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Article Summary: Military posts established at North Platte and Sidney protected the employees and equipment of the Union Pacific Railroad. Soldiers guarded the small railroad stations in the area and accompanied section crews doing maintenance.

Cataloging Information:

Names: Christopher Augur, Arthur MacArthur, Anson Mills, Frederick Schwatka, [Post Commissary Sergeant] Page, A M Dudley, William W Belknap, James Henton

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Photographs / Images: Captain Arthur MacArthur with his family, including young Douglas MacArthur; Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka, 3rd Cavalry, Arctic explorer; first Union Pacific bridge across the Platte; Captain Anson Mills, 3rd Cavalry; engineers' plans for officers' quarters; list of companies and officers stationed at North Platte, 1867-1878; list of surgeons stationed at the post

The Post of North Platte Station, 1867-1878

BY THOMAS R. BUECKER

As the Union Pacific Railroad crossed western Nebraska in 1867, there were two military posts established for the protection of railroad employees and equipment: Fort Sidney (Sidney Barracks) and North Platte Station. The history of those two posts is little remembered today, though Fort Sidney is probably more familiar than North Platte Station. Troops were stationed at North Platte for 11 years from 1867 to 1878, but its role in the Indian wars has become blurred and its military significance forgotten. To better understand the decades of the 1860s-1870s in central and western Nebraska, the history of this small Army post needs examination.

By January 2, 1867, the railroad reached North Platte, and as the grade moved westward, Indian depredations increased. In recalling the construction of the Union Pacific, Chief Engineer Grenville M. Dodge said, "Every mile had to be run within range of musket and there was not a moment's security."¹ The danger to employees necessitated military protection. North Platte, planned by the UP as a freight division point with shops and other facilities, was the location of the long railroad bridge over the North Platte River. General Christopher Augur, commanding officer of the Department of the Platte, decided that a company of soldiers should be stationed there. On January 29, 1867, Company I, 36th Infantry, was sent from Fort McPherson, 14 miles to the east, to "insure perfect security to the depot and bridge" at North Platte.² Its commanding officer was Captain Arthur MacArthur,³ father of General Douglas MacArthur of World Wars I and II fame.

Until the Fort McPherson quartermaster could arrange supplies, the railroad furnished quarters and fuel for the troops. Company I camped on the north side of the railroad west of

the new town. In addition to the main camp, 10 enlisted men and a "trusty" non-commissioned officer were stationed on the east end of the bridge.⁴ While the camp was established primarily for the protection of railroad property, it also served as a base of supplies for troops stationed along the railroad and for cavalry engaged in scouting the countryside. The post was designated "Camp at North Platte Station."

Winter, a time of few Indian forays, found soldiers pulling guard and trying to keep comfortable while living in tents. One night nine men deserted and headed east, intending to cross the frozen river. However, the river broke up and the deserters were apprehended attempting to cross the railroad bridge. They were confined in a guard house of railroad rails formed into a 12-foot high triangle and covered. There they suffered through severe winter weather.⁵ In March, 1867, Captain MacArthur reported quiet in the vicinity of the post and no rumors of Indian depredations. In early May General Augur decided to make better use of MacArthur's company and transferred it to Fort Sedgwick, Colorado, some 70 miles to the west.⁶ With spring sure to bring increased hostile activities, many felt removal of North Platte soldiers ill-advised. Colonel Henry Carrington, commander at Fort Sedgwick, urged the department commander to replace MacArthur's company with another. He wanted troops to remain at North Platte should it become the assembly point for friendly Indians, as the current Indian commissioners planned. Carrington felt the line was in no immediate danger but was vulnerable to Indian aggression from Fort Kearny west.⁷

After Company I left North Platte on May 7, Indians began to roam the area. Depredations and attacks against the railroad began in earnest, and by summer opposition to construction reached its highest level. Hostile attacks were frequent, particularly between North Platte and Julesburg, where grading was underway. At the same time friendly Indians began coming into North Platte. The agent there requested a detachment of 12 to 15 soldiers to assist in managing the friendlies and to provide security against hostiles.⁸ Fear and apprehension of attack in the North Platte vicinity grew, even though Fort McPherson was close by.

