



Fort Mitchell, Scotts Bluff, Nebraska Territory

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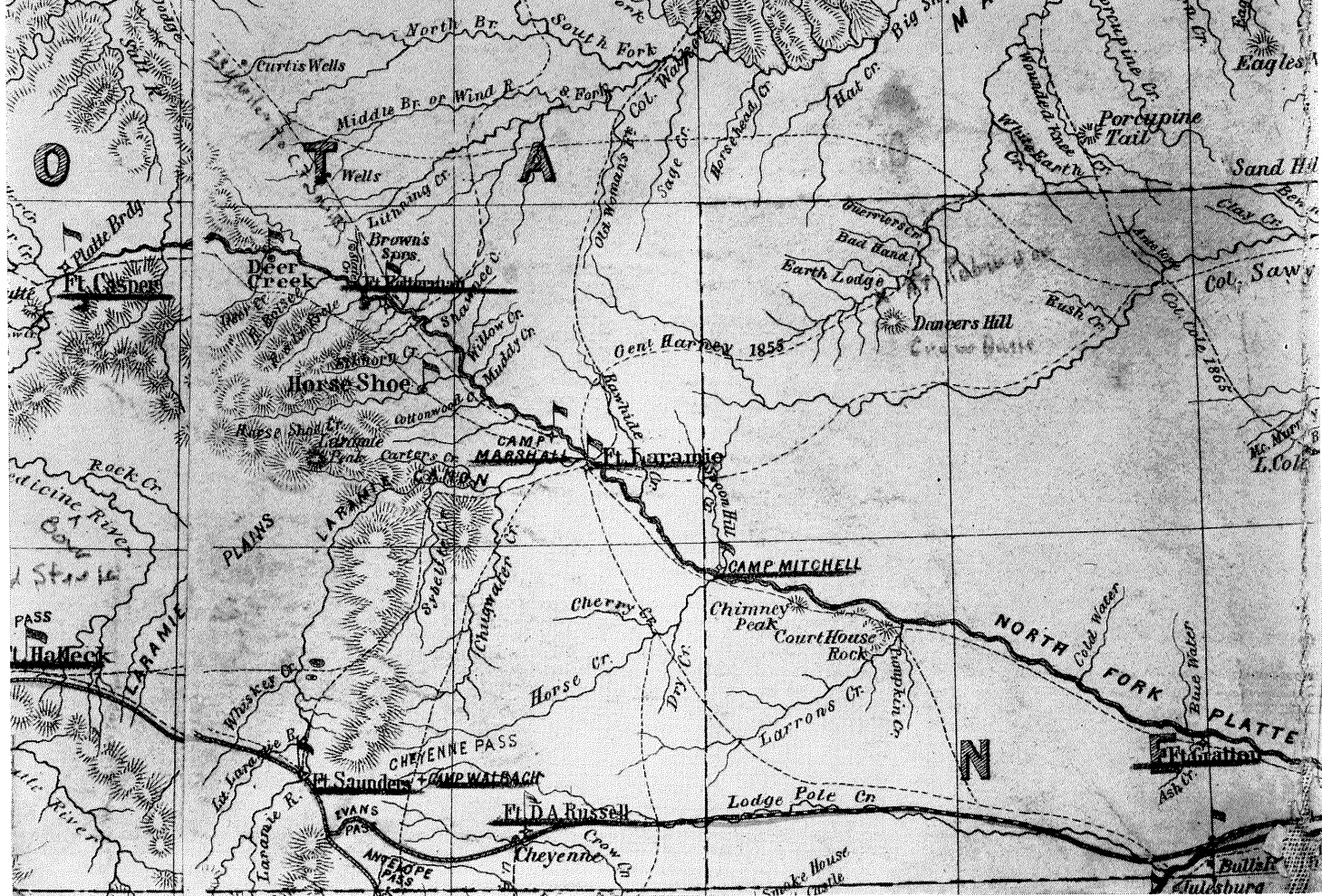
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Photographs / Images: section of map by W J Keeler, 1867, showing Camp Mitchell



Section of Keeler Map, 1867. (See p. 8.)

FORT MITCHELL, SCOTTS BLUFF, NEBRASKA TERRITORY

BY MERRILL J. MATTES

IT is frequently observed by historians that "no research job is ever completed." While the casual reader (as well as the casual historian) may be content with the summary of known facts resulting from a given research task, the researcher who has been truly infected by the bug will never learn to leave well enough alone. After fairly exhaustive inquiry he may whip his story into shape and get it published; but let one new fact regarding the "exhausted" subject stray into his line of vision and his nostrils quiver, his hackles rise, and with a figurative yell the old hunt is resumed, sometimes long after the game was supposedly shot, stuffed, and placed on the mantel.

A case in point is that of old Fort Mitchell, the site of which lies just to the northwest of Scotts Bluff National Monument, Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. On the basis of evidence then available, the subject was reviewed, digested, and expounded by the present writer in the form of an address given on August 12, 1943, upon the dedication of a marker at the site, as an incident to the Oregon Trail Centennial observances of that year. The paper subsequently appeared under the title, "A History of Old Fort Mitchell," in *Nebraska History*, XXIV (April-June, 1943), 71-82. In the

several intervening years, involving research on many remote subjects, scraps of data kept turning up; in particular the National Archives, prodded by Mr. H. J. Wisner of the *Scottsbluff Star Herald* and Robert G. Simmons, chief justice of Nebraska's supreme court (and formerly of Scottsbluff), turned up with some original documents with "Fort Mitchell, D. T." headings.¹ These are presented at the conclusion of this article.

Old subscribers are already acquainted with the salient facts regarding Fort Mitchell, but these may be briefly summarized. In the summer of 1864 the Platte River road to California and the parallel Pacific Telegraph, the only transcontinental telegraph line open during the Civil War, were menaced by Sioux and Cheyenne Indians on the war-path.² The situation was vividly set forth in the official correspondence:

FORT KEARNY, August 15, 1864.

Major-General CURTIS,
Commanding Department of Kansas:

I arrived here yesterday from Fort Laramie. I find the Indians at war with us through the entire District of Nebraska from South Pass to the Blue, a distance of 800 miles and more, and have laid waste the country, driven off stock, and murdered men, women, and children in large numbers. In my humble opinion, the only way to put a stop to this state of things will be to organize a sufficient force to pursue them to the villages and exterminate the leading tribes engaged in this terrible slaughter. On this part of the line the tribes engaged are the Cheyennes, Kiowas, and Arapahoes, part of the Yanktons, and straggling bands of the Brule Sioux. On the west part of the line are the Winnibigoshish, Snakes, and part of all the bands from Minnesota, and with the Indians there are a large number of white men engaged. From the best information I have, I believe every party

¹ Photostat copies of the documents were transmitted in 1945 to the National Park Service for safekeeping. Although the site of Fort Mitchell does not quite fall within the boundaries of Scotts Bluff National Monument, its history and that of Scotts Bluff are closely intertwined.

² The Platte route was the main overland emigrant route to Oregon and California in the 1840's and 1850's. It was the path of the fleet Pony Express, 1860-61, and of the principal overland stage route until 1862, when this was rerouted over the lower overland route, up the South Platte, thence north to Elk Mountain and west to Fort Bridger.

of Indians on this line has been led by white men. If you will intimate to me what line of policy you desire me to pursue I will act promptly. I think I have got things so arranged as to prevent further massacres until we are prepared to meet them with force.

ROBT B. MITCHELL,
Brigadier-General, Commanding³

Fort Mitchell was one of a series of new outposts of Fort Laramie then erected at the behest of Brig. Gen. Robert B. Mitchell, commander of the military district of Nebraska. Originally dubbed "Camp Shuman" after its first commander, Capt. J. S. Shuman, it shortly thereafter was named for General Mitchell, being variously referred to as "Camp Mitchell" or "Fort Mitchell." The little garrison of the adobe-walled post figured prominently in two notable engagements between the cavalry and the Sioux—the Battle of Mud Springs, in February, 1865, an aftermath of the siege of Julesburg, and the Battle of Horse Creek, in June, 1865, when Capt. W. D. Fouts and three enlisted men were killed in a surprise attack by "good Indians" whom they were escorting from Fort Laramie to Fort Kearny. Brief but tantalizing glimpses of Fort Mitchell during the period 1864-1867 are afforded by Birge, Bratt, Carrington, Coutant, and Ware.⁴

The pertinent documents in the National Archives are principally from the Order Books and the Regimental Papers of the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry, Adjutant-General's Office, Records of the War Department. For the most part routine messages reflecting unimportant details of garrison life, there is one document of special significance, for it puts Fort Mitchell in perspective. This is what purports to be the official report of the 11th Ohio Cavalry to the Adjutant General of Ohio, for the year 1865. This was a crucial year on the Plains, and Fort Mitchell's place in the contemporary

³ *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Part II, Vol. XLI, p. 722.

