Fort Atkinson, Nebraska

RG502 Fort Atkinson, Nebraska

Records: 1819-1957
Cubic ft.: 1.5
Approx. # of Items: 4 boxes of c.100 items and 10 reels of microfilm

HISTORICAL NOTE

Fort Atkinson, Nebraska, on the Council Bluffs, was the most remote U.S. military post on the western frontier from 1819-1827. In 1819, John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War, dispatched the Yellow-stone Expeditionary force under Col. Henry Atkinson as part of a plan to construct a chain of fortifications west of the Mississippi River. These forts were to serve as a warning to the British trading companies and to protect the fur trade along the Upper Missouri. The expedition had reached the Council Bluffs, when winter forced them to construct a camp. This camp was named Cantonment Missouri. In 1820, Congress abandoned the plan for the series of forts, leaving only the new post at the Council Bluffs. When floods destroyed this camp in the spring of 1820, a new site was selected on top of the Bluffs. The newly constructed post was known simply as Council Bluffs until 1821 when it was officially designated Fort Atkinson.

Fort Atkinson was garrisoned by the Rifle Regiment and the Sixth Infantry Regiment. In 1821, as part of a military cutback, the two regiments were combined and some of the troops were discharged. The troops at the fort saw almost no military operations with the exception of the brief Arickara War of 1823 after a party of fur traders were attached by Indians.

Fort Atkinson was to survive as an active military post only until 1827 when it was abandoned. However, during the period of its active operation, the fort was a valuable outpost in the opening of the west.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists mainly of ten reels of microfilm of official records of Fort Atkinson, Nebraska. Also included are four boxes of manuscript material. The collection is arranged into five series: 1) Court Martial Records, 1819-1827; 2) Correspondence, 1819-1957; 3) Manuscripts; 4) Records of the Sixth and Rifle Regiments, 1819-1827; and 5) Miscellany.
The collection relates to military affairs and activities at Fort Atkinson, Nebraska, 1819-1827, and to later historical research and interpretation. The bulk of the collection consists
ADDED ENTRIES:**

Atkinson, Henry, 1782-1842
Calhoun, John C (John Caldwell), 1782-1850
COUNCIL BLUFFS
COURT MARTIALS
UNITED STATES. ARMY--MILITARY LIFE
United States. Army. Infantry. Sixth Regiment
United States. Army. Infantry. Riflemen Company
MILITARY POSTS--NEBRASKA
Holmes, Reuben, c.1800-1833
Sheldon, A. E. (Addison Erwin), 1861-1944 *
WEATHER (FORT CALHOUN, NEB.) *
FORT CALHOUN (NEB.)--WEATHER *
COUNCIL BLUFFS--WEATHER
WEATHER--COUNCIL BLUFFS
Atkinson, Benjamin W. (Benjamin Walker), *
Contal, Benjamin, 1819-1903
Blackman, E. E. (Elmer Ellsworth), 1863-1942 *
Eller, William H., 1842-
Woods, William H. (William Henry), 1839-1927 *
Ney, Virgil, dec.1979 *
Watkins, Albert, 1848-1923
Leavenworth, Henry, 1783-1834
Latrom, Raymond J
Foster, William Sewell, -1839
Chronological Index - 1
of copies of official documents, correspondence, and manuscripts utilized in the compilation of *Fort Atkinson Records, 1819-1827*, illus., by A. E. Sheldon in 1915.

The reels of records concerning Court Martials contained in Series One, were microfilmed by the Historical Society. Reel #1 was filmed from photostat records contained in the National Archives Collection RG153, Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General. Reel #2 containing a court martial record, 1824-1825, was microfilm by our agency in 1991 from an original volume in the possession of Fort Atkinson State Historical Park, and loaned to us for copying by John Slader, Superintendent of the park.

Reels #2 and #3 of Series Four are microfilmed copies of the Fort Atkinson orderly books transcribed by A. E. Sheldon in 1915. These six volumes were microfilmed by the Historical Society in 1956. Reels Eight and Nine of this Series were microfilmed by the National Archives for the State Historical Society in April of 1987. They include fourteen volumes of letters sent and orders received.

The Clothing Estimates, 1821-1822, of Series Five, are xerox copies of originals in possession of James Seacrest of North Platte, Nebraska.

