

Fort Riley Driving Tour

The buildings that encompass Fort Riley's historic district were, for the most part, constructed from limestone quarried in the area. The first construction at this post began in the summer of 1853 and within five years the basic outline of "old" Fort Riley took shape around a central parade field. Three sets of officers' quarters stood on the north and south side of the field with three sets of enlisted barracks on the east and west sides. A post hospital (today's U. S. Cavalry Museum) was built to the east side of the parade field. To the south and west of this field were constructed stables and other buildings to be used for quartermaster storage and other support. A flagpole stood in the center of the parade field. This remained the basic lay out of the fort until the mid-1880s when the Army decided to establish the Cavalry and Light Artillery School at this post.

The buildings followed basic quartermaster designs and the stone was cut in a style known as a "pasture cut". This is characterized by a smooth surface.

Beginning in 1885 and continuing for the next three decades — as funding was available — the quarters and buildings that make up the historic Main Post were constructed. The buildings' exteriors are different in that the stone is a "rough" edge, which is sometimes referred to as a hammered stone.

Your tour will include the historic Main Post area as well as a drive through the Camp Whitside and Camp Funston areas.

We hope you enjoy your driving tour and come to appreciate and enjoy the rich history that is Fort Riley.

1. Custer House (24-A Sheridan Avenue)



Begin your driving tour by leaving the U. S. Cavalry Museum (Building 205) and turning left on to Sheridan¹ Avenue. You will drive past a small traffic island on your right. In its center a monument was erected in 1942 to the officers and enlisted men captured on the Philippines Islands in the early days of World War II. The Monument is dedicated to the 26th Cavalry Regiment.

As you proceed down the avenue, stop at the white picket fence in front of Quarters 24 — also known as Custer House. This building was constructed in 1855 at a cost of \$3500 and is the only surviving set of officers' quarters dating from the fort's establishment.

At one time, it was believed Lieutenant Colonel George Custer² and his wife lived in the A-side of these quarters. Subsequent research revealed the Custers actually occupied Quarters 21A which has undergone extensive renovation and is still used as quarters today. Contrary to some stories about Custer, he did not leave from Fort Riley and go to the Little Big Horn.

The Custer House, Quarters 24-A, was officers' housing until March 1974. It is now part of the U.S. Cavalry Museum and is open daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day and on weekends during early May and September. Special group tours may also be arranged through the Public Affairs Office. The quarters are furnished to reflect the lifestyle of the late 1870s and early 1880s. The other half of these quarters was used as officers' housing until March 1984. Today, groups may rent this side for meetings and receptions through the Historical and Archaeological Society of Fort Riley.

¹ Named for General Philip Sheridan (1831-1888) who was instrumental in securing Congressional funding for establishment of a Cavalry and Light Artillery School at Fort Riley in the 1880s. The school began operation in 1893.

² LTC George A. Custer (1839-1876) was the flamboyant and controversial commander of the 7th U. S. Cavalry Regiment. Along with 266 of his men, Custer died at the Battle of the Little Big Horn on 26 June 1876. The Custers lived at Fort Riley from November 1866 to the summer of 1867.

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2. Old Trooper Monument and Chief's Grave (Sheridan and Forsyth avenues)



At the intersection of Sheridan Avenue and Forsyth³ Avenue stands the “Old Trooper” monument, which was dedicated in 1961. An untitled pen and ink sketch drawn by Western artist Frederick Remington in 1898 inspired the statue. The life-size horse and rider were built of chemically treated plastic, using materials supplied by the Historical and Archaeological Society of Fort Riley. The original sketch is part of the U. S. Cavalry Museum’s art collection and is displayed in the Cavalry Museum.

Chief, the last cavalry mount registered to the U.S. government, is buried upright in front of the monument. The bay gelding was foaled in 1932 and entered the Army eight years later at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. He arrived at Fort Riley on April 3, 1941, and served with the 9th and 10th Cavalry units. In June 1942 he was transferred to the Cavalry School and retired in July 1953. He died on May 24, 1968, symbol of a bygone area.

To the left of the Old Trooper Monument is a large rock which has a plaque attached commemorating the centennial of the 2d U. S. Cavalry Regiment. This event occurred in the summer of 1936. At that time, the Regiment supported the operation of the Cavalry School.

3. Officers' Row (Forsyth Avenue)



Turn right on to Forsyth Avenue, which is the street running from the Old Trooper Monument to the Commanding General’s quarters. This street is known as “Officers’ Row”. In these dozen homes, built between 1887 and 1903, live many of the post’s senior officers and commanders.

