than any other forms of square-cut nails. They are used in sheathing, siding, and framing. The 16d and 20d nails were commonly used in heavy framing, in rafter work, and in putting up partitions. Casing nail sizes at Fort Massachusetts included 10, 9, 8, 6, and 4d. All of the casing nails are square in cross section at the point. There are shank beveling ends under the heads which made it possible for these nails to be driven flush into flat surfaces without searing or splitting. The major use of this type of nail was in casings on window frames, door heads, and floorings. They were particularly useful in tongue-in-groove carpentry. Fencing nail sizes included 8, 7, and 6d. All fencing nails were made with slightly raised or reinforced heads to take a hard pounding. These nails, which have beveled shanks and are rectangular in cross section at the point, were used in holding heavy and rough timber for fences.⁷

⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷ More detailed information on these nails, as well as a chart, is in *ibid.*, 8-11.

Additional metal artifacts discovered included mule shoes, a snuff box, fork fragments, other metal eating instruments including spoons, one S-shaped hook, handwrought spikes, a military button, and handwrought nails. One fragmentary canteen was recovered which still had the "U.S." marking plainly visible; some of the side fragments with metal loops for the carrying strap were also present. An officer's or enlisted man's hat visor, some eight inches broad, was recovered in association with the canteen. Numerous percussion or primer caps were recovered, as was a metal ornament or number fragment for a uniform and/or equipment.

Canteen fragment, soldier's shoe, and hat visor as they were found at the site. The paintbrush is used to indicate the size of the artifacts. Note the letters "U.S." still visible on the canteen.



Buttons found included examples made of mother-of-pearl, metal, and bone. One of the metal buttons had the marking "Fisher & Whitman of New York" and another "Republic of Connecticut." Glass fragments included wine bottles, medicine bottles, and window glass. One small unique medicine bottle was recovered which was two inches long and about one inch wide and had a constricted neck. Some pieces of glass apparently were picked up by Indians in the area after the occupation of the fort; one piece may have been worked into a rifle flint for use in the older flintlock gun, another into a graver, and a third into a scraper.

Ceramics include earthenware, ironstone, and Mexican ware. Earthenware, especially transfer print ceramic, was the most common. A transfer gray, a transfer print with glaze made in the 1830's, earthenware with an 1840's glaze, a banded cream ware, the very thick and heavy white ironstone of the post-1836 period, and about four fragments of Mexican earthenware were recovered. It is strange that more evidence of contact did not exist between the fort and the nearby Spanish settlements. Except for corn and some other goods bought from them, contact seems to have been extremely limited.

Of the clay pipes a number of bowl fragments and short stems were recovered. This type of pipe has a more square profile than the earlier (1830's to 1840's) Paris-type pipes found at the fur trading forts in northern Colorado. These later pipes were without the long stems and look more rugged. At Fort Massachusetts we excavated a pipe with a short bowl and a



very short stem which required a secondary stem to complete the smoking equipment. The bowls were either plain or decorated. They were decorated generally with a geometric design or in the case of a fragment, with a turbaned and mustached individual. Less than a dozen pipe fragments were recovered. This is probably due to the relatively careful cleaning up procedures maintained at the military forts.

Special thanks should again be given to R. Lacy, Inc., owners of the land on which the site was located, for permission to continue the excavations. Although it was impossible to excavate Fort Massachusetts completely, it is hoped that our findings have contributed to a greater understanding of the fort's construction and design, and have revealed something of the life led by the troops at that remote frontier outpost.

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