The reel of post returns appearing on reel #4 of Series Five, Miscellany, was purchased from the National Archives in June of 1972. Post returns are monthly lists of officers by name with number of men under their command. A remarks section lists names of all soldiers who enlisted, deserted, those on special duty, etc. The Meterological Register, 1822-1830 appearing on reel #7 was formerly shelved with RG500, U.S. Dept of War. This volume was microfilm by the Historical Society in 1956. It was more properly moved to this collection in June of 1972.

**DESCRIPTION**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>film</th>
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<td>SERIES ONE</td>
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- Roll #1
  - #17,372
    - Court Martial records, Fort Atkinson, 1819-1827
    - includes trials of Lt. Charles Pentland, 1823, and Capt. James Gray, 1925.

- Roll #10
  - #24,726
    - Court Martial Record, 1824-1825
    - Index at end of volume
SERIES TWO  CORRESPONDENCE, 1819-1957

B.1 f.1 General Atkinson to Colonel Hamilton, Dec. 21, 1825
Copy from Magazine of History, March, 1905

f.2 John C. Calhoun to General Atkinson, 1819-1821, 1824
Copies from U.S. War Dept. records.

f.3 John C. Calhoun to Brown, Jesup, and Long, 1819-1820
Copies from U.S. War Dept. records

f.4 General Atkinson to John C. Calhoun, 1820-1824
Copies from U.S. War Dept. records

f.5 Research letters, 1905-1957

f.6 Correspondence of Lt. Reuben Holmes, 1824-1831
(Copies of orginal)

f.7 Letter re remains of soldiers of Fort Calhoun,
1905-1906
Circular, Gen. F. C. Ainsworth to Harvey Reid,
Maquoheta, IA, Jan. 1910 re Ft. Atkinson

B.5 f.8 Correspondence of Maj. William S. Foster, 1820-1821
(Copies of original

SERIES THREE  MANUSCRIPTS

B.1 f.1 Journal of General Atkinson's Treaty Expedition,
1825 (copy)

f.2 Address by B. W. Atkinson, Oct. 11, 1919, Fort
Calhoun, Nebraska
Reminiscences in Nebraska from 1821-1827, by
Capt. Benjamin Contal
Brief Resume of Fort Atkinson, prepared from Fort
Atkinson by E. E. Blackman, September 1919

f.3 Fort Atkinson, by Raymond Latrom
Old Fort Atkinson, by W. H. Eller, 1892; paper
given before members of Nebraska State
Historical Society.
Why Fort Atkinson Was Established, by Albert
Watkins; Nebraska History Magazine, Vol. 2,
#3, July-Sept 1919

f.4 Fort Atkinson, by William H. Woods.
f.5  Miscellaneous manuscripts, anonymous & not dated.
f.6-9  Fort Atkinson Records, 1819-1827, illus., by
       Addison E. Sheldon, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1915
       (typed manuscript volumes)
SERIES THREE  MANUSCRIPTS (cont)

B.2  Fort Atkinson Records (cont), Orderly Books, 1818-1820
     NOTE: Above Sheldon material may be duplicated in rolls #2 & #3, Series Four

B.3  Fort Atkinson--Guardian of the Western Frontier, 1819-1827, by Col. Virgil Ney, 1973, 707 pages of correspondence and manuscript.

B.5  f.10  Diary of William S. Foster, 1820-1824, not complete (Copies of original)

film

SERIES FOUR  OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE SIXTH INFANTRY AND RIFLE REGIMENT, 1819-1827

     f.2  Clothing Estimate, year ending 10/31/1822 (copy)

B.4  v.1  Manuscript Orders, p.1 - Martin Cantonment, June 1, 1819 thru p.562, Ft Atkinson Detail Order, November 19, 1821
     v.2  Manuscript Orders, p.563 (#70), March 6, 1822 thru p.1087, Letter, H. Leavenworth to Don Bart. Boca, Gov. of New Mexico re deserters, Sept 7, 1824

B.5  v.3  Manuscript Orders, p.1102 (#156), June 23, 1822 thru p.1566, Detail Order, March 5, 1824. pp.1567-end of volume, Miscellaneous material re Council Bluffs including list of officers and enlisted men, 1812-1828, and historical notes.
     NOTE: Above volumes are copies of originals

     NOTE: Rolls #2 & #3 duplicate material found in boxes 1 & 2.