Construction on this street began in 1887 with quarters 7, 8, 11, and 12. This was followed in 1889 with construction of quarters 15, 16, and 17. The construction dates for the remainder of the homes are Quarters 9 and 10 (1890); 13 and 14 (1894); 18 (1903). The quarters were patterned after standard Quartermaster plans of the period but these evolved from popular blueprints for homes being constructed on a grand scale in the civilian world. Some of the quarters’ gables retain remnants of ornate woodwork. The homes are all duplexes.

Many officers who resided in these homes later became American military heroes in World War Two. Among the more famous were Jonathan Wainwright⁴, Ernie Harmon⁵, H.H. “Hap” Arnold⁶ and Terry Allen⁷.

³ Named for Colonel James A. Forsyth (1836-1906) who commanded the 7th U. S. Cavalry in the late 1880s and was the first commandant of the Cavalry and Light Artillery School.

⁴ Wainwright (1883-1953) was the son of an army officer and descended from a line of distinguished naval officers. He graduated from West Point in 1906 and was commissioned in the cavalry. He graduated from the Mounted Service School in 1916. During World War I he served with the 82nd Infantry Division. Following the war, he served as an instructor at the Cavalry School. He returned to Fort Riley during the 1930s. He was the senior field commander of American forces in the Philippines at the outbreak of World War II. His command was eventually forced to surrender and he was held as a prisoner of war until 1945.

⁵ Ernest N. Harmon (1894 -1979) graduated from West Point in 1917 and received his commissioned in cavalry. He graduated from the Cavalry School in 1921. In World War II he commanded the 2nd Armored Division and 1st Armored Division. After the war he commanded the U. S. Constabulary forces in occupied territory.

⁶ Henry H. “Hap” Arnold (1886-1950) graduated from West Point in 1907. Between 1926 and 1928, he commanded Marshal Field at Fort Riley. During World War II he was instrumental in creating what became the U. S. Air Force.

⁷ Terry de la Mesa Allen (1888-1969) was commissioned as a cavalry officer upon his graduation from West Point in 1912. He attended the Cavalry School in the 1920s. During World War II he commanded the 1st Infantry Division in North Africa and Italy.

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4. Commanding General's Quarters (1 Barry⁷ Avenue)



Quarters Number 1 was built in 1887 as the home of the Fort Riley's commanding officer. The single family home was constructed at a cost of almost \$9,500. The quarters consist of approximately 8,000 square feet. The first occupant was Colonel (later Major General) James Forsyth. The third-floor balcony gave him a clear view of his troops drilling on the Cavalry Parade Field. A staircase in the hall is yellow pine detailed with rosewood panels and cherry balusters. This is the private residence of the current commanding general. Original features of the commander's home included a library, sleeping porches, servants' rooms and a third-floor ballroom.

Names of all the occupants of Quarters 1 are listed on a plaque inside. It includes former Chief of Staff of the Army, General Gordon Sullivan and Major General Thomas Rhame who commanded the 1st Infantry Division during the Gulf War in 1990-91.

We ask that you please drive by the quarters without stopping.

Fort Riley Trivia

During the 1850s, Fort Riley was the home station for Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, Captain's John Buford and Lewis Armistead (who fought on opposite sides at Gettysburg), Captain Nathaniel Lyon (the first Union General killed during the Civil War at the Battle of Wilson's Creek), and First Lieutenant James Ewell "JEB" Stuart.

LTC Robert E. Lee was at Fort Riley for court martial duty in the first week of November 1855. The following week, Lieutenant Jeb Stuart married Flora Cooke at the post.

Contrary to some historical accounts, Custer and the Seventh Cavalry did not leave from Fort Riley for the Little Big Horn.

The only President's to visit Fort Riley while in office were Theodore Roosevelt in 1903 and Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1943.



5. Sturgis Stadium and Tuttle Park

Turn right down Barry⁸ Avenue and drive past Sturgis⁹ Stadium on



your right and Tuttle Park¹⁰ on the left. The field was named in honor of the Sturgis family which boasted three generations of Army officers. It was originally used as a training area for the 1936 U. S. Olympic Equestrian Team and in more recent years has been converted to a football field where spirited contests are held each November to determine the post championship.

⁸ Named for Chaplain Thomas Barry (1861?-1904) who served at Fort Riley in the 1890s, was instrumental in securing funds to build the Main Post Chapel.

