FORT SCOTT
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Teachers' Guide

Planning Your Visit-On Site

Visitor Center (Post Hospital)

Welcome to Fort Scott National Historic Site, one of over 390 units of the National Park Service. We are pleased to have you participate in our education program. This guide will give you information about your visit and the history of the site. Your program will not be a standard buildings tour; instead, it will focus on various aspects of the site's history. We hope you enjoy your visit!

Site Information

Fort Scott National Historic Site contains eighteen historic buildings which have been restored to their 1840s appearance. Eleven are open to the public. You are urged to arrive early or stay late and view the buildings on your own. The site also includes a parade ground and five acres of restored tallgrass prairie. There is a self-guided walk through the prairie.

Site Accessibility

All education programs, the restrooms and many other areas of the site are accessible to the mobility impaired with limited assistance. The orientation program is accessible and closed captioned. Please notify us prior to your program if you have anyone in your group with special needs.

Restrooms and Water

Modern restrooms and drinking fountains are located in the Infantry Barracks on the east side of the parade ground. Please try to arrive 15-20 minutes early to allow your students time to use the facilities.

Eating on the Grounds

School groups may bring their own refreshments and are allowed to eat in designated areas at the site: the Grand Hall, which seats large groups, or the picnic area, which is available for small groups.

Groups wishing to eat in the Grand Hall should reserve the space in advance. They are responsible for cleaning it afterward. This includes disposing of all trash, sweeping the floor, and wiping tables.

Bookstore

Inside the visitor center, students can pick up lasting reminders of their visit at the site's bookstore*. Sales items include books, postcards, maps and posters. There are also several historically reproduced souvenirs such as jaw harps, Civil War kepis, and hardtack.

* The bookstore is operated by Western National Parks Association, a cooperating association that manages outlets at more than 50 National Park Service units. All proceeds from the sale of these items go to benefit the National Park Service.

Orientation Program

The orientation program gives a good overview of the site's history. The program lasts 23 minutes. Groups of 10 or less may watch the program in the auditorium in the museum. Larger groups may use the auditorium on the second floor of the visitor center.

Exhibits-Indoor and Outdoor

As you tour the site, you will see several outdoor wayside exhibits that portray various stories from the site's thirty-one year history. Additionally, thirty-one historically furnished rooms give a picture of life at Fort Scott in the 1840s.

Three different areas of the site house museum exhibits.

- The infantry barracks museum, located next to the visitor center, has exhibits that address the site's history.
- A room of exhibits in the dragoon barracks is dedicated to the soldiers of Fort Scott.
- The third area is the Wilson-Goodlander home, a former officers' quarters that dates back to the 1840s. The evolution of the building and construction techniques are featured here.

Safety Precautions

Fort Scott National Historic Site, like any historical or natural environment, contains certain inherent hazards that could spoil your group's visit. The following precautions should be practiced to avoid accidents. Please review these with your class before your visit.

1. Running through the buildings, leaning on or sliding down banisters, and climbing on walls, wagons, artillery pieces and other features may cause serious injury and damage to historic resources.

2. Stairways are steep and sidewalks are uneven in places. Have everyone watch their step and use the handrails.

3. During periods of rain and snow, exterior stairways are slippery and should not be used.

4. Seek shelter inside during thunderstorms, as lightning strikes are common.

5. Keep a safe distance from weapons and animals during demonstrations.

6. Weather may be cold, windy or rainy. Many activities are outside. Dress accordingly.

Following these safety precautions will help to assure a safe and enjoyable trip to Fort Scott National Historic Site.

Planning Your Visit-In Town

An attraction near the site that is associated with Fort Scott's Civil War history is Fort Blair. Fort Scott was never invaded during the Civil War, but fighting raged all around it. Guerrilla warfare swept up and down the border as Jayhawkers and Bushwhackers constantly sought revenge against each other. Some of the townspeople feared that Fort Scott would be attacked; however, it was well defended. It was surrounded by forty miles of fortifications, which included three blockhouses: Forts Blair, Henning, and Insley. The army constructed these blockhouses in the spring of 1863 and strategically located them to protect three major roads that entered Fort Scott. Today, a reconstructed blockhouse representing Fort Blair is located on Skubitz Plaza, across the street from Fort Scott National Historic Site.

Dolly the Trolley

Dolly the Trolley

Take a tour of the town of Fort Scott aboard Dolly the Trolley. See the National Cemetery, Victorian Homes, Gunn Park, and more! There is a charge. For more information call 1-800-245-FORT

National Cemetery

One of the 14 original national cemeteries established in 1862, Fort Scott National Cemetery includes the graves of soldiers from the 1840s to the present. (620) 223-2840

Lincoln School

Built in 1881, this one-room schoolhouse was originally located in the town of Fort Lincoln in northern Bourbon County. The Retired Teachers Association runs this school. By appointment. Call 1-800-245-FORT.