⁴ Julius C. Birge, *The Awakening of the Desert* (Boston, 1912), pp. 167-168; John Bratt, *Trails of Yesterday* (Chicago, 1921), pp. 103-118; C. G. Coutant, *The History of Wyoming* (Laramie, 1899), pp. 425, 457; Margaret I. Carrington, *Ab-Sa-Ra-Ka, Land of Massacre* (Philadelphia, 1879), pp. 70, 240; Eugene F. Ware, *The Indian War of 1864* (Topeka, 1911), pp. 144-430.

scheme of things is here revealed. Here is official confirmation of the heroic role played by the young men from Ohio who manned the lonely little outpost in western Nebraska.

A knowledge of posts contemporary with Fort Mitchell is indispensable to an understanding of the Platte route, otherwise known as the Central route, the Oregon Trail, or the California Trail. The general situation in the mid-sixties is succinctly set forth by Hebard and Brininstool:

There were established two stage and telegraph lines from the Missouri, one running from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Kearney, and the other going from Omaha to Fort Kearney. Here, at this last named post, the lines consolidated, going up the Platte valley as far as Julesburg, a conspicuous stage station near the mouth of Lodge Pole Creek, where it emptied into the Platte. At this characteristically-alive border town the lines again separated, the main telegraph line going northwestward to Fort Laramie and beyond to South Pass and Utah, while the stage line went southwestward to Denver, by the way of the South Platte. From Denver the coaches went north to Fort (or Camp) Collins, thence to Virginia Dale, across the Laramie Plains, Fort Halleck, Elk Mountain, Bridger's Pass, Bitter Creek, out to Fort Bridger, on to Utah, California, Oregon, and Montana. Just east of Fort Bridger the Oregon Trail and the Overland Trail united and became one.⁵

Brief notes on each of the stations mentioned in the archival correspondence will suffice. A table of stations⁶ along the perilous North Platte route during the 1860's, from Julesburg to South Pass, follows:

Station	Miles from Independence	Comments
Pole Creek	513	Above Julesburg 23 miles
Roulette & Pringle	531	North bank of Lodgepole Creek, 3 miles east of present Sidney, Nebr.
Mud Springs	550	Near present Bridgeport, Nebr., established as a sol-

⁵ Grace R. Hebard and E. A. Brininstool, *The Bozeman Trail* (Cleveland, 1922), I, 71.

⁶ Hebard and Brininstool, *op. cit.*, 77-95; Agnes W. Spring, *Casper Collins* (New York, 1927), pp. 61-69; LeRoy R. Hafen and Francis M. Young, *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890* (Glendale, 1938), pp. 303-330; Paul Henderson, "The Story of Mud Springs," *Nebraska History*, XXXII (June 1951), 108-119; Letter, Paul Henderson to the author, October 12, 1951; The William O. Collins Collection of Maps, Colorado State College. The mileages given are necessarily approximate.

		dier post and telegraph station, 1864, by General Mitchell; Battle of Mud Springs, 1865.
Chimney Rock	571	Opposite Bayard, Nebr., established as a mail station, 1865, by soldiers from Fort Mitchell.
Ficklin's	587	Near Melbeta, Nebr.; a Pony Express and stage station, 1860-62.
Fort Mitchell	600	Established as a soldier post and telegraph station, 1864.
Horse Creek	610	Near Lyman, Nebr.; established 1860-62 as Pony Express and stage station.
Cold Springs	630	Near Torrington, Wyo.; established 1865 as a mail station.
Fort Laramie	700	Now a national monument, in present Goshen County, Wyo.; the most important post along the trail from 1834-1890; military headquarters of the North Platte region.
Cottonwood Station	718	A "home station" of the Pony Express in 1860-61, situated about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile southwest of Wendover, Wyo.
Horseshoe Station	736	Near Glendo, Wyo.; Pony Express, stage, and soldier station.
Camp Marshall (La Bonte)	766	Near Orin junction and site of Fort Fetterman, Wyo.; telegraph station; Bozeman Trail turned north here.
La Prele	782	Near Douglas, Wyo.; telegraph station.
Deer Creek	802	Near Glenrock, Wyo.; telegraph and soldier station; early emigrant crossing.
Platte Bridge (Fort Caspar)	830	At Casper, Wyo.; important emigrant crossing since 1847; soldier station; scene of Platte Bridge fight, 1865.
Red Buttes	842	Pony Express and U.S. mail station.
Sweetwater Station	880	Near Independence Rock; Pony Express and telegraph station.
Three Crossings	950	Telegraph station.
St. Mary's (Rocky Ridge)	980	Telegraph station.
South Pass Station (Burnt Fort)	1,000	Telegraph station.

To the south Fort Laramie was linked to Denver and the Overland road by a trail to Fort Halleck, at the foot of Elk Mountain in the Medicine Bow Range (Carbon County, Wyoming). Between Fort Halleck and Denver was Virginia Dale, just below the Wyoming boundary, a notorious haven for "road agents," and Camp Collins or Fort Collins, named for Col. Wm. O. Collins, commander of the 11th Ohio Cavalry. To the north of Fort Laramie, along the Bozeman Trail to the Montana gold fields, were three posts established in 1865-66 and abandoned in 1868—Forts Reno, Phil Kearny, and C. F. Smith.⁷

Other than these military posts and related stage and telegraph stations, there were virtually no white men's habitations in the Central Plains region (present Wyoming, northern Colorado, and western Nebraska) in 1865. This was a wilderness, infested with hostile Indians, huge herds of buffalo, and other wild game. Twenty years later the Indians were subdued and the first homesteader had arrived in western Nebraska. The soldiers of Fort Mitchell and the other little outposts of the plains were the true frontiersmen who ushered in the present era of civilization.

Fort Mitchell has actually always been in the State of Nebraska or earlier Nebraska Territory, notwithstanding the impression conveyed in official correspondence that it was first in Idaho Territory, later in Dakota Territory. A careful scrutiny of territorial maps indicates that the Nebraska "panhandle" was in unorganized territory to 1854; in Nebraska Territory, first form (including present Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho), 1854-1861; in Nebraska Territory, second form (including part of present Wyoming), 1861-1863; and Nebraska Territory, third form (present state boundaries), 1863 to 1867. On the other hand, Fort Laramie, now in Wyoming, about fifty miles west of Fort Mitchell, was in the first two Nebraska territories; then in Idaho Territory, first form, 1863-1864; Dakota Territory, second form, 1864-

⁷ Hebard and Brininstool, *op. cit.*; Agnes W. Spring, "The Founding of Fort Collins, United States Military Post," *Colorado Magazine*, X (March 1933), 47-55; LeRoy R. Hafen, *The Overland Mail, 1849-1869* (Cleveland, 1926).

1868; and finally Wyoming Territory, 1868-1890.⁸ The proximity of Fort Mitchell to its parent post and the absence of survey lines at the time undoubtedly account for the erroneous impression entertained by the military that it was in Idaho and Dakota Territories.

Research on Fort Mitchell, Nebraska, is complicated by the fact that there have been at least seven other Fort Mitchells in America, including a second Fort Mitchell in Nebraska! Properly speaking, this second Fort Mitchell was actually "the first Fort Mitchell" from the standpoint of chronology. It was situated at the junction of the Niobrara and Missouri Rivers, in present Knox County, Nebraska,⁹ being established there as a trading post in 1833 by Narcisse Le Clerc. It was named for D. D. Mitchell, then an official of the American Fur Company, later Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, and, incidentally, a prominent figure at the famous Indian treaty council of 1851, which took place at the mouth of Horse Creek, just a few miles west of Scotts Bluff and the later Fort Mitchell of that locale.¹⁰ Fort Mitchell on the Missouri was, according to Chittenden, abandoned in 1837 and for several years there-

⁸ Charles O. Paullin, *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States* (Washington, 1932), p. 44, pl. 64.