⁹ The Sturgis family included Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis who served in the Army during the Civil War; Major General Samuel D. Sturgis who served from 1884 to 1925 and commanded the 87th Division during World War I; and Lieutenant General Samuel D. Sturgis, III, who as a first lieutenant of Troop A, 9th Engineers (Mounted) from 1929 to 1932 converted the area into a stadium. He served as Chief of Engineers before retiring in 1956.

¹⁰ Tuttle Park is named for Colonel Hiram Tuttle who served at Fort Riley during the 1930s and trained Army officers. In this area, horse shows were held. Still visible are several of the horse jumps.

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6. Schofield Circle, Artillery Parade Field, and Quarters 100 (Schofield Circle)

Schofield Circle and the Artillery Parade Field encompass an area developed and used by artillery units assigned to the Cavalry and Light Artillery School and Mounted Service School. The horseshoe-shaped circle of quarters is named for Lieutenant General John Schofield, who served as General of the Army from 1888 to 1895. The quarters were built between 1887 and 1903 to accommodate officers attached to the school. Across the parade field are barracks for enlisted soldiers. Note the building on the right side of the parade field which has parapets. Constructed in 1889, this structure served as the artillery administration building and is named in honor of Brevet Major General George A. Custer. The parade field was designated as the Artillery Parade Field in 1967.



In 1887, there were separate posts for the cavalry and the artillery. This home was built in that year for the Artillery Post's commanding officer. It is basically a twin to the commanding general's quarters at 1 Barry Avenue. The quarters were constructed at a cost of nearly \$8,500. The third-floor balcony in this home gave the artillery commander a clear view of his troops drilling on the parade field.

Prominent features include the original picture molding on the first floor, a library at the north end of the living room and a rosewood banister.

In front of these quarters is Drumfire Park which features "Old Thunder", a replica of a six pound British Model 1764 cannon. There is also displayed a three inch ordnance rifle. This weapon was developed in the years prior to the Civil War. General George Meade, commander of Union forces at Gettysburg, had 360 of these pieces for the battle.

A brief stop in front of these quarters and park affords a grand view of the parade field where soldiers trained and passed in review. In the distant are the rolling hills that are the beginnings of the Kansas River Valley.

Proceed down Schofield Circle and turn left onto Godfrey¹¹ Avenue. In this general area during World War I, ten two-story frame buildings were constructed along with a central mess hall. During the 1920s this area was turned into family quarters. The remodeled apartments housed forty families who had on average three children each. Local residents came to affectionately refer to Godfrey Court as "Goofey Court" and represented a unique way of family life.

All of the buildings were connected with each other with a wide covered passageway through which stretcher cases, wheelchairs and food carts had once passed. Godfrey Court thundered with the sound of children on tricycles, bicycles and roller skates during these years as families passed on their way to meals in the mess hall. In the 1930s, Godfrey Court was torn down to make way for the family quarters you see today.

Follow this road to the next stop sign, which is adjacent to Riley's Community Center. The grounds around the event center were used as a golf course during the 1940s through the 1960s.

At the stop sign, turn left on to Seitz¹² Drive and follow this road back to Huebner Road. Turn right on Huebner. Your next stop is Wyman Park and Locomotive #6072.

¹¹ Named for Brigadier General Edward S. Godfrey (1843-1932). He served as Commandant of the Cavalry and Light Artillery School in the first decade of the 20th century.

¹² Named for Brigadier General Andy Seitz (1908-1986), a native Kansan who entered the Army in 1930. In the late 1950s he commanded the 1st Infantry Division Artillery commander and also served as post commander in the late 1960s. General Seitz was a great booster of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley.

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7. Wyman Park¹³ and Locomotive #6072 (Huebner Road and Dickman¹⁴ Avenue)



This pleasant wooded spot was a picnic grounds and recreational area long before its official dedication as a park. The Fort Riley Non-Commissioned Officers Association bought the recreation equipment for the park which was dedicated in the summer of 1958. It is named for General Willard G. Wyman, a former 1st Infantry Division assistant commander who landed with the troops during the D-Day invasion of Normandy. The 1st Engineer Battalion landscaped the area and built the tables, benches and fences in 1958.



Locomotive #6072 symbolizes the importance of the railroads in the development of the West. The railroad arrived at Fort Riley in the fall of 1866. The Union Pacific Railroad donated this 110 ton locomotive to Fort Riley in February 1958. The engine was built as a coal steam engine in 1908 and converted to an oil-burner in 1941. The engine was used on mid-western rail lines for nearly a half century before coming to Fort Riley.