Train Museum

For the railroad buff, this museum has a collection of model trains and Frisco railroad memorabilia. For more information, call 1-800-245-FORT

Gordon Parks Center

Established in 2004, the Gordon Parks Center for Culture and Diversity at Fort Scott Community College focuses on the life and achievements of Fort Scott, Kansas native son, Gordon Parks. Ft. Scott Community College, 2108 S. Horton, 1-800-874-3722, ext. 515. Call for hours.

Lyons' House

Take a tour through an 1870s Victorian mansion. This is a bed and breakfast that is open year round for public viewing. Students will learn about the customs and lifestyles of families in the 1870s. (620) 223-0779. By appointment.

Gunn Park

The best place to picnic in the area is Gunn Park, a 90 acre park located at the southwestern edge of the city of Fort Scott. The park contains picnic tables, restrooms and recreational facilities. For reservations, call (620) 223-0655.

Lyons' House

Area Attractions

Bushwhacker Museum-*Nevada, MO-Containing relics of the late 19th century, this museum served as a jail for 100 years. The building survived the burning of Nevada in 1863. For more information call (417) 667-5841 or 667-7609.*

John Brown State Historic Site-*Osawatomie, KS-The cabin where John Brown stayed periodically with his sister and brother-in-law, this site observes the man who contributed much to the "Bleeding" part of "Bleeding Kansas." (913) 755-4384.*

Marais Des Cygnes Massacre State Historic Site-*Near Trading Post, KS-The Marais Des Cygnes is the site of a massacre where pro-slavery advocates murdered Free Staters during the era of "Bleeding Kansas". Open from dawn to dusk. Call (913) 352-8890 for information.*

Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic Site-*Near Pleasanton, KS-Site of a major Civil War battle in Kansas. Fought in 1864, it was one of the last battles in General Sterling Price's campaign to win Missouri for the Confederacy. There is a visitor center on site. (913) 352-8890*

Prairie State Park-*Liberal, MO-Bison roam freely and more than 200 species of wildflowers dot this 2,558 acre preserve of America's tallgrass prairie. Prairie State Park preserves this rich and diverse ecosystem. Films, slide shows and guided walks are available to school groups by request. (417) 843-6711.*

A Nation in Conflict

Civil War Scene

Sweep Through History at Fort Scott National Historic Site. From 1842-73, soldiers and civilians from Fort Scott participated in events that brought about the settlement and development of the West. Many of these years were bathed in conflict as the nation struggled to define itself-both in terms of size and character. The events that surrounded Fort Scott from its establishment as an isolated frontier outpost to its years as a regional trade and railroad center resulted in **Conflict on the Border**.

In the 1840s, westward expansion proceeded at an astronomical pace. Promises of wide-open spaces and inexpensive land with rich soil enticed many settlers in the East to pack up their possessions and head West.

The ranks of the overland migrations swelled as an ever-increasing number of settlers chose to cast their lots in the valleys of Oregon and California. For three successive years, from 1843 to 1845, soldiers from Fort Scott participated in expeditions intended to protect traffic along the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails.

As the population of Americans on the West Coast increased, so too did the nation's yearning for territorial acquisition. The phrase "Manifest Destiny" was coined to describe the philosophy that it was the divine right of the United States to become a transcontinental nation.

This philosophy brought about conflict because the reality was that Americans were moving to land that did not belong to them. California was part of Mexico, while ownership of Oregon Territory was disputed with Britain. The threat of warfare loomed with both countries.

War with Britain was averted through negotiation and the United States gained the southern part of Oregon Territory. But the controversy with Mexico escalated into two years of conflict and violence.

Soldiers from Fort Scott played a role in several campaigns of the Mexican-American War. When it was over, the United States possessed the American Southwest.

The acquisition of new territory reignited an old controversy. David Wilmot, a congressman from Pennsylvania, proposed to outlaw slavery in the new territories gained from Mexico. Southerners were upset at the notion of slavery being excluded from these territories, because it meant that they would be limited in their territorial expansion.

From the early beginnings of the United States, the debate on slavery had raised passions among the populace. The balance of senatorial power between free and slave states remained equal through the years. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 brought in Maine as a free state (1820) and Missouri as a slave state (1821). In addition, slavery was forever limited to south of the 36°30" line of latitude, the southern boundary of Missouri.

Then in 1854, two new territories, Kansas and Nebraska, were proposed. Because both of these territories were north of the 36°30" latitude, Southern states were alarmed, as this would upset the balance of voting power. Senator Stephen Douglas from Illinois proposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which would open up these territories to settlement under the banner of popular sovereignty.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the Missouri Compromise limit of 36°30" and put the question of being a free or slave state to the voters in each territory. Most people in the country felt that Nebraska would enter as a free state and Kansas as slave. However, both sides laid claim to Kansas, which became a battleground between pro and anti-slavery forces. Due to the violence that ensued, the territory became known as "Bleeding Kansas."