⁹ "Map of the Missouri River from Its Mouth to Three Forks, Montana," published by the Missouri River Commission, 1892-95, Sheet XXXII.

¹⁰ Hafen and Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-196; LeRoy R. Hafen and W. J. Ghent, *Broken Hand* (Denver, 1931), p. 227; *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, November 27, 1851, pp. 265-322; *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1946), XIII, 41. Fort Mitchell at the foot of Scotts Bluff is definitely not to be confused with the earlier "Fort Robidoux" and "Fort John," elsewhere in the vicinity. See T. L. Green, "Scotts Bluff, Fort John," *Nebraska History*, XIX (July-September, 1938), 175-188, and Merrill J. Mattes, "Robidoux's Trading Post at 'Scott's Bluffs' and the California Gold Rush," *Nebraska History*, XXX (June, 1949), 95-138. Grant L. Shumway failed to realize that these establishments were widely separated in time and space. He describes Fort Mitchell at Scotts Bluff as a fur trappers' rendezvous of the 1850's, named after D. D. Mitchell, associate of Lucien Fontenelle. In 1854 he has a steamboat ascending the North Platte, making fast for the night at Fort Mitchell "where now R. S. Hunt's stock go down for water." Aside from the problem of the navigability of the North Platte, he has the right location, but the wrong fort and the wrong decade. See Grant L. Shumway, *The History of Western Nebraska and Its People* (Lincoln, 1921), II, 28-33.

after the palisades thereof furnished excellent fuel for steamboats.¹¹

As a warning to other historians who may be tampering with the idea of exploring "Fort Mitchell," we list the various military forts of the same name which appear in Heitman's Army Register:

<i>Forts, etc., and Location</i>	<i>Where situated</i>
Mitchell, Fort, Ala.	Russell County, on Chattahoochee River; now town of that name; 10 miles below Columbus.
Mitchell, Fort, Fla.	Tenhallama River.
Mitchell, Fort, Ga.	Chattahoochee River.
Mitchell, Fort or Camp, Ky.	Near Covington.
Mitchell, Camp, Nebr.	At junction of Spoon Hill Creek and North Fork of Platte River.
Mitchell, Camp, Tenn.	At Nashville.
Mitchell, Fort, Va.	Lunenburg County; now town of that name. ¹²

None of the several Fort Mitchells survive today; but the military name survives, in substance, at present Mitchel Air Force Base, Hempstead, Long Island, New York.

"Camp Mitchell" or "Fort Mitchell" at the foot of Scotts Bluff appears on at least three contemporary maps—an unpublished and untitled map of the military district of the Upper Platte prepared by Colonel Collins, now in a vault of the Colorado State College at Fort Collins; an unpublished map of the "Military District, Kansas and the Territories, 1866, Maj. Gen. G. M. Dodge, Commanding, drawn by T. H. Williams," found in the National Archives; and the published "National Map of the Territory of the United States from the Mississippi River to Pacific Ocean, made by the authority of the Hon. O. H. Browning, Secretary of the Interior, by W. J. Keeler, 1867," courtesy of the Library of Congress. On the Williams map "Camp Mitchell" is given as 595 miles from Fort Leavenworth.

¹¹ Hiram M. Chittenden, *American Fur Trade of the Far West*, with introduction and notes by Stallo Vinton (New York, 1936), II, 963.

¹² Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903* (Washington, 1903), II, 525.

On each of the above maps, as in Heitman, Fort Mitchell appears opposite the mouth of a "Spoon Hill Creek." This is something of an enigma, for no such creek exists today to the knowledge of the writer nor does it appear on the Scotts Bluff Quadrangle of the U.S. Geological Survey as of 1898. The nearest creek on the right bank of the North Platte, the same side as Fort Mitchell, is Kiowa Creek, just below Horse Creek, at least twelve miles upriver; while the nearest known affluences coming in from the north are Winter Creek, leading into the present city of Scottsbluff, and Spottedtail Creek, into present Mitchell, Nebraska. Yet neither of these come within several miles of the Fort Mitchell site, and both are quite insignificant, scarcely warranting recognition on maps of national scale. One suspects that "Spoonhill" may be an error in transposition of "Spotted Tail" (the name of a prominent chief of the Brule Sioux), but this minor cartographical mystery remains unsolved.

A "Campaign Map of the Department of the Platte, Nebraska and Wyoming, 1874, by Capt. W. A. Jones, C.E.," shows no Fort Mitchell, but its odd appendage, "Spoon Hill Creek," survives.¹³ "Fort Mitchell, abandoned" appears on a map of Fort Laramie, Wyoming (Sheet I, "Reservation as originally declared, extended and reduced"), issued by Headquarters, Department of the Platte, Engineer's Office, Fort Omaha, Nebraska, April 8, 1881, by Capt. W.S. Stanton.¹⁴ It is rather surprising to learn from this that the site of Fort Mitchell, indeed all land west from the summit of "Scotts Bluffs," fell within the Fort Laramie Reservation at one time. This reservation from 1869 to 1872 and from 1876 to 1890 was limited to a rectangular plat of 54 square miles surrounding the post; but during 1872 to 1876 it was enlarged to an impressive 406 square miles plus, by adding a tract bounded as follows:

Commencing at a point on the prolongation of the eastern boundary of the reservation as described in G.O. No. 34 of 1869 Headqrs. Dept of the Patte: 6 miles from

¹³ National Archives, Cartographic Records, Records of the War Department, Office of the Chief of Engineers, RG-77, File G-228.

¹⁴ Received by the National Park Service from the Adjutant-General's Library.

where it crosses the south bank of the North Platte River, and running E. 35° S. 8 miles and 2260 feet; E. 51° 05' 45" S. 3 miles and 2860 feet; E 35° S. 12 miles and 5090 feet to Horse Creek; E. 17 15' S. 2 miles and 1140 feet to north point of Horse Creek Butte; E. 0° 45' N. 11 miles and 4170 feet to an angle on Scotts Bluffs; thence easterly along crest of Scotts Bluffs to North Platte River; thence across to north bank of said river; thence westerly along north bank of said river to intersection with eastern boundary of present reservation; and thence south to place of beginning.

There is no recognition of Fort Mitchell in the Cheyenne County map which appears in Everts and Kirk, *Official State Atlas of Nebraska*, 1885. (The land around Scotts Bluff is here labelled "Coad's Ranch.") Neither does it appear in the compilation of *United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries and Military Parks*, for it was never recognized by the War Department as an established army post.¹⁵ Officially, "Fort Mitchell, Dakota Territory" (or more accurately "Fort Mitchell, Scotts Bluffs, Nebraska Territory") has disappeared except for scanty documentary and archeological evidence. It lingers on only in the memory and traditions of frontier Nebraska.

It is of interest to glance at the table of military organization during Fort Mitchell's brief career. As of August 31, 1864, when Fort Mitchell was under construction, this is outlined in *The War of the Rebellion*:

Organization of troops in the Department of Kansas,
Maj. Gen Samuel K. Curtis, U.S. Army, commanding
... District of Nebraska, Brig. Gen. Robert B. Mitchell
... Fort Laramie, Idaho Ter., 7th Iowa Cavalry, Com-
pany D, Capt. William D. Fouts, Camp Mitchell, Idaho
Ter., 11th Ohio Cavalry, Company H, Capt. Jacob S.
Shuman.

Other districts in the department are given as Colorado, North Kansas, South Kansas, and the Upper Arkansas.¹⁶

In December 1864 Maj. Gen. Grenville M. Dodge assumed command of the Department of the Missouri, with headquarters at Fort Leavenworth. In February 1865 the Department of Kansas was merged with that of the Missouri, and

¹⁵ Prepared in the Office of the Judge Advocate General, U.S. Army, Washington, 1916.