8. First Territorial Capitol of Kansas (Kansas Highway 18-Huebner Road)



The first Kansas Territorial Legislature met in this building from July 2-6, 1855. The settlement was originally called Pawnee. How this settlement came to be within the boundaries of Fort Riley is a long and twisted tale. Military and civilian officials were involved in land speculation, hoping the site would become the state capital. But the legislators who came here were divided over the question of how to organize the territory and adjourned never to return. This brief meeting was but a foreshadowing of the bitter power struggle that would simmer and eventually erupt between pro- and anti-slavery

forces within the territory and later, across the nation.

Shortly thereafter, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis ordered the town site be incorporated into the Fort Riley reservation. While soldiers were sent to pull down the walls of the houses, they spared the capitol building. It later became a carpenter shop, living quarters and military storehouse.

Across the road from the Territorial Capitol, the 7th U. S. Cavalry bivouacked when first organized at Fort Riley in the fall of 1866.

Neglected over the years, the building eventually fell into ruin and disrepair. In the late 1920s, the Kansas State Historical Society, the Kansas legislature and the Union Pacific Railway took measures to restore the structure. It reopened in August 1928, and stands today as a symbol of the early struggle for the ideas of equality and freedom for all. The building is maintained by the Kansas State Historical Society and Friends of the First Territorial Capitol. The facility is open only on weekends and by appointment during the weekdays. Admission is free.

¹³ General Willard G. Wyman (1898-1969) was assistant commander of the 1st Infantry Division on D-Day and later commanded the 71st Division in World War II, and IX Corps in the Korean Conflict. Wyman established the Big Red One's forward command post beyond Normandy Beach with the code-name "Danger Forward".

¹⁴ Named for General Joseph T. Dickman (1857-1927) who was one of the first students at the Cavalry and Light Artillery School in 1893. In World War I he commanded the 3rd Division and later IV and I Corps.

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9. Camp Funston (Kansas Highway 18-Huebner Road)

More than 50,000 men trained at Camp Funston for World War I. The camp was named for Brigadier General Frederick L. Funston¹⁵, a native Kansan who distinguished himself during the Philippine Insurrection in the early years of the 20th century.

The camp was one of sixteen division sized training sites established across the nation as we entered World War I in the spring of 1917. Approximately 1,400 buildings and twenty-nine miles of paved streets were built at a cost of \$10 million. The camp also included fourteen infirmaries, fifteen YMCAs and four large theaters. Soldiers from the Great Plains came here for training. These soldiers initially carried wooden rifles. Eventually, the 89th and elements of the 92nd Division deployed from here for the battlefields of France. The 10th Division trained here but the war came to an end before they were shipped overseas.

Major General Leonard Wood¹⁶ commanded the camp.

Some historians attribute Camp Funston as the site where the great flu epidemic first broke out in the spring and fall of 1918, however there is evidence reported by the Fort Riley Museum director, Dr. Robert Smith that this may not be true. The lives of over a thousand soldiers were eventually claimed during these outbreaks.

In the early 1920s, the camp was torn down and the lumber sold at public auction. The campsite became a maneuver area.

As war clouds gathered in the late 1930s, Camp Funston was rebuilt and again used for training. In the early years of the war, it was the home of the 2nd Cavalry Division. In the decades following the war, the camp was used by the 10th Infantry Division and 1st Infantry Division. The buildings of the second Camp Funston have been replaced and today this area is used as a maintenance equipment site for the Kansas National Guard and Army Reserve as well as a rail shipment point for the Army.

10. Great War Memorial (Kansas Highway 18-Huebner Road)



Turn right down a paved drive which becomes a circular one around the Great War Memorial. This memorial honors the soldiers who trained at Camp Funston for World War I. The monument was erected within a month following Armistice Day in November 1918. Major General Leonard Wood ordered the monument to be built to the memory of the soldiers who trained at this camp. The monument's inscription reads, "To the men who trained at Camp Funston for the Great War 1917-1919".

The 89th Division was organized here in August 1917 and was shipped overseas in May 1918. They won streamers for St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne and Lorraine campaigns. More than 7,000 of the division's men were killed or wounded. The 92nd Division was organized in October 1917 and earned battle honors for campaigns in the Meuse-Argonne and Lorraine.

The 10th Infantry Division was also formed here, but was still in training when the war ended. This division demobilized in February 1919 without ever seeing combat.