B.5  f.3  Health Report of Garrison, Feb. 8, 1820

Roll #2  Records of Fort Atkinson, 1819-1827, compiled and #12,814 Edited by A. E. Sheldon, 1915
Roll #3 Sheldon work, 1915, cont.
#12,815

Roll #4 Post Returns, July 1821 - May 1827
NARS Microcopy 617, Roll #49
Roll #5
#20,331
Muster Rolls, Sixth U.S. Infantry,
Companies A thru K, 1819-1821
Muster Rolls, Sixth U.S. Infantry,
Companies A thru D, 1821-1827

Roll #6
#20,332
Muster Rolls, Sixth U.S. Infantry
Companies E thru K, 1821-1827
Muster Rolls, U.S. Rifleman, 1819-1821
Companies A thru K and Miscellaneous

Roll #8
#21,908
Letters Sent and Received, 1817-1824
v.1 Jan. 28, 1817 - Feb. 02, 1824
Letters Sent, 1824-1827
v.2 Nov. 02, 1824 - Jan. 18, 1828
v.3 Oct. 01, 1824 - Jan. 18, 1828
Orders Issued and Received, 1818-1823
v.4 Adjutant Gen., Nashville, Division
order #3, Nov. 02, 1818 thru
Regimental Order, Cantonment Missouri,
Jan. 10, 1820
v.5 Regimental Order, Plattsburgh,
Apr. 29, 1818 thru
Regimental Order, T. Stanford, on board
the "Expedition," July 10, 1819
v.6 Regimental Order, T. Stanford, ibid,
Aug. 03, 1819 thru
Regimental Order, Cantonment Council
Bluffs, Dec. 31, 1820
v.7 Regimental Order, Jan. 01, 1821 thru
Order #69, Ft. Atkinson, Mar. 07, 1822
v.8 Order #156, Ft. Atkinson, June 23, 1822
thru
Order #281, Ft. Atkinson, Oct. 11, 1822
and Detail Order, Oct. 13, 1822
v.9 Order #70, Ft. Atkinson, Mar. 06, 1822
thru
Order #160, Ft. Atkinson, Sept 08, 1823
Order #161, Sept 09, 1823 thru Order #184, Oct. 06, 1823
SERIES FOUR  SIXTH INFANTRY AND RIFLE REGIMENT (cont)

Roll #9  v.10  Plattsburgh, Mar. 11, 1819 thru
         U.S. Barrack at Carlisle, Apr. 19, 1819

         v.11  Order #7, Jan. 01, 1826 thru
               Order #131, Camp Jefferson, Oct. 19, 1827
         pp.370-382, Index to Orders
         p.386 (continued from p.269)
         p.387-end of volume
               Order #132, October 21, 1827 thru
               Order #169, Jefferson Barracks,
               December 27, 1827

Orders Issued, 1823-1827

Roll #10  v.12  Order #185, Ft. Atkinson, Oct. 08, 1823
         thru
         Order #278, Ft. Atkinson, Oct. 24, 1824
         Index, pp. 279-end of volume

         v.13  Order #165, Ft. Atkinson, Sept 12, 1823
         thru
         Order #177, Ft. Atkinson, June 13, 1824

SERIES FIVE  MISCELLANY

B.5  f.1  Map of Fort Atkinson, n.d.
       Sgt. Floyd Monument plan, Lewis and Clark Historical
       Association, Sioux City, Iowa, 1957
       Broadside--Fort Atkinson Day, August 5, n.d.
       f.2  Letter re weather diaries, Ft. Atkinson, 4/23/1920
       f.3-4 Weather Reports, 1820
       f.5  Weather Reports, 1824

OD122  Sketch of Fort Atkinson 1819. Sketch made 1919
       Copy of Blueprint obtained from National Archives

Roll #7  Meterological Register, Fort Atkinson and
       #13,679 Council Bluffs, 1822-1830
       From RG500, Roll #50

END OF INVENTORY
JEP/kj 9/12/1980
JEP/PMC  6/15/1972