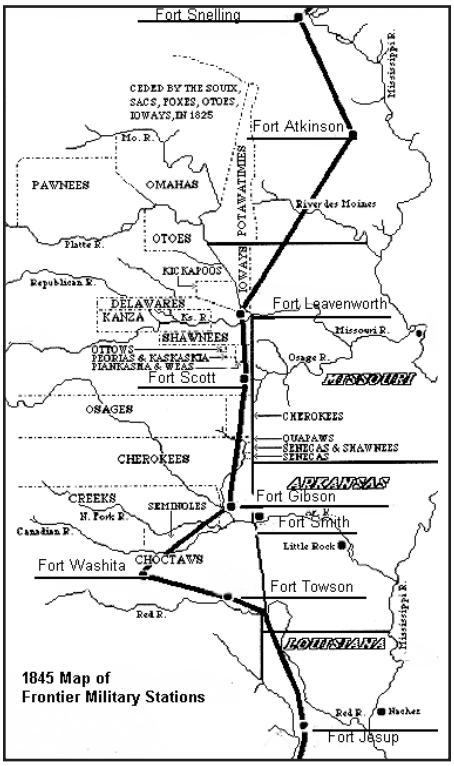
Fort Scott, abandoned by the military and now a town, was caught in the center of this controversy. The town was mostly occupied by pro-slavery factions, while free-staters dominated the surrounding countryside. Incidents of violence in Fort Scott typified the conflict raging throughout Eastern Kansas.

In 1861, the firestorm that swept through Kansas in the 1850s exploded in the rest of the nation as the Civil War erupted. Kansas entered the Union that year as a free state. Kansans rallied to Lincoln's call for volunteers as regiments were formed to defend the Kansas border.

The military post at Fort Scott was reestablished and was the key to defense of the middle border. It served as a supply base and training ground for Union troops; it was also a refugee center. Other military functions located in Fort Scott included a military prison and a U.S. Army general hospital. The military presence may have spared Fort Scott the fate that befell other Kansas towns as violence along the border escalated.

Permanent Indian Frontier

Originally established in 1842, Fort Scott was one of a series of forts along what was known as the Permanent Indian Frontier. Its mission was to maintain the frontier by keeping whites and Indians out of each other's territory and to keep peace between the various Indian tribes.



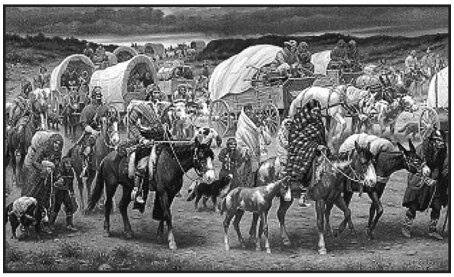
Indian Removal

Prior to Fort Scott's establishment, nearly all of the Indians living east of the Mississippi River and several tribes west of the river had been forced to relocate to what are now the states of Kansas and Oklahoma. They were told that this would be Permanent Indian Territory and that no white settlement would be allowed further west.

Both Presidents Jefferson and Monroe had proposed that the Eastern Indians should trade their ancestral lands for lands west of the Mississippi. They felt that to survive the Indians must become civilized and learn the ways of the white man.

In 1829, Andrew Jackson became President. He felt that the Indians did not have absolute title to the land. On May 28, 1830, Jackson signed into law the Removal Act of 1830. It required the tribes to move to land west of the Mississippi. The United States would "forever secure and guarantee" this land to them and their "heirs or successors."

Nearly 46,000 Indians were moved West in the next few years. Many tribes suffered severe hardships on their journey. The Cherokee, especially, endured many difficulties as they followed a "Trail of Tears" to their new homes.



Trail of Tears

A Line of Forts

Many of the relocated tribes were promised protection by the United States from hostile whites and other Indian tribes that were native to the area, such as the Osage and the Pawnee.

As the removed Indians began to arrive, the white settlers in Missouri and Arkansas also demanded protection from both relocated and native tribes. This situation led to the development of a series of forts that stretched from Minnesota to Louisiana

Forts of the Permanent Indian Frontier

Fort Snelling (1819) *This was the fort furthest north along the frontier. Located in present-day Minneapolis, Minnesota, it was established to keep the British from intruding on the fur trade in territory belonging to the United States.*

Fort Atkinson (1840) *Located in what is now northeast Iowa, the troops here were charged with protecting the Winnebago, who had been relocated from Wisconsin.*

Fort Leavenworth (1827) *Fort Leavenworth was the first fort in Kansas. Soldiers from the fort protected wagon trains along the Oregon and Santa Fe Trails.*

Fort Scott (1842) *Fort Scott provided a vital link between Leavenworth and Gibson and filled a gap in the Permanent Indian Frontier.*

Fort Gibson (1824) *Fort Gibson was established as a buffer between the Cherokee and the Osage. It was located in the heart of the Cherokee nation.*

Fort Smith (1817) *Fort Smith was established on the western border of Arkansas to keep peace between the Osage and the Cherokee.*

Fort Washita (1842) *Located about sixty miles west of Towson, Washita played a key role in the resettlement of the Chickasaw nation.*

Fort Towson (1824) *Established along the Red River in what is now Oklahoma. Soldiers from Fort Towson protected the Choctaw nation.*

Fort Jesup (1822) *Located in Louisiana, Fort Jesup protected the Louisiana-Texas border.*

The Dragoon Expeditions

Dragoon Soldier

Dragoon and infantry soldiers were stationed at Fort Scott. While the infantry constituted the fort's permanent garrison, the dragoons were a highly mobile force needed to patrol the vast distances along the military frontier. They provided armed escorts for parties on the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails, surveyed unmapped country, and maintained contact with Plains Indians. Each summer, from 1843-45, several companies of dragoons, including Company A, 1st U.S. Dragoons, from Fort Scott, participated in military expeditions along the overland trails.