You will want to turn around at this site and return to Huebner Road. At the stop sign, turn left and head back towards Main Post.

¹⁵ Frederick L. Funston (1865-1917) was born in Ohio and later attended the University of Kansas. During the Spanish-American War he commanded the 20th Kansas Volunteer Regiment. Sent to the Philippines, he saw action against Philippine insurgents led by Emilio Aguinaldo. He later captured Aguinaldo.

¹⁶ Leonard Wood (1860-1927) earned a medical degree from Harvard and became an army assistant surgeon in 1886. He took part in the expedition against Geronimo. Serving as a medical and a line officer, Wood distinguished himself in battle and in March 1898 was awarded a Medal of Honor. He became White House physician to President Cleveland and continued in this post under McKinley. A close friendship developed with Theodore Roosevelt and in May 1898 they organized the 1st Volunteer Cavalry Regiment. His promotion to major general in 1903 aroused controversy which seemed to follow him throughout his career. Upon our entry into World War I, he was passed over for field command although he was the senior officer in the army.

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11. Major General Leonard Wood Headquarters (Kansas Highway 18-Huebner Road)



Your next stop is a short distance down Huebner Road and on your right. Stone foundations are all that remain of the quarters used by Major General Leonard Wood when he commanded Camp Funston in World War I. From atop this hill, a grand view of the camp awaits the visitor who has the energy to climb the steps.

A bronze plaque is affixed to the fireplace of the old headquarters and commemorates Wood's leadership. The plaque reads simply: "Headquarters Site, Major General Leonard Wood, Commanding General Camp Funston, 1917-1918."

12. Packer's Camp (Building 1020-Huebner Road)



Fort Riley's Pack Train Station was established in 1901 when H. W. Daly, Chief Packer of the Army, arrived at the post with four pack trains from Cuba. The building was built in 1911 as quarters for the packers. Packers, muleskinners and blacksmiths called this building home.

The small building to the rear was constructed in 1914 as a blacksmith shop. A large stable once stood here but it was dismantled in 1948.

As you drive past this building you will cross a small creek known as Three Mile Creek. The name derives from the fact that this stream is approximately three miles from the center of the Main Post Parade Field.

13. Camp Whitside and Irwin Army Hospital (Kansas Highway 18 – Huebner Road)

In the early years of this century, Army and National Guard troops bivouacked along this open stretch. During World War I, the area was used as a Medical Officers' Training Camp. The camp was named in honor of Colonel Warren W. Whitside¹⁷ who, as Post Quartermaster in 1924, supervised the construction of a training area for National Guard soldiers. The camp originally consisted of mess halls, latrines and other semi-permanent facilities. In 1940 wooden buildings were erected and the area became a center for troop medical care. These buildings continued to be utilized for medical care until the late



1970s when they were torn down. The site is now home to Whitside Fitness Center and Irwin Army Community Hospital.

The original Irwin Army Community hospital was dedicated in 1958 and named in honor of Brigadier General and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, Bernard John Dowling Irwin¹⁸ who was the first regimental surgeon for the 7th U. S. Cavalry. The original facility was torn down and a new facility located near the original opened in 2015. The new hospital retained the same name. It serves the Fort Riley community and retirees within a forty mile radius of the post.

¹⁷ Whitside's father, Samuel M. Whitside (1839-1904), founded Fort Huachuca and was later stationed at Fort Riley. Colonel Whitside was commissioned in the infantry in 1899 and later transferred to the cavalry. In 1917 he was made 89th Division Quartermaster at Camp Funston and served with this unit in France. He returned to Fort Riley following the war. Whitside was instrumental in moving the Wounded Knee monument to its present location and in erecting the third Ogden Monument. He later commanded the Front Royal Remount Depot from 1934 until his retirement in 1939.

¹⁸ Bernard J. D. Irwin (1830-1917) entered the Army in 1856 as an Assistant Surgeon. He was recognized for his bravery with the Medal of Honor when he took command of troops and defeated a party of hostile Apaches at Apache Pass, Arizona Territory in February 1861.

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Just past the hospital is One Mile Creek – so named because it is approximately one mile from the Main Post Parade Field. As you drive on you will notice redbrick buildings, which were constructed in the 1930s. You will also pass a structure that is really not in keeping with the architectural style of the post. This is the “Scrap House” which was constructed from discarded building materials from the World War I era. During the 1920s and 1930s, this building was used as quarters by the post fire chief and his family. It is junior officer quarters today.