¹⁶ Part II, Vol. XLI, 1893, pp. 981-984.

thereupon General Dodge merged the districts of Utah, Colorado, and Nebraska into one command, the District of the Plains. In March 1865 this was placed under Gen. P. E. Connor, with headquarters in Denver. General Connor divided his district as follows: The South Sub-District (Territory of Colorado plus Fort Halleck); the East Sub-District (Territory of Nebraska, headquarters at Fort Kearny); the North Sub-District (Dakota Territory minus Fort Halleck and plus Julesburg, headquarters at Fort Laramie); and the West Sub-District (Territory of Utah).¹⁷

As we have seen, Fort Mitchell was considered to fall within the District of Nebraska while General Mitchell was in command thereof, but it fell within the North Sub-District of the District of the Plains under Connor's reorganization plan. In September 1865, after the failure of the Powder River campaign,¹⁸ General Connor returned to Utah and the districts were rescrambled, Nebraska and that portion of Dakota Territory west of Nebraska being reunited as the Department of the Platte, with headquarters at Omaha, the field command at Fort Laramie. In 1866 a new "Mountain District" of the Department of the Platte crops up, this apparently encompassing the Powder River country.¹⁹ The frequent shifting of military districts, coupled with frequently shifting territorial alignments, cause much confusion, but it is not important. During the Indian wars, it was all hostile wilderness country, and just what territory or military district Fort Mitchell or any other point was in at any given moment seems quite academic.

¹⁷ *War of the Rebellion*, Part I, Vol. XLVIII, pp. 780, 1285; Fred B. Rogers, *Soldiers of the Overland* (San Francisco, 1938), pp. 149-150.

¹⁸ The Powder River campaign is referred to at some length in the accompanying annual report of the 11th Ohio Cavalry for 1865. See also Rogers, *op. cit.*; Hafen and Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-340; George B. Grinnell, *Two Great Scouts and Their Pawnee Battalion* (Cleveland, 1928), pp. 87-125.

¹⁹ *War of the Rebellion*, Part I, Vol. XLVIII, p. 355; National Archives, War Department Records, letter of January 3, 1867, written from "Fort Phil Kearney, Dak." by Col. Henry B. Carrington to the Assistant Adjutant-General, Department of the Platte, Omaha.

A tentative list of successive commanders at Fort Laramie in 1864-67, who were by virtue of that fact immediately superior to those in charge of Fort Mitchell, includes Lt. Col. William O. Collins of the 11th Ohio Volunteers; Maj. John S. Wood, 7th Iowa Cavalry;²⁰ Capt. William D. Fouts, 7th Iowa Cavalry; Col. Thomas Moonlight, 11th Kansas Cavalry;²¹ Maj. Thomas L. Mackay, 11th Ohio; Capt. Wm. H. Evans, 11th Ohio; Col. Peter Stagg, First Michigan Cavalry;²² Brevet Maj. Gen. Frank Wheaton, 39th U.S. Infantry;²³ Col. Henry E. Maynadier, 5th U.S. Volunteers; and Gen. H. W. Wessels, 18th U.S. Infantry.²⁴

From the archival correspondence and other sources we are able to reconstruct also a tentative list of officers in command²⁵ and units stationed at Fort Mitchell:

Capt. J. S. Shuman	11th Ohio Cavalry	Aug. 1864 to Aug. 1865
Lt. William Ellsworth	11th Ohio Cavalry	January 1865
Capt. W. R. Behymer	11th Ohio Cavalry	Aug. 1865 to Sept. 1865
Capt. John Collar	12th Missouri Cavalry	? to March 1866
Capt. W. R. Behymer	11th Ohio Cavalry	Apr. 1866 to May 1866
Capt. J. S. Shuman	11th Ohio Cavalry	May 1866
Capt. Robert P. Hughes	18th Regiment of U.S. Infantry	? to ? 1867

It is possible to enlarge further on the career of Robert Byington Mitchell, whose name, originally given to the little adobe fort at Scotts Bluff, is now perpetuated by Mitchell Pass, Mitchell Valley, the city of Mitchell, all in Scotts Bluff

²⁰ *War of the Rebellion*, Part II, Vol. XLI, July-December 1864, p. 449; Spring, *op. cit.*

²¹ Colonel Moonlight was a quite controversial figure. He led troops at the Battle of Mud Springs and on the chase after the Sioux after the Battle of Horse Creek, a notorious fiasco. This episode and the unauthorized hanging of two Indian chiefs at Fort Laramie led to his ouster by General Connor in June 1865.

²² Heitman, *op. cit.*, I, 914.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1022; Hafen and Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 340-341.

²⁴ Hafen and Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-346, 353-354; Heitman, *op. cit.*, I, 699, 1010; George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, 1802-1890* (Boston, 1891), I, 560-561; II, 452-453.

²⁵ The names of all officers listed appear in available official correspondence except that of Captain Hughes (regarding whom, see below). Lieutenant Ellsworth does not appear in the present documents as commander, but that he was in charge when reinforcements were sent from Fort Laramie to Mud Springs appears from Spring, *op. cit.*, and Grinnell, *op. cit.*

County, and Mitchell Creek, in Frontier County. Born April 4, 1823, in Mansfield, Richland County, Ohio, of Scotch-Irish parents, he became a practicing lawyer in Mansfield and served in the Mexican War as lieutenant in the 2d Ohio Infantry. In October 1856 he emigrated to Kansas Territory, settling at Paris, Linn County, and becoming a potent figure in territorial politics.

Mitchell's Civil War career was distinguished. As Colonel of the 2d Kansas Volunteer Infantry, he was wounded at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, Missouri. Commissioned a brigadier general, he commanded the 9th Division at the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky. As chief of cavalry in the Army of the Cumberland, he contributed notably to Union successes in southeastern Tennessee in 1863. Sustaining severe wounds he reported briefly to Washington for court-martial duty, and early in 1864 was assigned to the District of Nebraska. Early in 1865 he was transferred to the District of Kansas. In 1866 he became Governor of New Mexico Territory. Despite a troublesome regime, he did not resign until 1869, when he returned to Kansas. In 1872 he was nominated for Congress by Liberal Republicans and Democrats, but was defeated. He died in Washington, D.C., January 26, 1882.²⁶

Distinguished citizen, soldier, patriot, General Mitchell was a key figure in the affairs of frontier Kansas and Nebraska. His stalwart contributions have been poorly recognized by those States. A brief sketch of his career appears in the *Kansas Historical Collections*.²⁷ (A Mitchell County, Kansas, was named for Wm. D. Mitchell, another Civil War hero.)²⁸ He is memorialized in Nebraska only by historical markers at Mitchell Pass in Scotts Bluff National Monument and at the site of old Fort Mitchell.

Of the several minor officers in command of Fort Mitchell,

²⁶ *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIII, 60-61.

²⁷ "Sketch of the Career of General Robert B. Mitchell," *Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society*, XVI, (1923-1925), 632-637, reprinted from the *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, April 26 and May 3, 1895. There is no mention here of Mitchell's military career in Nebraska.

²⁸ Frank W. Blackmar, ed., *Kansas, A Cyclopedia*, II, 295.

nothing can be learned except in the case of "Captain Hughes," whose name so appears in the journals left by Bratt and Carrington.²⁹ In Heitman, among several "Hughes" listed, we find one who quite fills the bill—Robert Patterson Hughes of Pennsylvania, birth and death dates undisclosed, but listed as retired in April 1903. His military record reveals that he enlisted as a private in the 12th Pennsylvania Infantry in April 1861; rose to Lieutenant-Colonel of the 199th Pennsylvania Infantry and was brevetted Colonel of Volunteers in April 1865 for gallantry and meritorious service in the assault on Fort Gregg, Virginia. He then joined the regular army and became a captain in the 18th U.S. Infantry in July 1866, and rose to become a major general of the U.S. Army in April 1902.³⁰

On June 11, 1866, Col. Henry B. Carrington led the 18th Regiment of U.S. Infantry past Fort Mitchell en route to Fort Laramie, thence going north on the Bozeman Trail to establish the three forts in the Powder River country.³¹ In February 1867 the Carringtons returned, crushed by the disaster inflicted on Fetterman and his command near Fort Phil Kearny in December 1866 by the Sioux and Cheyenne.³² The latest Fort Mitchell document available, dated May 22, 1866, finds Captain Shuman being relieved of his command, his successor unspecified. It seems possible that on June 11 Captain (then Lieutenant?) Hughes was detached to man this post, and that he continued to do so until its abandonment some time in 1867.

Captain Fouts of the 7th Iowa Cavalry will be remembered as a tragic figure in the episode known as the Battle of Horse Creek, on June 14, 1865. The most interesting account is given by Grinnell:

²⁹ See Mattes, "A History of Old Fort Mitchell," *Nebraska History*, XXIV (April-June, 1948), 78-79.

³⁰ Heitman, *op. cit.*, I, 552-553.

³¹ Carrington, *op. cit.*, p. 70; "Muster Roll of the Field, Staff and Band, 18th Regiment, U.S. Infantry for April 30 to June 30, 1866," in the Records of the War Department, Adjutant-General's Office, National Archives.