The U.S. Dragoons

The first regiment of United States Dragoons was authorized in 1833. The regiment was originally organized for defense of the Santa Fe Trail and its initial efforts were to pacify the Indian tribes that attacked traders along the trail. As the concept of a Permanent Indian Frontier evolved, the dragoons were dispersed to the various frontier forts.

The dragoons were an elite fighting force, trained to fight both on horseback and on foot. The majority of the dragoon soldiers spoke English and could read and write. Dragoon privates were generally better educated than their infantry counterparts, They were also better paid. Dragoon privates were paid $8.00 a month, as opposed to $7.00 a month for infantry privates.

The requirements for being a dragoon were as follows.

1. Must be between the ages of 18 and 35.
2. Must be a free white male.
3. Must be at least 5 feet, 3 inches high.
4. Must be able bodied and free from disease
5. Must have a knowledge of the English language.
6. Must be sober at the time of enlistment.

The Santa Fe and Texas Freebooters

In 1843, trouble erupted along the Santa Fe Trail, not from Indian attacks, but from Texans.

Ill will existed between Texas and Mexico even before the Texan Revolution of 1836. Prejudice and hatred on both sides, border squabbles, and violence continued into the 1840s. In 1843, Texas "freebooters" began attacking Mexican caravans along the Santa Fe Trail. The dragoons were sent to investigate and to protect the caravans.

Led by Captain Philip St. George Cooke, the dragoons confronted Jacob Snively, who held a commission from Texas to raid Mexican caravans on Mexican soil. Cooke contended that Snively was conducting his affairs on American soil, so he ordered the dragoons to disarm the "freebooters" and send them back to Texas.

March to Pawnee Country

The year 1843 also saw the first significant migration over the Oregon Trail. To strengthen security along the Oregon Trail and to end the fighting between the Pawnee and the Sioux, who were attacking each other across the trail, five companies of dragoons were dispatched to Pawnee country in August of 1844.

The expedition was designed to impress the Pawnee and other tribes with the appearance and weapons of the dragoons. The Pawnee were asked to make a truce with the Sioux and to refrain from horse stealing.

Although at first, the Pawnee refused to comply, they reconsidered after seeing the soldiers firing two mountain howitzers as part of a drill exercise.

54°40" or Fight

Dragoons were sent westward along the Oregon Trail again in 1845, ostensibly to escort wagon trains heading west, but also to place a military force near Oregon in the event of war.

The United States and Britain both laid claim to the Oregon Territory and were unwilling to relinquish. The war cry, "54°40" or Fight", referred to the northern line of latitude of the Oregon Territory. War was averted, but the threat was very real in 1845.

The expedition of 1845 brought the soldiers in contact with several Indian tribes, who were impressed with the appearance and weapons of the dragoons. The dragoons followed the Oregon Trail as far as South Pass, and then returned via the Santa Fe Trail, completing a march of 2200 miles in just 99 days.

The Mexican-American War

The Mexican War was a major factor in the nation's quest for new territory and its ambition to stretch from coast to coast. The war was born out of the smoldering embers in Texas and disputed territory along the Rio Grande. Revolts in California also contributed to the conflict, as well as expansionist thirst for more land. The war essentially consisted of three different campaigns. Soldiers formerly stationed at Fort Scott played a role in each of these.

Zachary Taylor's Army

The United States annexed Texas in 1845. This move angered Mexico because it had never officially recognized Texan independence. General Zachary Taylor was sent to Texas with a large army to provide protection. Two companies of infantry from Fort Scott were included in Taylor's contingent of men.

When Taylor occupied a position on the north banks of the Rio Grande in the spring of 1846, his army proved to be too tempting a target for the Mexican Army. A portion of the Mexican Army crossed the Rio Grande and engaged a body of eighty dragoons, killing eleven of them. Claiming that "American blood had been shed on American soil," President Polk asked Congress for a declaration of war.

Taylor was victorious as he marched through Northern Mexico. His campaign reached its apex at Buena Vista where he defeated a larger Mexican army. He was assisted in this effort by a recently arrived squadron of dragoons that included Company A from Fort Scott.

The Army of the West

To protect the Santa Fe trade and to capture New Mexico, the remaining companies of the 1st Dragoons were ordered to join General Stephen Kearny's Army of the West. This included Company C, which was stationed at Fort Scott from 1842-43.

Kearny reached Bent's Fort in the summer of 1846 and then turned south to Santa Fe. The New Mexicans gave no resistance to Kearny's army. Many believed that American rule would be good for trade and were tired of being neglected by the Mexican government. Santa Fe was captured in August of 1846 without a single shot being fired.