14. Summerall Hall (Building 500-Huebner Road)



This building was used as the post hospital from 1888 to 1948. The building was constructed in three stages between 1888 and 1909. During World War I the structure was part of a 50-building complex known as “Section K,” the surgical services section of Fort Riley’s large hospital. In 1948 the building was remodeled and became post headquarters. On June 8, 1956, it was named in honor of General Charles P. Summerall¹⁹. He commanded the 1st Infantry Division three times: from July to October 1918; from September 1919 to April 1920; and from July 1920 to July 1921. He later became the Army’s Chief of Staff.

Located in front of the building is Ware Memorial Parade Field. This area is named for Major General Keith Ware, who commanded the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam and was killed in action in 1968.

Across the street are red brick buildings, which were constructed in the 1930s.

As you drive past Post Headquarters, you will encounter a stoplight. A right hand turn takes you to Custer Hill, which is where the tactical units assigned to Fort Riley are located. You will want to continue through this stoplight.

The five limestone buildings located on your right hand side of the road were constructed shortly before World War I to further accommodate officers’ and their families while on assignment at the Mounted Service School.

15. St. Mary’s and Main Post Chapels (Barry Avenue)



Located to your left are two churches. The more visible one from Huebner Road is the Main Post Chapel, constructed in 1897-98. This building was erected to better serve the religious needs of the soldiers assigned to Fort Riley as part of the Cavalry and Light Artillery School. Chaplain Thomas Barry secured donations and funding for completion of this chapel which was formally dedicated on July 4, 1897.

The smaller chapel behind the Main Post Chapel is known as St. Mary’s Chapel and was completed in 1861. This is the first stone chapel erected in Kansas. Lieutenant James Ewell Brown “Jeb” Stuart²⁰ probably helped raise money to construct this church. St. Mary’s saw use as a depot during the Civil War and later a school. The chapel became a Catholic Chapel in 1938.

¹⁹ Charles Summerall (1867-1955) was one of the original commanders of the 1st Infantry Division and was the founder of the Society of the First Division. Born near Lake City, Florida on 4 March 1867, he graduated from the U. S. Military Academy (Class of 1892). In World War I, he served as Commander of the 1st Infantry Division and from 1926 to 1930 as the Army’s Chief of Staff. During his career he earned a reputation as a brilliant artillery tactician and a great military leader.

²⁰ Lieutenant “Jeb” Stuart (1833-1864) served at Fort Riley in the late 1850s with the 1st U. S. Cavalry Regiment. During his assignment here, he married Flora Cooke, daughter of LTC Philip St. George Cooke, commander of the 2d U. S. Dragoons. The marriage took place on 14 November 1855 which may have been attended by Joseph Johnston and Robert E. Lee who finished court-martial duty at the fort only two days prior to the wedding.

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16. Quarters 123 (Kansas Highway 18 - Huebner Road)



The home at 123 Huebner Road was built in 1855 as a residence for the post chaplain. It has smooth-cut limestone foundation and walls indicative of the architectural style of the pre-Civil War era and includes thirteen foot high ceilings. The first occupant was Chaplain Daniel Clarkson, who served the spiritual needs of the post for seven years. He and his family cared for many of the victims of the 1855 cholera epidemic. A court-martial board met in this structure in October-November 1855 to hear charges against Dr. James Simons²¹ who abandoned his post during this cholera outbreak. Serving on that board included Colonels Joseph Johnston²² and Robert E. Lee²³ and Major John Sedgwick²⁴.

17. Buffalo Corral (Kansas Highway 18 - Huebner Road)



Thousands of buffalo once roamed the Great Plains but by the end of the 19th century the species was nearly extinct. Most of the surviving animals were in game preserves or private parks. In 1957, Fort Riley Commander, Major General David H. Buchanan decided that buffalo should again take up residence here. Assisted by Junction City civic groups, a small herd was obtained from the Broadmoor Hotel Corral in Colorado Springs. The animals were brought here in

February 1958 but today there are no longer any buffalo on post. The area is now used as a dog park.

More Fort Riley Trivia

Since its establishment, Fort Riley has been the home to many famous units. The Second Cavalry (re-designated the Fourth Cavalry in 1861) was stationed here during the 1850s. The Seventh Cavalry, under the command of LTC George A. Custer, was formed here in the fall of 1866. The Sixteenth Infantry Regiment was garrisoned at Fort Riley from 1877 to 1880. In the early 1880s, the Ninth Cavalry (one of the Buffalo Soldier regiments) was assigned here.