³² See "The Fetterman Disaster" in Hebard and Brininstool, *op. cit.*, pp. 297-346.

... Up to this time [The Brule Sioux] had taken no part in the war. They had been encamped at Fort Laramie, in charge of a white man named Elston, and had been subsisted by the troops. There had been complaint of the cost of this, and General Dodge ordered them sent east to a point where food was less costly. Colonel Moonlight, commander at Fort Laramie, sent them under guard to Fort Kearny, in Nebraska. It was a large village, about one hundred and eighty-five lodges, and Elston had them all in good control and had a uniformed and armed company of the Indians, whom he had been using to police the camp.

Fort Kearny was in the Pawnee country, and the Brules feared that if they were sent there the Pawnees would attack them in great force. They were thus much frightened and dissatisfied—exceedingly loath to go. Captain Fouts left Laramie with these Indians June 11, 1865. He had one hundred and thirty-five men and four officers of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry. They had hardly started before the Indians began to complain that the escort treated them badly, and abused the young girls. The result of this added discontent was that before they had been more than a day or two on the road the Indians held a secret council and decided to attack their guard at the next camp, and to join the hostiles who were in the north. The next camp was made on Horse Creek, a small stream on the Platte. Where the road crossed the creek, near its mouth, the troops put up their tents on the east bank, while the Indians camped on the west side near a bluff overgrown with willows. Early next morning a part of the troops and the wagon-train started down the road, while the soldiers who were to guard the Indians crossed Horse Creek and rode toward the lodges, to count the people and get them started on their way.

As the soldiers rode up, the women and children slipped in among the willows behind the lodges and hid, while the warriors came out and lined up to be counted, holding their bows and the few pistols they possessed hidden under their blankets. The plan was to let the soldiers approach very near, and then attack and kill them all, but the hot-headedness of some of the young men interfered with this plan. The officer was riding far ahead of his men, and as he rode close to the Indians the young men could not restrain themselves, and, leaping forward, killed the officer. No sooner had the troopers witnessed this than they wheeled about and galloped off as fast as they could go. The official record seems to show that the troops had no ammunition, for none had been issued the night before, though Lieutenant W. Hayward urged the commanding officer to issue ammunition to the men. Captain Wilcox, on learning what had taken place, followed the Indians, and found them just crossing the Platte, the women and children swimming the ponies, while the men were on the bank ready to fight. He did not attack them.

Colonel Moonlight at Fort Laramie, advised by tele-

graph from Camp Mitchell of what had happened, crossed the Platte with a strong force of cavalry and struck out northward in pursuit of the Indians. . . .³³

According to the Indians themselves, who were Grinnell's chief source of information, no Indians worth mentioning were killed, and it really wasn't much of a battle. This contradicts the official report of the battle given by Captain Wilcox (see below), as transposed by Coutant.³⁴ However, it is clearly established that Captain Fouts and at least three enlisted men were killed.

Arthur Woodward, curator of the Los Angeles County Museum, has informed the writer that his grandfather, Sgt. Simon B. Woodward, 7th Iowa Cavalry, was orderly for Captain Fouts, and was an eyewitness of his murder. He related that the Captain was shot in the head by Indians charging out of ambush. Another member of the 7th Iowa Cavalry at the time was the grandfather of the novelist McKinlay Kantor.³⁵

The wheel now comes full circle, for a full account of the "Fort Mitchell Cemetery" is to be found in Volume I, No. 8 (December 1918), of *Nebraska History*. Written by Albert Watkins, then Historian of the Nebraska State Historical Society, this comprises an exhaustive account of the surface archeological evidence at the site in 1910, based on a report by Robert Harvey; statements of 1918 by R. S. Hunt of Scottsbluff, owner of the site, and L. A. Heil, Superintendent of Fort McPherson National Cemetery, regarding the reinterment of Captain Fouts and the enlisted men; and a detailed account of the Battle of Horse Creek assembled by Mr. Watkins from the official reports by Colonel Moonlight and Captain Wilcox.³⁶ The latest and undoubtedly the most authentic information as to the disposition of soldiers supposedly buried at Fort Mitchell is provided by Mr. R. D.

³³ George B. Grinnell, *The Fighting Cheyennes* (New York, 1915), pp. 215-217. This is a classic work on the Indian Wars of the Plains. "Camp Mitchell" appears on a map showing Indian raids, p. 190.

³⁴ Coutant, *op. cit.*, p. 457.

³⁵ Interview, July 1947.

³⁶ Originally published in the Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year 1865.

Rasmusson of North Platte, who for years has taken a scholarly interest in ferreting out the stories behind the death of frontier soldiers buried at Fort McPherson:

Records at the Cemetery indicate that bodies were brought there on two occasions. In 1915 the body of Capt. W. D. Fouts and that of an "unknown" child. In 1918 the remains of two soldiers were reinterred.

Correspondence in the cemetery files indicates that the remains of Capt. Fouts were identified by the Captain's insignia. The fact that the last two moved here were soldiers was established by buttons etc., indicating that they were soldiers.

I am of the opinion that these two soldiers were not those who were killed on Horse Creek. Captain John Wilcox, Company 'B' 7th Iowa Cavalry in his report, which I found in the Roster of Soldiers, Iowa, states that after the battle they proceeded to Fort Mitchell, first burying their dead, but that the body of Captain Fouts was taken with them to Fort Mitchell for burial. I have other accounts of the battle and they also state that the three soldiers killed were buried on the battle field but that Captain Fouts was buried at Fort Mitchell.³⁷

As to the three enlisted men, Pattison identifies them as Richard Alden, Edward McMahan, and Richard Grover; but these names do not appear on the Fort McPherson burial register.³⁸

In our earlier report, two contemporary sketches of Fort Mitchell are cited—one by Bugler Moellman in 1864 or 1865, reproduced in *The Bozeman Trail*,³⁹ and one by William H. Jackson in 1866, appearing in *Nebraska History*, XXIV (April-June, 1943), 80. A third sketch has since turned up in a most unlikely spot, to wit: *Preliminary Report of the United States Geological Survey of Wyoming and Portions of Contiguous Territories*, by F. V. Hayden, published in 1871. The sketch, with the signature of "Nichols," appears on page 110 as "Fort Mitchell—Scott's Bluff" in connection with a chapter on Nebraska geology. There is no mention of Fort Mitchell in the text (and only fleeting reference to

³⁷ Letter, R. D. Rasmusson to the author, September 22, 1951.

³⁸ John J. Pattison, "With the U.S. Army Along the Oregon Trail, 1863-66," *Nebraska History*, XV (April-June, 1934), 79-93; Letter, Rasmusson to Mattes, May 6, 1948.

³⁹ Hebard and Brininstool, *op. cit.*, p. 75. The picture is labelled "Camp Mitchell, Nebraska Territory," and the date is erroneously given as 1863.

Scotts Bluff and Chimney Rock as landmarks), but since Hayden's Nebraska journey was made in 1867, the sketch may be presumed to be an authentic contemporary. If the exact date of Hayden's (or Nichols') visit to Scotts Bluff could be determined, we could probably extend the known duration of Fort Mitchell as an actual post, for the Nichols sketch clearly depicts an armed sentry in the foreground and a flag flying.

But we will let Fort Mitchell speak out for itself across the span of eighty-five years:

Report of the 11th Ohio Vol. Cav. to the Adjutant General of Ohio. For the year 1865

Sir:

It shall be the aim of this communication to be concise and to the point. The Seven Companies have been very much Scattered. E was Stationed at Horse Shoe, Labonte, and Deer Creek stations from the first of February until the first of June, the duty devolving upon them was guarding the Pacific Telegraph Line, Escorting government Trains and doing guard duty. The Squad at Deer Creek Station fortified it well, so as to be able to hold the place against any number of Indians that might choose to attack them. On the 21st of April John Donovan a private of this Company was killed by Indians on Laprelle Creek, and on the 23rd a detachment of 40 men of the Company had an engagement with a party of Indians at Camp Marshall. In this Skirmish Private L. E. Timmons was killed. On the 18th of May the Company was ordered to Report to Fort Laramie D. T. On the 23rd of May the detachment at Deer Creek were attacked by Indians which was Repulsed without loss on the part of the detachment. From the 1st of June until about the 11th of July the Company done garrison duty at Fort Laramie. The Company was then Sent up the Laramie River about 30 Miles under command of Capt Marshall to recruit the Stock and guard a large Supply Train. On the 29th of July the Company started on the Connor Expedition as Escort for the Supply Train and joined the Main Command under Gen Connor at Labonte Camp 90 miles above Laramie on the

North Platte River The whole Command moved out from this beautiful Camp on the first day of August striking at once for the heart of the Indian Country on Powder River. The whole command reached this Stream on the 15th of the Month and immediately set to work to erect a Stockade and Fort. On the 16th a detachment of the Company 16 men were Sent out to Scout, and look out for Indian Signs, they returned on the 17th having traveled about 80 Miles. On the 20st [sic] Aug Captain Marshall and 40 men were Sent out to support the Pawnee Scouts who were fighting the Sioux, the detachment Killed and Scalped two Indians while out on this Scouting expedition. (As the history of E and K are intimately connected we will leave them for the present.)

