

The Community at Fort Scott

Position Descriptions

Quartermaster-This position was vital to the success of any frontier fort. He was in charge of all supplies with the exception of food. He was in charge of the construction and maintenance of the fort. The quartermaster was also in charge of the building of roads and bridges for the main purpose of transporting the supplies to the fort. He had to acquire fuel and provide uniforms. He was paid 50 dollars per month. The quartermaster worked very closely with the skilled workers including blacksmith, farrier, millwright, carriage-makers, artificer, and armorer.



Commissary of subsistence- This individual distributed the food, oversaw the bake house and handed out the soldier's daily food rations. He was also in charge of the storehouses where the food and supplies were kept. He was paid 50 dollars per month.

Millwright-He was in charge of the saw-mill. The saw-mill was built along the river and turned cut trees into lumber. Most of the fort was made out of wood. The saw-mill repeatedly broke down or there was a lack of water to power the equipment as well as a lack of skilled workers to operate the saw-mill. These were some of the biggest obstacles during the construction of the fort.

Officers-There were two types of officers in the Army in the 1840's: Commission and Non-Commission. Commission officers attended college while non-commission joined the army and moved up the ranks according to merit. The officers were in charge of the enlisted men. They were responsible for drilling, training and disciplining the enlisted men. Most officers attended college. They were provided better living quarters and pay than the enlisted men. They were allowed to bring their wives and children with them. They also had more free time than the enlisted men. Officers were required to purchase their own uniforms, food and furnishings for their quarters. If they violated the rules they were put under house arrest while the enlisted men were placed in the guardhouse and faced harsh punishments. The officers' pay was as follows:

Major 60-50 dollars a month

Captain 50-40 dollars a month

Lieutenant 33-25 dollars

*Officers were responsible for purchasing all of their food and furniture, etc.



Officer's Rows

Officer's wives – These women were usually from back east and were educated. Their role was behind the scenes. The ideal woman of the day was seen but not heard. Usually the officer's wives were in charge of entertaining and raising the children. The wives had a huge impact on the fort because they brought a civilizing influence.

Enlisted men -Enlisted men were volunteers that did not attend a military school such as West Point. The enlisted men performed most of the grueling work of constructing the fort. Their duties included: drilling, fixing roads and bridges, constructing and maintaining buildings guard, duty, cleaning, farming, and if you were a dragoon you cared for the horses. They lived in cramped living conditions. Enlisted men took turns cooking and working in the bake house as well as growing vegetables in the gardens. If the enlisted men broke the rules they were punished more harshly than the officers. Many of the enlisted men were recent immigrants from Europe. These men had to not only adjust to life in the army but also to a new language and customs. The enlisted men's pay was as follows:

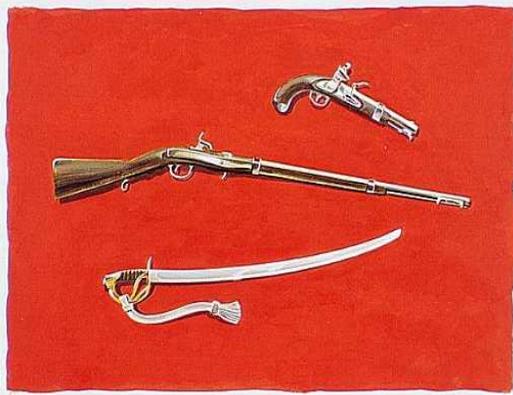
Private- 7-8 dollars a month

Corporals- 9-10 dollars a month

Sergeant- 13-16 dollars a month (highest rank an enlisted men could achieve)

* They were given additional pay for extra duty work

Dragoons-The dragoons were a prestigious unit that was an early form of the cavalry. The unit consisted of both officers and enlisted men. Dragoon units were ideal for fighting on the vast open areas of the Great Plains. This allowed them to respond rapidly to problems at various distances from the fort. The dragoons were excellent horsemen. Most of the men were between the ages of 25-35 and were born in the United States. The dragoons wore colorful uniforms and were well armed. They received better pay than the enlisted men in the infantry. They were given the best equipment including the most modern of weapons Dragoons were given more training than a typical unit. Not only were they trained to fight on horseback but off the horse like infantry. Dragoon units were provided 1840 heavy Sabers, 1842 percussion pistol, a lighter breech loading Carbine and a lance. One other benefit was they were allowed to grow mustaches while the infantry could not.