In this century, the Second and Fourteenth Cavalry Regiment's supported the Cavalry School. The Tenth, Eight-Ninth and Ninety-Second Divisions trained at Camp Funston in World War I. During the early days of World War II, the Ninth Armored Division was activated on the Cavalry Parade Field. Soldiers were trained here during the Korean War by the Tenth Infantry Division. The First Infantry Division was assigned to Riley in 1955. In June 1999, headquarters of the Twenty-fourth Infantry Division were reactivated

²¹ Dr. Simons was dismissed from the Army as a result of the court-martial hearing.

²² Joseph E. Johnston (1807-1891) graduated from West Point in 1829. His pre-Civil War career included service in the artillery as well as campaigns in the Seminole and Mexican Wars. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he became the highest-ranking regular army officer to resign and join the Confederacy. At the time of the court-martial, he was serving with the 1st Cavalry Regiment.

²³ Robert E. Lee (1807-1870) was a classmate of Joseph Johnston at West Point. In 1855 he was posted as lieutenant colonel to Texas with newly formed 2nd Cavalry Regiment. Most of his duties during this time involved serving on court-martial panels.

²⁴ John Sedgwick (1813-1864) was affectionately called "Uncle John" by his troops during the Civil War. An 1837 West Point graduate, Sedgwick was originally posted to the artillery, fought in the Seminole War and was involved in the Trail of Tears episode. He earned two brevets in the Mexican War. When the mounted branch expanded in 1855, he transferred for promotion purposes. He served in "Bleeding Kansas", on the Mormon Expedition as well as several Indian campaigns.

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18. Ogden Monument (Huebner Road)



This monument honors Brevet Major Edmund A. Ogden, who oversaw the construction of Fort Riley. Ogden was born in Oswego County, New York on February 20, 1811. As a youth, he desired to pursue a military career and devote himself to the service of his country. He accomplished this goal by being appointed to the United States Military Academy and earning a commission as an infantry officer in 1827. In the following two decades, Ogden served at remote frontier posts ranging from Wisconsin and Illinois to Minnesota and Missouri. He also saw service in the Seminole War and the Canadian Border disturbances in the late 1830s.

He transferred to the Quartermaster Department and after the Mexican War was stationed on the frontier. In this capacity, he oversaw the initial planning and construction efforts at Fort Riley. Ogden, along with approximately seventy other people, died in the cholera epidemic which occurred at Fort Riley in the July and August 1855.

The first Ogden monument stood on the hill above what is now Huebner Road — about 300 yards north of the present monument. Weather and vandalism damaged the first monument and was replaced after the Civil War. The second monument, which stands in front of the U. S. Cavalry Museum, was restored in 1887 by order of Colonel James Forsyth. This is the third monument and was placed here in 1923. At one time, it was believed this marked the geographical center of the United States. That is obviously not the case.

19. Post Cemetery (Huebner Road)



The Fort Riley Cemetery is the final resting-place for soldiers, veterans, service family members and two mass graves of those who perished in the cholera epidemics of 1855 and 1867. The cemetery covers 8.3 acres with the first recorded burial occurring in August of 1854.

Walking through the cemetery is a reflection of the history of Fort Riley. Among the early burials are approximately 75 men, women and children who died in the 1855 cholera epidemic. Major Armistead who became a Confederate Major General and was killed at the Battle Gettysburg is buried here, along with his wife Cornelia Armistead. Her grave is marked with a simple stone marker but a plaque was placed next to his by the Historical and Archaeological Society of Gettysburg. Many victims were mass buried in the southeast corner. Only three headstones that were erected remain. The other graves had wooden markers, all of which were destroyed by a prairie fire.

Other interments include three Medal of Honor recipients and other service members from all of America's major conflicts since the Civil War.

There are graves of Confederate soldiers captured during the Battle of Glorietta Pass in 1862 who were brought to Fort Riley during the summer of that year. These soldiers were from the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 7th Texas Mounted Volunteers. In addition, victims of a second cholera epidemic, which occurred in the summer of 1867, as well as victims of the 1918 influenza outbreak rest in this quiet setting. German and Italian prisoners of war who died here during World War II are buried near soldiers of the 7th Cavalry who were killed at Battle of Wounded Knee.

You may park your car in the circular drive adjacent to the Ogden Monument and walk through the cemetery.

At this point, you will want to return back onto Huebner Road.