Company F was Stationed at Fort Collins one hundred and fifty Miles South of Fort Laramie, on the beginning of the year, Capt Evans in Command, in February the Company was employed in guarding the Overland Mail Line from Collins to Fort Halleck a distance of one hundred and fifty Miles. on the 30th of June a detachment of five men while escorting a coach Captured 6 horses from the Indians on Rock Creek. On the 8th of July the Company was ordered to report to Fort Laramie where it arrived on the 13th and reported for duty. The company was employed in doing garrison and escort duty until the 28th of Aug when it was relieved from duty at the Post and ordered to Hay grounds 30 Miles below Laramie here their duty was to guard the government hay. On the 13th of September the Company were Sent out on a Scout after Indians They traveled about 400 Miles without Seeing an Indian, On the 6 of Oct the Company was ordered back to Fort Laramie, and on the 7th 40 Men of the company were Sent as Escort for General P. E. Connor to Denver. On the Return of the Escorting Party, Capt. Evans with about the Same number of Men Escorted General Wheaton to Omaha, where they Still remain, the ballance of the Company have been doing duty at this place up to this time.

Company G was Stationed at the following Stations Viz Platte Bridge, Sweet Water Bridge, Three Crossings Saint

Mary's and South Pass. Here we have a Single Company holding 4 Stations and guarding over 150 Miles of the Pacific Telegraph Line. There is no Company belonging to the Regiment which has been more thoroughly tried by the Indians than this Company, their duties have been heavy, and they have discharged them nobly. From the 1st of March until the 5th of September the detachments at the different Stations had 13 engagements with the Indians, the Company lost 2 commissioned officers and 2 privates Killed and one wounded. Capt Rhinehart was Killed in a night attack on an Indian Camp. Lt Casper W Collins was Killed at Platte Bridge on the 26th of July while leading a charge in Command of 30 Men belonging to the 11th Kansas, against from eight hundred to one thousand Indian warriors, the object being to rescue a government Train. The life of this brave young Officer was Sacrificed through the Cowardice of the Kansas Officers, But as there has been an investigation ordered by the Secretary of War I refrain from comments. Twenty men of this Company under Lieut Britney accompanied Brev Brig Gen Tom Moonlight on his famous expedition against the Indians, When he was hunting for them in the opposite direction from the one where their trail led. Lieut Britney and his Squad were Mounted on poor Broken down horses; although it was in the Month of May heavy Snows fell and the Men Suffered very much from the Severe cold. One Morning after the command Started out from Camp Genl Moonlight Saw Something in the distance which took to be a large party of Indians. In the place of Sending forward Some of his own Regiment that were well mounted, he Sent an orderly back to the Rear of the column for Lieut Britney and Squad to move forward and Reconnoiter, and forward they went on their poor Stock. they were Soon far ahead of the command that came on liesurly. It was Soon ascertained that the Supposed Indians were nothing but a herd of Antelopes

On the 27th of May A party of Indians numbering about 300 hundred attacked the Station at St. Mary's defended by 5 Men of G Co The resistance was desperate, But the Indians soon Succeeded in Setting fire to the Stables and

as the wind blew directly toward the Station it was soon wrapt in flames, but the brave defenders determined to die game, they secured a Supply of ammunition and provision and Knocked out a few logs on the rear of the building and retreated into an underground cave determined to die game. Luckily there was a box of Metallic Catridges in the Station that soon commenced to explode, these had a good effect as the Indians became frightened and left. As soon as the coast was clear one of the boys crawled out and pulled the end of the telegraph wire into the cave and by the aid of a Relay the operator Sent a dispatch to South Pass for assistance, and thus the 5 men made their escape.

On the 5th of September Co G was relieved from duty at the Posts between Platte Bridge and South Pass and Ordered to Laramie for duty. Where it has been doing Garrison duty up to the present.

Co H has been Stationed at Fort Mitchell 55 Miles East of Laramie on the Platte River. The company participated in the celebrated Indian fights at Mud Springs and Rush Creek where 150 Men under Command of Lt Col Wm O Collins fought from fifteen hundred to two thousand of the dusky warriors, Since that time this Company has carried the Mail from Julesberg to Laramie, This has been heavy and laborious duty, yet they have never flinched but have had the Mail through in good time. Besides this company has built one Mail Station, near the noted Land Mark Chimney Rock, besides repairing the one at Mud Springs.

Company I was doing duty at Fort Laramie at the commencement of the year 1865. This Co also participated in the celebrated fights at Mud Springs and Rush Creek being under Command of Capt Apt at this time. In these engagements the Co had two men wounded. On the return of the Company to Laramie they done garrison duty until the 27th of March When Lieut John R. Malony with 30 Men of the Company were ordered to Raw Hide Creek 40 Miles North East of Fort Laramie Having complied with Instructions they Returned on the 29th.

On the 1st of April Lt John R. Malony and 30 Men were ordered to Horse Shoe Station 38 Miles West of Fort Laramie

to do Garrison duty. They done duty here until the 18th of May Lieut Malony and Squad were ordered down to Laramie to join the Company. The company continued doing duty here until the 29 of August. On the 6th of July Lieut John R. Malony with a Squad of 15 Men was ordered to Escort Telegraph Repair train as far West as South Pass, which place the Squad reached on the 3rd of August. Started on their Return on the 8th of August and arrived at Laramie on the 26th On the 29 of August Capt T. B. Harlan in Command of the Company Started enroute for Three Crossings, where they arrived on the 18th of Sept. The company Since that time have Garrisoned Sweet Water, Three Crossings, St Marys, and South Pass Stations besides doing escort duty and carrying the Mails.

Company K was Stationed at Fort Halleck on the Overland Stage Line 130 Miles South West of Fort Laramie at the commencement of the year 1865. Their duty for the 3 first Months of the year were Shoveling Snow and doing guard duty. On the 15th of Feb Sergeant Danl' Christ and private John J. Greeny were sent out by Capt J. L. Humfreville Commanding the Co. to look up Some Cattle that had Strayed away from the Post. They were overtaken by one of those dreadful Snow Storms that are prevalent in the Mountain Region about Fort Halleck. The two Men became lost and on the night of the 17th of Feb Greeny was frozen to death on the open Prairie 18 miles from the Post, Sergt Christ was found by Lt J. A. Brown on the morning of the 18th So badly frozen, that death relieved him from his Sufferings on the 2nd of March.