Kearny's next goal was California. It was reported that California was already in the hands of United States forces so Kearny took only a part of his forces. The reports proved to be premature, for when Kearny arrived he found himself facing a well-trained force of California lancers near the village of San Pasqual. His dragoons suffered heavy losses in the ensuing battle.

Kearny reached San Diego on December 11. There he joined forces with a body of marines commanded by Commodore Robert Stockton. With their combined forces, they were able to secure the possession of California for the United States.

Invasion of Mexico City

To prevent a costly land war and an overland march by Taylor, his campaign was halted after Buena Vista. Much of his command was transferred to General Winfield Scott-for whom the fort was named. The infantry units that had once been stationed at Fort Scott now joined General Scott's army as he conducted an amphibious assault on Veracruz.

Battle of San Pasqual

When Kearny arrived at San Pasqual, it was raining and his men had just completed an arduous trek across the desert. Despite their exhaustion, Kearny ordered an early morning attack in hopes of a swift victory. Captain Benjamin Moore-the fort's first commander-led a charge that proved disastrous.

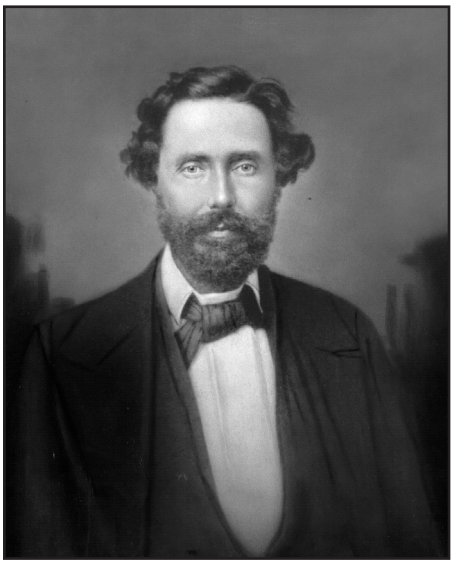
The Californians were ready and surprised them with a counter charge. The dragoons could not fire their weapons because the gunpowder was wet. They were no match for the Californio lancers. When it was over, eighteen dragoons lie dead, including Captain Moore.

After seizing Veracruz in March of 1847, the army commanded by General Scott began its march toward Mexico City. After a series of costly victories (one of which claimed the life of Colonel William Graham, the fort's second commander), Scott's army captured Mexico City on September 13, 1847.

The American victory at Mexico City clinched the outcome of the war. The peace treaty, which was ratified on May 30, 1848, turned the entire Southwest over to the United States.

The Mexican War, combined with the overland migrations and the gold rush of 1849, bought about the fulfillment of "Manifest Destiny." Westward expansion brought about an end to the Permanent Indian Frontier, and led to the abandonment of Fort Scott in 1853.

Bleeding Kansas



James Montgomery

James Montgomery was a Campbellite minister who moved his family to Kansas, so that his children might be raised in an environment free from the institution of slavery. Montgomery became the leader of the free-state opposition in Linn and Bourbon counties when Border Ruffians (radical pro-slavery men) burned his house.

Throughout 1858, Montgomery visited Fort Scott several times.

In February of that year, Montgomery and his men came to arrest several of the "Border Ruffians" under the authority of the Squatter's Court. All of them had fled, however. Failing in their objective, the Free State men settled for free breakfast and left town without further incident.

In June, Montgomery and his men attempted to burn the Western Hotel, a former infantry barracks, and a haven for pro-slavery advocates. This action prompted the territorial governor to come to Fort Scott to attempt to settle the disturbances peaceably.

In December of 1858, Montgomery returned to Fort Scott to break a comrade out of jail. In the ensuing melee, townspeople were ordered out of their homes, shots were fired and John Little was killed.

Fort Scott was abandoned in 1853 by the military. Two years later, the buildings were sold at public auction and the former fort became the nucleus of the new town of Fort Scott. The town quickly became engulfed in the "Bleeding Kansas" controversy. The townspeople were primarily pro-slavery, while the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside were predominantly free-staters. Trouble lurked just around the corner.

Dark Lantern Societies

The first trouble of any significance in Fort Scott came in the summer of 1856 when 30 settlers from South Carolina settled in Bourbon County. These men were suspected members of "Dark Lantern Societies," which were secret groups organized to drive the free-state settlers out of Bourbon County.

The Dark Lantern Societies went around gathering information about the settlers in Bourbon County. They identified those who were free-staters, and began terrorizing them, shooting into their homes, and driving them from their farms. Many free-staters were forced to leave the territory, after which the pro-slavery men took over their claims.

Raids and Retaliation

Raiding, which continued in the autumn of that year, forced more free-staters and pro-slavers to leave their homes and left a wake of destruction in its path. Crops were ruined, livestock were driven off, and household goods were destroyed.

In 1857, the free state men organized resistance to the raids. Several of them supported the efforts of a William Stone, who was attempting to retake a claim he had abandoned the previous year.

Opposing Courts

Further resistance came when Fort Scott became the home of the third judicial district of the United States District Court. Joseph Williams presided over the court, while John Little served as his Deputy Marshal. This court and all its officials were charged with being in full sympathy with the pro-slavery party.