Fort Riley Driving Tour

20. Waters Hall (170 Sheridan Avenue)



Mose Waters was the last post sutler²⁵ at Fort Riley. He built this structure in 1888 as a general store and recreation center.

Fort Riley's first canteen opened in the building's basement on February 1, 1890. Soldiers gathered at this building to socialize and purchase the necessities of life. In 1897 the canteen became the Post Exchange. In the first decade of the 20th century it was used by students of the Cavalry and Light Artillery School for horse-shoeing classes. It was later converted to apartments for Non-Commissioned officers and their families.

In 1897, Waters Hall became the first Post Exchange. The building was converted to living quarters in 1930. Today it is used as guest quarters.

21. Polk Hall, 22. Central Processing Facility, 23. King Field House and 24. Patton Hall (Custer Avenue)



Turn right onto Pleasanton Avenue. To your right is Polk Hall, which was constructed in 1908 as the West Riding Hall. This building was used to conduct training indoors during inclement weather. The building is named in honor of General James Polk²⁶. The building across the street from the stop sign was constructed in 1905 as the post confinement facility. At the stop sign (intersection of Pleasanton and Custer Avenues), turn left onto Custer Avenue. The buildings along this street include barracks.

During the 1920s and 1930s, units assigned to support operation of the Cavalry School used these buildings.



Building 210 (located on the right side of the street and across from a parking lot) is the Central Processing Facility where soldiers are in-processed upon their arrival at Fort Riley. This building was constructed in 1890 as a post consolidated mess hall. This idea was a revolutionary one for the Army. Prior to this, the cooking was the responsibility of individual companies and of soldiers detailed on a monthly basis. One can imagine the quality and experimentation that may have gone on in preparing the daily meals!

²⁵ A sutler was someone who sold food and drink to soldiers. ²⁶ Named in honor of Major General Edward L. King (1873-1933), Commandant of the Cavalry School from 1923 to 1925. His thirty-seven years of military service included action in the Philippine Insurrection and World War I where he won the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star and Distinguished Service Medal.

Fort Riley Driving Tour



Driving on down the street you will see King Field House²⁶ (originally known as the East Riding Hall). This building was constructed in 1891. Like Polk Hall, this facility permitted troops to train during periods of cold and wet weather. Horse shows and other competitions were also held in this building. Today, it has been remodeled as a fitness center.



As you pass King Field House, turn to your left. You will be passing Patton Hall, constructed in 1940. This building was originally called the Academic Building and was built to handle the ever expanding curriculum and personnel assigned to the Cavalry School in the late 1930s. In 1946, the building was renamed Patton Hall in honor of General George S. Patton, Jr.²⁷, who had served at the school.

25. U.S. Cavalry Museum and 28. 1st Infantry Division Museum (Building 205 & 207 – Henry Avenue)



The U.S. Cavalry Museum and 1st Infantry Division Museum document the storied history of American Cavalry and the “Big Red One”. Appropriately, the museums stand next to each other in the heart of Fort Riley’s historic Main Post.

The Cavalry Museum’s south wing was built in 1855 and originally was the post hospital. The flat limestone identifies it as one of the four surviving buildings from the post’s initial construction. The building was renovated and a clock tower added in 1890, when it became the Cavalry School Administration Building.

In September 1957, the building became the home of the Fort Riley Historical Museum. Five years later, it was renamed the U. S. Cavalry Museum and today tells the history of the mounted branch of service from the Revolutionary War to 1950.

The building directly to the rear of the Cavalry Museum is the 1st Infantry Division Museum. This building was constructed in 1905 for use as a barracks. In later years it was used as offices for the Cavalry Board which tested and reported on new equipment. During the 1960s and 1970s, it was used as the post library before being opened in June 1992 as the 1st Infantry Division Museum. Today, visitors may view exhibits that relate the rich and colorful history of the Big Red One from 1917 to the present.



The museums are currently under renovation and are projected to reopen Spring/Summer 2023.

²⁷ George S. Patton, Jr. (1885-1945) was one of the most flamboyant and colorful commanders of World War II. Patton was first assigned to Fort Riley as a young lieutenant in the fall of 1913. He wrote of Fort Riley: “...Fort Riley must have been selected by a hermit who thought he was quite alone when he got here.” Patton described the fort as, “...the most strictly army place I have ever been in and also the most strictly business.” His last posting to Fort Riley occurred in the spring of 1938 when he became the executive officer of the Academic Division and the 9th Cavalry.