On the 2nd of June Indians were Reported near Platte Ferry 30 Miles West of the Post Capt Humfreville Ordered Lieut J. A. Brown, First Sergt Walter Florentine and 30 Men to reconnoiter the Road as far West as Sulphur Springs a distance of 90 Miles, On his arrival at the Ferry he found that the Overland Mail had been Stopped on account of Indian depredations. Lt Brow and Squad loaded one Coach with Mail Sacks and proceeded on to Sulphur Springs Station, On his return he left 3 men at Sulph Springs Station, 5 at Bridger's Pass, 5 at Pine Grove Station, Five Miles West

of Sage Creek Station Lt Brown and Squad found the Bodies of two citizens (names unknown) who had been killed by Indians these the party buried as well as they could. At Sage Creek Lt Brown left 4 privates in charge of Cor Wm H. Caldwell, and returned to Halleck with the remainder of the Squad, on or about the 5th of June Sergt Wm McFadden in Charge of a Squad of 18 Men Escorted Hon' Shuyler Calfax Lt Gov Bross and party as far West as Sulphur Springs Station. After this party passed up the Road the Indians Numbering about one hundred attacked Sage Creek Station between daylight and Sun up on the morning of June 8th The party found that it would be impossible to hold the Station against Such fearful odds, as it would be an easy Matter for the Indians to burn them out. The party consisting of 7 men 5 Soldiers and two Citizens attempted to cut their way through the Indians. George Bodine and Perry Stewart and the two Citizens were killed. Corpt Caldwell and Wm Willson were both wounded But Succeeded in making their escape Orlando Duckett was unhorsed. the horse making his escape to the Indians Duckett Slipted into the Willows on Willow Creek and thus eluded the Indians and Made his escape. Sergt McFadden and Squad returned the 9th and Recovered the bodies of Bodine and Stewart and brought them to Fort Halleck where they were decently interred, On the 15th Capt J. L. Humfreville. With first Sergt Florentine and nine Men Inspected the Road as far West as Sulphur Springs Station and found all the Stage Stock driven off by the Indians. On their Return they brought two Coaches through loaded with Mail. On the 22nd of June First Sergt Walter Florentine an 5 Men were Sent as Escort with two Coaches loaded with Mail as far East as Little Laramie Creek on their Return they Saw Indians, and in fact the Indians followed them to within Sight of Fort Halleck. Sergt Florentine and 15 Men immediately Started in pursuit. The Indians struck Northward, the party chased them nearly 30 Miles without overtaking them. On June 25th Sergt Florentine and 8 Men Escorted two Coaches through to Sulphur Springs Station. on his return he brought down all the Men belonging to the Company that were guarding

Mail Stations. The Company was relieved from duty at Halleck on the 28th of June and Started en route for Fort Laramie on the 29th arrived July 3rd From this time until the 8 of August the Company rested and Recruited the Stock. On the 8 the Company started for Powder River in charge of 100 Wagons loaded with supplies for Genl Connor. Arrived at Connor's Camp on Powder River August 21st On the Morning of the 22nd Companies E and K Started for Tongue River. The Command now Consisted of the following troops, Signal and Engineer Corps of about 30 Men, a detachment of 40 Men Co F 7th Iowa Batter, One Company Pawnee Scouts, E and K 11th Ohio On our arrival at Clear Fork 40 Miles West of Powder River we were joined by Companies L and M 2nd California and one Company of Winnebago Indians.

Nothing of note occurred until the Command Reached Tongue River and went into Camp on the afternoon of the 28th of August, When word was brought in by the Scouts that they had discovered an Indian Village. Genl Connor Soon issued orders for Detachments from all the Companies but E to be in readiness to move in one hour for a night attack 40 Men from Co K under Command of Capt. J. L. Humfreville were of the party. But owing to the distance being so much greater than was expected the Command did not arrive at the Indian Village until 8 ocl the next Morning. The whole force under the immediate Command of the Genl Charged into the village which was soon wrapted in flames and entirely Consumed The resistance on the part of Arrap-hoe Indians was desperate and the fight lasted until 2 ocl P.M. Capt Humfreville and detachment were complimented by the Genl for bravery displayed in the action. On the 2nd of Sept Co E under Command of Capt Marshall were ordered to Scout down the River as far as the Yellow Stone River, the Company returned to the command on the 9th having traveled Some 300 Miles. About the 7th of Sept. Capt. Humfreville with 30 Men was ordered to Scout West as far as Rose Creek a distance of 70 Miles. At the Same time Cap North in Command of 40 men belonging to the Pawnee Scouts was ordered to Scout East as far as Powder River

the object in Sending out these parties was to discover if possible the Where abouts and Condition of Col Coles command Capt North discovered Coles trail returned and reported. Capt Humfreville and Squad returned about the Same time. On the 14th Capt Marshal was ordered with E Co to Scout to Powder River and overtake Col Coles command this they accomplished and joined the Command at Clear Fork 40 Miles West of Fort Reno on Powder River. having traveled over 300 Miles. Both Companies now Returned to Fort Laramie where they arrived October 4 having been out 58 days and having traveled over 1000 Miles Co E was ordered to the Government Hay grounds on the 5th of October and K into the post for duty. Co L was Stationed at Fort Collins at the beginning of the 1865 but were Soon relieved and ordered to Denver for duty the Co remained here on duty for some time, when a part of the Co Escorted Genl Henry down to Kearney and back to Laramie, Where they rejoined the ballance of the Company which had arrived a few days previous. The Company was employed doing Garrison duty and Escorting Mails &c until about the 20 of Sept when the whole Company under Command of Lieut Hanna was ordered out on a Scout after Indians, They returned on the 3rd day having Seen no Indians. In a Short time after this Company was ordered up the Road to Garrison Horse Shoe, Labonte and Deer Creek Stations and have continued on duty at those places until the present time

The duties devolving upon the Companies of the 11th Ohio have been hard but have been accomplished with an energy and will that bespeaks for them the highest praise. No Regiment of Men ever sent to this Country has performed half the duty or went through half the dangers and hardships that the 11th Ohio V. C. has. The men of this Regiment are feared by the Indians far more than any other troops that have been stationed in this country.

Sergt B. Moffoot
Respected friend

If these notes will aid you in the Report that you are

called upon to make you are welcome to them.

Yours truly

Wm Mooney

Co K 11th O.V.C.

Hd Qrs. Fort Laramie I. T.

March 15th 1865

Orders)

No 259)

The following enlisted men of H Co 11 O.V.C. are this day are returned from sick in Hospital to duty, Sergt Hickman and Patrick Flarety, and will proceed to Camp Mitchell and report to their Company Commander for duty without delay

By Order

Thos L MacKey

Comdg Post

R. E. Talpey

Lieut and Act Post Adjt

Fort Mitchell I. T.

March 19th 1865

Capt Shuman Cmdg Post Fort Mitchell will send detachment of men to have wood to the following camping plaices, Viz, Mud Springs, Court House Roock, Ficklin's Ranch and Fort Mitchell to the latter two plaices Capt Shuman will furnish the necessary transportation The amount of wood at Each plaice must be sufficient to supply 1800 hundred men for one day.

Wm. Baumer

Lieut 1st U.V. Neb Cav

Assigned to Comdg W. S. Dist of Neb

Hd Qrs North Sub Dist of the Plains

Fort Laramie D. T.

July 2nd 1865

Special Order

No. 23

I Major Thomas L. MacKay Commanding Post Ft Laramie D.T. will have twelve Men and one Non Commissioned

Officer Stationed half way between here and Ft Mitchell D.T. Will take Eight Mules along One team to run each way the Non Commissioned Officer will have way bill Made on arrival and departure the Non Commissioned Officer to report every man who fails to make good time Stock not to be injured by hard riding

II Capt Childs A.Q.M will given Men Stationed below Ft Laramie as Mail Carriers an Order for Corn for Ninety days from first train Enroute for the Post

III Each Company Commander will make their Monthly and Tri Monthly Returns to Post Ft Laramie and not to Sub dist Hd Qr as heretofore ordered all Companies will be taken up as in Regular garrison of Ft Laramie that are Stationed on Telegraph line and Reported as on detached Service

By order of Maj Thos. L. MacKay 11th O.V.C

Comdg North Sub dist of the Plains

Jno Q Lewis

2nd Lieut and A. A. A Genl

Co Co H 11th O. V. C

Ft Mitchell

D. T.

Fort Mitchell D. T.

August 13th 1865

Lieut. Coburn

Sir;

About half past 2 PM 12th Inst, three Indians were discovered approaching the mail station at Chimney Rock from the north side of Platte River and after viewing the camp for a few moments, they proceeded up the river about two miles and there crossed over to the South Side, After the Indians had crossed the river Sergt Carberry and three men belonging to Co H 11th Ohio Vol. Cav, started out to where the Indians had crossed the river and met them, At first they appeared to be rather friendly, but when they were asked to go to camp, they (the Indians) put spurs to their horses and endeavored to Escape, Sergt Carberry, then ordered his men to fire up on them, which they did Killing One Indian

and One horse. Two of the Indians were mounted on Government horses, and One of them on a U.S. Mule. While Sergeant Carberry and his men were dismounted and firing One of his horses became unmanageable and made his escape and followed up the retreating Indians who immediately captured him and then crossed the river and disappeared behind the Bluffs. To day at about 3 PM, thirty (30) or forty (40) Indians were seen in the vicinity of Chimney Rock and two men came to this Post to secure amunition. They stated that an attack was expected at the time they left the Station. After procuring the amunition they started to Chimney Rock and I have not herd from them since. Whether the Indians intend making any hostile demonstrations in that quarter or not I am unable to say, but it is evident that they are on the road and in force

I am Sir

Very Respectfully

Your Obt Servt

(Signed) W. R. Behymer

Comd'g Fort Mitchell

Official

H P. Humphreys

1st Lt 5th U.S. and A.A.A.G.