As an act of defiance toward this court, a Squatter's Court led by free-staters was set up to judge disputed claims. Fighting took place when Deputy Marshal Little attempted to disperse this court.

The Military Intervenes

During this period of tension and fighting, the military was sent to Fort Scott three times to restore order: in December of 1857, from February to August of 1858, and from December of 1859 to January of 1861.

The year 1858 was especially turbulent in southeast Kansas. Radical elements from other theaters of the conflict now converged on this area. The free state men gained the upper hand as chaos swirled in and around Fort Scott. Leadership of the free staters fell to one man who was to visit Fort Scott repeatedly that year - James Montgomery.

Peace Convention-Fort Scott, Kansas-June 1858

Civil War on the Border

The violence of the "Bleeding Kansas" years began to subside in 1859 as the free- state forces became more solidly entrenched. Statehood came to the territory of Kansas on January 29, 1861. Citizens who once had adamantly supported slavery either changed their opinion, moved to Missouri, or returned to the Southern states they had come from. The period of peace in Kansas was short-lived as the Civil War brought about a new era of fear and violence along the border.

A Score to Settle

Fear and retaliation characterized the Civil War along the Kansas-Missouri border with each side causing bloodshed and destruction. The violence had its roots in "Bleeding Kansas", where many Missourians had crossed the border to stuff the ballot boxes and otherwise influence the outcome of the decision to make Kansas free or slave.

Free state forces prevailed and Kansas joined the Union as a free state on January 29, 1861. However, smoldering embers of resentment still existed between the residents of Eastern Kansas and Western Missouri. Many Kansans sought revenge and began mustering their forces as the Civil War broke out in Missouri.

War in Missouri

Missourians were divided in their loyalties throughout the war. Many had initially chosen to remain neutral. However, there was a strong secession movement among the Missourians, and many, including the governor, flatly refused Lincoln's call for volunteers. Secession talk ran rampant, the Missouri State Guard was raised, and riotous demonstrations broke out all along the border.

The Federal arsenal at Liberty was seized by secessionists. The Stars and Stripes were torn to shreds in St. Joseph. A train carrying Federal troops crashed over a bridge that had been burned by Southern sympathizers. Battles were fought at Carthage and Wilson's Creek.

Jayhawkers vs. Bushwhackers

With the beginning of the war, regiments of Kansas "Jayhawkers" began conducting raids into Missouri. The intention of these raiders was to destroy the homes and farms of the Missourians who had raided Kansas during the Bleeding Kansas years.

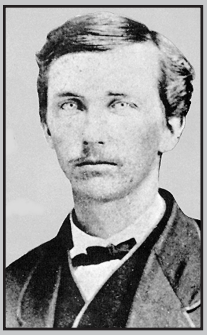
Two notable jayhawkers, as the anti-slavery forces were called, were James Lane and Charles Jennison. In August of 1861, Lane, a U.S. Senator from Kansas, assumed command of three regiments of Kansas volunteers at Fort Scott.

In September of 1861, Lane's Brigade entered Missouri near Trading Post and began to pillage, plunder, and burn everything in sight. The town of Osceola was virtually destroyed. In November of the same year, Charles Jennison led the Seventh Kansas Cavalry on a similar expedition of destruction.

Jayhawking, as this practice was called, seriously hampered the occupation of Missouri by Union forces because it turned many that had chosen to remain neutral into Southern sympathizers.

The next year, "bushwhackers," under the leadership of William Quantrill, began invading Kansas, sacking the towns of Aubry, Olathe, and Shawnee. Federal troops were sent into Missouri to ferret out the bushwhackers and to punish them by attacking their homes and families. This only served to heighten the problem and to increase hostilities. The violence along the Kansas-Missouri border became the most ruthless of the entire war.

Lawrence and Order No. 11



William Quantrill

Lawrence, Kansas was known as the citadel of Kansas abolition. It was the capital of the free-state movement and was home to noted leaders such as Charles Robinson and James Lane. It had been attacked and partially destroyed by Missourians during the "Bleeding Kansas" years and with the beginning of the Civil War, many residents feared that their town would be attacked again.

By 1863, the fear had subsided. The town, after all, was fifty miles from the border and was much too large to be attacked by anything but a sizable force. Surely any such force entering Kansas would be noticed by the border guard who would give Lawrence ample warning.

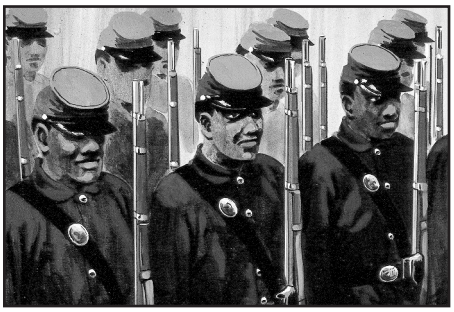
On the morning of August 21, 1863, William Quantrill and 450 men entered Lawrence without warning and proceeded to burn and pillage the hated abolitionist town and to kill its citizens.