Dragoon weapons



Dragoons on patrol

Infantry

Unit comprised of both enlisted men and officers. The infantry were the foot soldiers that made up the backbone of the army in the 1800's. The enlisted men did most of the physical labor at the fort, which made them feel more like cheap labor than fighting men. The infantry were provided a .69 caliber flintlock musket made in 1816 with bayonets. The bayonets were mainly used for cooking and securing tents than use in combat.



Sutler- A civilian who sold items to the soldiers including: tobacco, toothbrush, beer, wine, candy, books, playing cards, pencil, paper and other personal items. Prices were set by the military so the sutler could not charge outrageous prices. The sutler would pay a fee to the military for the privilege of setting up shop. He would also trade with local Indians and white settlers. The sutler's store was a popular place for the soldiers to gather and play games. He was also in charge of the post office. The sutler would extend credit to the soldiers and would be paid first when the soldiers received their pay.

Fort Scott Mo Nov 6-1844

224	Levt M. Eneto Dr		
	To 8 of as. Blue Calico 167		1.58
225	Major M. Graham Dr		
	To Cash 100		1.00
	" 1 Bottle Sherry Wine		1.00
	" 1 " Madeira "		1.00
	" 6 Cut Glass Tumblers 75		4.50
	" 2 doz. Sugar 25		5.00
	" 2 " "		37 1/2
226	Cash To		
223	Merchandise Dr		
	Rec'd on sales		15.00
225	Major Graham Dr		
	1 Coop Br's Sugar 32		88
226	Capt. B. L. Lott Dr		
224	To Cash Dr		3.00
227	Capt. B. L. Lott Dr		
	17 Nails		1.10
	John M. Brown Dr		

Suter's ledger

Post Surgeon-He provided examinations and treatment for the soldiers as well as civilians. He recorded the weather and scientific data including plant and animal life around the fort. The post's surgeon was paid 50 dollars a month.

Laundress- A female civilian who was in charge of washing and fixing the men's clothing. She was provided one ration of food per day. She rarely had any formal education. Usually she married a non-commission officer. She charged from 4.00 dollars to .50 cents per soldier for laundry services per month. In total she was better paid than most enlisted men. Mending of items cost extra. Her prices included:

Prices for laundry and mending

BUTTONS

Small \$.01 per button

Large \$.03 per button

MENDING

Drawers \$.09

Shirts \$.10

Coats \$.25

Vests \$.12

Pantaloon \$.19

Great Coat \$.37 1/2

ALTERING

Vests \$.37

Pantaloon \$.37 1/2

Coats \$.40

Shortening vest \$.12 1/2

Lengthening vest \$.20

1-yard muslin thread \$.20

Other Position Pay Scales

Blacksmith paid between 30-11 dollars

Farrier paid 11 dollars

Armorer Paid between 30 and 9 dollars

Carriagemaker paid between 30 and 13 dollars per month

Artificer paid 9 dollars a month

Bugler paid between 17 and 9 dollars per month

Chaplain paid 40 dollars per month

Questions:

1. Who was in charge of the sawmill?
2. What men did most of the grueling work at the fort?
3. Who were two civilians (non military personnel) that work near or at the fort?
4. What person distributed the food?
5. What person recorded the weather and other scientific information?
6. Besides trading with the soldiers what other two types of people did the sutler do business with?
7. What are three ways the officer's lives at the fort were better than the enlisted men? Do you think it was fair for officers to be treated better than the enlisted men?
8. What are three ways the Dragoon's were different than the infantry?
9. Who are some people in your town or community who perform some of the same duties as people you just read. Remember you can have more than one person who does the work of one of the fort's people.
10. Compare prices of the laundress with you local dry cleaners?
11. Make a chart comparing the pay of the different positions at the fort.
12. Choose a individual and find out what role he played at the fort? Choices are: blacksmith, farrier, millwright, carriage-makers, artificer, armorer, bugler, and chaplain.