Head Quarters North Sub Dist of the Plains
Fort Laramie D. T. Sept 6 1865

Special Order

No 57

I So much of Special Order No 55 current series from these Head Quarters as Orders 1st Lieut *William Ellsworth* 11th Ohio Cavalry to rejoin his Company, reporting for duty to Captain *J. S. Shuman* at Fort Mitchell D.T. is hereby revoked and Lieut *Ellsworth* will without delay, report at the hay fields in the Vicinity of the old Indian Agency to Captain *Wm H. Evans* Company F 11th Ohio Cavalry and relieve him of the command of his Company.

II Major *Thos L Mackey* Commanding 11th Ohio Cavalry haveing been Ordered to Fort Leavenworth Kansas for Muster out and as Captain *W. H. Evans* is the senior officer

of that Regiment present, he will as soon as relieved of the Command of his Company by 1st Lieut *Ellsworth* 11th Ohio Cavalry, report to this Post and assume Command of his Regiment,

III 1st Lieut *Ewell P Drake* 11th Ohio Cavalry with a detachment of twenty-five men to be furnished by the Commanding Officer Post of Fort Laramie D.T. from the 16th Kansas Cav will proceed to Denver City C.T. in charge of Gov't Horses being sent to that place.

Lieut *Drake* will report to Capt *S. D. Childs* a.q.m for further instructions.

IV . . . To enable 1st Lieut *Ewell P Drake* 11th Ohio Cavalry to settle some business contracted while A.A.Q.M. at Fort Collins he is hereby granted permission to remain absent from his Post fifteen days from the time he arrives at Fort Collins C. T. on his return from Denver City. His attachment will immediately return to this Post.

V 1st Lieut *H. C. Britney* Commanding G Company 11th Ohio Cavalry will turn over one Mountain Howitzer and the Howitzer ammunition for which he is responsible to Cap *J. F. Shanks* Commanding "I" Co 6th US Vols

By order of Col. Bvt Brig Genl Staggs
Wm Coburn
Lieut and a a a Genl

Hd Qrs. North Sub Dist of the Plains
Fort Laramie Sept 4th 1865

Sir

After Monday Sept 4th the Mail between Fort Laramie D.T. and Julesburg C.T. will be run by the following Time Table leaving both ends of the route on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, Drivers and Non Commissioned Officers in Charge of escort will be particular that they do not arrive at a Station over five Minutes ahead of time

Going East			Going West	
Arrives	Leaves		Arrives	Leaves
A.M.	8.00 A.M.	Laramie	8.00 A.M.	12.00 P.M.
3.45 P.M.	4.00 P.M.	Cold Spring	11.45 P.M.	4.10 P.M.
11.45 P.M.	12.00 P.M.	Mitchell	3.45 P.M.	8.15 A.M.
4.30 A.M.	7.45 A.M.	Cut Off	8.00 A.M.	12.30 A.M.
3.15 P.M.	3.30 P.M.	Mud Spring	12.15 A.M.	3.30 P.M.
12.15 P.M.	12.30 P.M.	Pole Creek	3.15 P.M.	8.00 A.M.
8.00 A.M.		Julesburg		

By Order of

Col and Bvt. Brig. Gen Stagg

Wm Coburn

Lieut and A. A. A. Genl.

Camp Near Fort Mitchell D.T.

Sept. 26th 1865

Camp Shuman)
)
 Comdg Ft. Mitchell) Sir

Genl. Stagg wishes you to forward a report of number of horses in your command and number required to run the Mail from Chimney Rock to Fort Laramie, the 6th W. Virginia to run the Mail from Julesburg to Chimney Rock. Send it by first Mail.

I am Captain.

Very Respectfully

Your Obet. Servt.

J. Stagg, Jr.

Lieut and A.A.D.C.

Hd Qrs West Sub District of Nebraska

Fort Laramie D.T. Sept 27th /65

Special Order

No 7

2nd Lieut W. R. Behymer 11th O.V.C is hereby relieved from duty at Fort Mitchell D.T. and will report immediately

for duty to the Comdg Officer of his Regt at Fort Laramie DT.

By order of
Col and Brevt Brig Genl Staggs
Wm Coburn
A A A Genl

Head Qrs West Sub Dist of Neb
Fort Laramie D.T. Sept 27th /65

Special Orders
No 7

I 2d Lieut *W. R. Behymer* 11th Ohio. Cav. is hereby relieved from duty at Fort Mitchell D.T. and will report immediately for duty to the commanding Officer of his Regiment at Fort Laramie D.T.

II Private *Oliver Boggs* Co "F" 11th Ohio Cav Vols is hereby relieved from duty at these Head Qrs and will report to Captain *Geo. M. Bailey* A.C.M for duty

By order of
Col. and Bvt Brig Genl Staggs
Wm Coburn
Lieut and A.A.A. General

Hd Qrs Fort Mitchell D T
March 3d 1866

Special Order)
)
No 13)

Lieut Wm R. Behymer Comdg Co "H" 11th O.V.C will at once shoot (1) one Mule the property of the United States and for which he is responsible the same having the Glanders Ordered to be shot to prevent contagion

Capt John Collar 12th Mo Cav
Comdg Post

Hd Qrs Fort Mitchell D.T.
March 4th 1866

Special Order)

)

No. 14)

I x x x x x Pursuant to S.O. No 2 D.T. Feb 26th 1866
Asst Surg H. C. Linn 12th Mo Cav Vols is hereby relieved
from duty at this Post

II Pursuant to the same Order the undersigned hereby
turns over Command of this Post to Lieut Wm R Behymer
Co. H. 12th Ohio Cav Vols

John Collar
Capt Co "H" 12th Mo Cav Vols
Comdg Post

Head Qrs 11th Ohio Cav Vols
Fort Laramie D.T.

April 17th 1866

Special Orders)

)

No 14)

III 1st Lieut Wm R. Behymer, H, Co 11th Ohio Cav Vols
is hereby detailed as Actg Regimental Quarter Master 11th
Ohio Cav Vols and having turned over whatever Public
Property for which he is responsible at Fort Mitchell D.T.
will report to these Head Quarters for duty without delay

By Order Maj Wm H. Evans
Comdg 11th Ohio Cav Vols

John B. Furay
Lieut 11th Ohio Cav Vols
Regtl Adjt

By Telegraph From Laramie

To

Capt J. S. Shuman Q.M

Issue Rations if you have them if not Send the Indians
up here

H. E. Maynadier
Col Comdg

Fort Mitchell DT
May 11th 1866

Lieut H P Humphrey.
Sir

I have been Issueing Rations to Indians of Whistler Yellow Jacket and Bigthighs Bands and would ask that you order me rations in place of those Issued in compliance with Orders from Sub Dist Hd Qdrs

I remain Your Obt Servt

J S Shuman
Capt Co K 11th O V C

Hd Qrs District of the Platte
Ft Laramie May 14th /66

Respectfully returned to Capt J S Shuman Fort Mitchell who will send requisition for the amount of Rations issued to Indians The commissary will be Ordered to Issue thereon

By order of
Col H. E. Maynadier
H. P. Humphreys
1st Lieut 5th US Vols
A A A Genl

Hd Qrs Dist of Nebraska
Office Asst Commisary of Musters
Omaha N T May 8th 1866

Commanding Officer
Co "H" 11 Ohio Cav Vols
Fort Mitchell D T

Sir I have the honor to inform you That I have on the 2d inst mustered out of the U.S. Volunteer Service the fol-

lowing named Enlisted Men of Your Company Viz
Corpl Eli Tracy
Pvt Chas Stambaugh

I am Sir
Very Respectfully
Your Obdt Servt
Bailey
Capt 5 US Infty Vols
A.Q.M

By Telegraph from
Ft Laramie D T
May 22d 1866

To Capt J S Shuman
Fort Mitchell

The Colonel Commanding directs you to turn over Your
command and report for duty at this Post immediately

H P Humphreys
Lieut and AAAG