The raid on Lawrence heightened the fear that already existed along the border. Several residents of Fort Scott feared that they would be attacked next.

The army issued the infamous Order No. 11, which simply stated that four counties in western Missouri-Jackson, Cass, Bates, and Vernon-would be evacuated

The idea behind this order was to remove the bushwhackers' base of operations. This was successful to some degree, but the order heightened bad feelings, which would fester for many years after the war.

Fort Scott in the Civil War


African-American Soldiers in the Civil War

The battles of Gettysburg, Antietam, Shiloh, Vicksburg and Manassas are all well known in Civil War history. Less well known, but also of significance were the battles of Carthage, Wilson's Creek, Westport (Missouri), Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove (Arkansas), Cabin Creek, Honey Springs (Oklahoma), and Mine Creek (Kansas). These battles shaped the character of the Civil War west of the Mississippi. Union military successes here drew badly needed manpower and resources from other theaters of the war. Fort Scott played a major role in the Union war effort due to the many varied functions it took on during the war.

African-American Soldiers and American Indian Home Guard

One of the most unique things about Fort Scott during the Civil War is that white, African-American, and American Indian troops all camped on its grounds at one time or another.

The first African American troops to join the Union Army from a Northern state were mustered in at Fort Scott on January 13, 1863.

The First Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment compiled a proud combat record. It participated in the battles of:

Island Mound; Butler, Missouri
Reeder Farm; Sherwood, Missouri
Cabin Creek, Indian Territory
Honey Springs, Indian Territory
Poison Springs, Arkansas
Flat Rock Creek, Indian Territory
Timber Hills, Indian Territory

American Indians also were present at Fort Scott. Three regiments of Indian Home Guards were raised in this area. Sixteen are buried in the National Cemetery. They are:

Deer in Water
Set Them Up
Stick-Out-Belly
Dave
Joseph Drinker
Jon Binche
James Cunningham
Woodard
Rich'D Hand
Coming Deer
Johnson Springston
Parhosa
Young Chicken
Isaac Ord
Chas. Fleetwood
Henry Vaun

The Military Returns

Almost ten years after Fort Scott was abandoned as a U.S. Army post, the military reversed this decision. The post of Fort Scott was officially reestablished in March 1862, although, for all practical purposes, the Union presence existed from the beginning of the Civil War.

With the surrender of Fort Sumter, President Lincoln requested 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion. Two companies of volunteers were formed at Fort Scott on May 1, although only a few kept their patriotic ardor and enlisted at Lawrence.

It wasn't long before the U.S. Army recognized the strategic location of Fort Scott. In July, war came home to the people as refugees from Missouri and southern Kansas began to relocate in Fort Scott. Word was soon received that Governor Robinson was ordering a considerable militia force to be stationed in the town and that Fort Scott was to be an advanced supply depot for troops operating in Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory.

Fort Scott was soon to witness growth and prosperity due to the Army's demand for forage, workmen, and living quarters. By the end of 1861, around 6,000 troops were residing at Fort Scott awaiting the coming of spring and the renewing of hostilities.

The Many Hats of Fort Scott

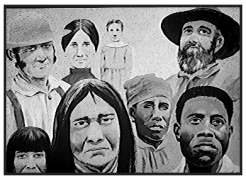
Throughout the conflict, Fort Scott served as a key Union defense along the Kansas-Missouri border. Fort Scott performed many functions in supporting the war effort.

Fort Scott was a center of recruiting and training activities for many companies and regiments formed and mustered into federal service. Serving as a troop assembly and concentration point, large numbers of supply trains heading south to reinforce Union soldiers were escorted and guarded by cavalry troops and infantry companies.

Constant warfare led to the displacement of thousands of people-refugees from Arkansas, Missouri, and Indian Territory (Oklahoma). Former slaves, free blacks, displaced whites, and Indians all sought refuge in the vicinity of Fort Scott.

During the war years, Fort Scott also housed prisoners of war and provided care for the sick and wounded from both sides. It contained a large military prison, a general U.S. Army hospital and one of the 14 original National (military) Cemeteries.

The support provided by Fort Scott made the Union task of thwarting Confederate activity in Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory (Oklahoma) much easier.


Civil War Refugees

Railroad Expansion

The 1860s was a time of great transition and development for the West, largely due to the railroads. Faster and safer transportation brought a rapid influx of settlers to the plains, which would in turn increase the demand for railroads, which would bring more settlers and so on. The mileage of track laid in Kansas increased from 71 miles in 1865 to 1,234 in 1870 to 8,763 in 1890. The flurry of railroad construction bought the final phase of military occupation to Fort Scott, Kansas.

Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf locomotive

The Border Tier Railroad

The military activity in Fort Scott during the Civil War fostered growth and economic development in town. When the troops left, the town leaders sought ways to keep the economy strong. The avenue that they pursued most earnestly was bringing a railroad to town.

One project that the town's leaders found particularly attractive was the Border Tier Railroad. The owners of this railroad planned to build south from Kansas City, along the state border, and down to Indian Territory. They hoped to build all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, and tap into its resources. The Border Tier made good progress and tracks had reached Fort Scott by December 7, 1869. But as construction began south of town, the railroad workers started encountering resistance.

The Land League

The lands south of town had originally belonged to the Cherokee Nation. Squatters began moving onto these lands before the Cherokee Nation sold them to the Federal government in 1866. More settlers followed, but by 1868, they still did not have legal title to this land. The railroad was able to buy up title to a significant portion of it.

Facing the prospect of losing their land, settlers banned together to form a Land League to resist the coming of the railroad. In May of 1869, they attacked a survey crew, burned their equipment and told them to get out. In July, they attacked a construction camp and notified the workers of plans to burn them out.

Post of Southeast Kansas

The federal government responded by sending soldiers to the area to protect the railroad workers. The Post of Southeast Kansas was created on January 14, 1870, with its headquarters in the town of Fort Scott. The troops, however, were stationed in camps along the right of way.

The presence of the troops angered the settlers further. They considered the soldiers to be the puppets of the railroads and viewed them with distrust. They had originally asked for military protection for themselves and now felt betrayed that the troops were protecting the railroad instead. The military presence discouraged further attacks against the railroad workers. Relative peace settled in but the tension still existed and flared up occasionally.

The Railroad's Legacy

The Border Tier railroad provided Fort Scott with a railroad tie to the East. It and subsequent railroads made Fort Scott an important trade center in southeast Kansas.

The railroad years of 1869-73 marked the end of military involvement at Fort Scott. Thus ended an era that had spanned three decades and had witnessed the transformation of Fort Scott from an isolated frontier outpost to a developing trade center. More importantly, it was an era in which Fort Scott was involved in several events that brought about the opening, settlement and development of the West.

Race to Indian Territory

To reach the Gulf of Mexico from Kansas required going through Indian Territory. To build in Indian Territory required the permission of the tribes that lived there. The Cherokee tribe granted right of passage for one railroad to build through their land. Congress specified that the first railroad to reach the northern boundary of the Indian Territory would be the one that could build on Cherokee land.

This condition set off a race to Indian Territory between two railroads: The Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad or Border Tier Railroad, and the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, also known as the Katy. For a while it seemed the Border Tier would win, but when they reached Baxter Springs, they encountered the trickery of the Katy Railroad.

Quapaw land lay to the south of Baxter Springs. Katy infiltrators led Border Tier officials to believe that Quapaw land was part of the Cherokee Nation and that the Border Tier would be able to build through it. Unfortunately, no such right of passage existed.

Some outdated boundary markers contributed to the belief among Border Tier officials that the border of Indian Territory would be reached at Baxter Springs. As the railroad progressed, they began letting workers go, thinking that victory was sure. When Baxter Springs was reached, Cherokee associates of the Katy cheered the Border Tier's victory. A celebration followed and by the time the deception was realized, workers had scattered and precious time had been lost. The Katy won the race!

Resource Protection

One of the missions of the National Park Service is to protect and preserve the resources. You can help us fulfil this goal by observing these regulations:

1. Eat only in designated areas. No food or drink in buildings.
2. Do not collect grasses, flowers, or historic artifacts. Leave historic artifacts where you find them and notify a ranger.
3. Help us to protect our new sod and prairie grasses. Stay on existing walkways and avoid areas that are roped off or flagged.
4. Remain outside of barricaded areas. Reaching in or leaning over barricades will set off security alarms.
5. Sliding down bannisters and climbing on walls, wagons, artillery pieces, and other features is prohibited.

Suggested Reading (for students)

- **Fort Scott: Courage and Conflict on the Border**, *Leo Oliva*, KS State Historical Society*
- **Native Americans of the West**, *ed. by Carter Smith,* Millbrook Press
- **Conquest of the West**, *ed. by Carter Smith*, Millbrook Press
- **Exploring the West**, *William H. Goetzmann*, National Park Service*
- **Indian, Soldier and Settler**, *Robert Utley*, National Park Service
- **U.S. Dragoons: Men at Arms Series**, *John Langellier*, Stackpole Books*
- **Overland Migrations**, *David Lavender*, National Park Service*
- **Santa Fe Trail National Historical Trail**, *Mark Gardner*, Southwest Parks and Monuments*
- **Santa Fe Trail: Story Behind the Scenery**, *Dan Murphy*, KC Publications*
- **Oregon Trail: Story Behind the Scenery,** *Dan Murphy,* KC Publications*
- **Mexican War: Manifest Destiny,** *Alden Carter*, Franklin Watts
- **Mexican War**, *Otis Singletary*, University of Chicago Press
- **Prelude to War**, *ed. by Carter Smith*, Millbrook Press
- **A Nation Torn: The Story of How the Civil War Began**, *Delia Ray*, Penguin Books
- **Civil War: American Tragedy,** *Alden Carter*, Franklin Watts
- **Civil War in the Ozarks**, *Steve Cottrell and Phillip Steele*, Pelican Publishing*
- **Civil War in the Indian Territory**, *Steve Cottrell*, Pelican Publishing*
- **Common Soldier**, *James I. Robinson*, Eastern National Parks and Monuments*

* This title is sold at the site.

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