Finally the need for more military protection was underscored by the derailment and burning of a train near

Plum Creek (east of modern-day Lexington) and the death of six workmen nearby. Realizing the danger to the immediate vicinity of North Platte, General Augur telegraphed Fort Sedgwick to send one company by special train to that place. They arrived field-equipped and went into camp at the station to protect railroad employees and property and to assist the Indian agent. In addition, a company was ordered out from Fort McPherson, along with a detachment of Pawnee Scouts. Under the command of Major Richard I. Dodge,⁹ the force was to strike hostile Indians in retaliation for the Plum Creek incident. Several days later the Pawnee detachment successfully attacked a group of Cheyenne and inflicted heavy losses. The brief affair saved the railroad from further molestation.¹⁰

In the ensuing weeks the troops served as guards to stations on the railroad east toward Fort Kearny. In late August Company B, 14th Infantry was ordered to remain at North Platte and make it a permanent station. The new post was actually a subpost of Fort Sedgwick, which furnished troops and supplies. The new post was briefly named Camp Sargent, in honor of an officer that died of wounds received at Gravelly Run during the Civil War. For several weeks the troops lived in tents on the north side of the tracks across from the depot. In October Major Dodge removed the post 400 yards west of the railroad depot and 200 feet south of the tracks. Although the post was to be permanent, no reservation was declared, and the land occupied was on the townsite owned by the Union Pacific. The railroad land commissioners were cooperative and with few exceptions declined to sell the lots occupied by the post.¹¹ The designation Camp Sargent was soon dropped, and by winter the post was officially known as North Platte Station.

In the latter part of the month materials for the first buildings were received and construction of quarters began. Four structures were erected from portable white pine frames made in Chicago. The post took on a temporary appearance, but quarters were better than the tents in which the soldiers formerly lived. All buildings were constructed alike, the walls of upright boards and battened and the roofs of so-called "composition"—boards covered with tar paper secured by means of batten. The buildings were arranged around a



Captain Arthur MacArthur, first commanding officer at North Platte Station (January-May, 1867) with his family, including young Douglas MacArthur (behind Mrs. MacArthur).



Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka, 3rd Cavalry, who served at North Platte Station, was later famous for Arctic exploration. Courtesy US Military Academy Archives.

parade ground with officers' quarters, storehouse, and guard house on the west side and the company barracks on the east. The officers' quarters, a two-room 26x44-foot building with attic, housed two officers most of the time. To the south and in line with officers' quarters was located a storehouse with a capacity for the supplies of one company. The third building on the west side was a small guard house, 12x20 feet, containing a guard room and prison room. Across the parade ground was a one-story barracks building, 30x96 feet, with adjoining kitchen and mess room. The building was heated by three stoves, with one end of the dormitory partitioned into a wash room. To take care of the sick, a hospital tent was used when needed. The seriously ill were sent to the post hospital at Fort McPherson.

A flagstaff was installed midway between the officers' quarters and the barracks, and the buildings and grounds (about 8 acres), were surrounded by a fence.¹² Built to house but one company, the post never was taxed beyond its limit.

Before winter was over, several more buildings were added. South of the barracks two small quarters were soon added, one for the first sergeant, the other quarters for a laundress. A stable holding eight horses was built, a larger stable being unnecessary until cavalry troops formed the garrison. In 1869 a one-story officers' quarters was erected just south of the existing unit to house a post surgeon. Only infantry soldiers served at the garrison for the first three years. Because the post was laid out square with the cardinal directions, it did not align with town streets running parallel to the railroad, which angled through the city.

One of the post buildings, the guard house, was frequently used by the town. North Platte in its earliest years had no jail. When civilian culprits were arrested, they were kept in the guard house. The Army billed the county for boarding and tending the prisoners. The guard house, adequately warm but imperfectly ventilated, had a capacity of six prisoners but there was a tendency to overload it with civilian offenders. The structure was built principally of adobe brick, making it necessary to post a sentry inside to keep the prisoners from cutting their way to freedom. After the town built a jail, soldier guards were requested several times by the sheriff to help when mobs threatened to seize prisoners. Such an event occurred in 1871:

Sheriff Woodhurst . . . comprehending the situation, went to the Commander of the Post and asked for a guard to protect the jail. This was granted, and the leaders of the mob changed their tactics and presented a petition asking him to turn Manning over to them, and censuring him for protecting a murderer. His reply to this was that, being sheriff, it was his duty to protect the prisoners, and he would do so. Not to be foiled and lest Manning should be spirited away, the citizens put a guard at the jail to prevent him being removed without their knowledge. This state of affairs continued for five days, to the annoyance of Captain Brown and the sheriff, but the sheriff was equal to the occasion and, procuring a soldier's uniform, caused Manning to put it on in the morning and march to the post with the guard when it was relieved. The scheme worked and he was taken to Fort McPherson, guarded by soldiers, to be kept until called for.¹³

On occasion prisoners in the guard house escaped and hid in town while avoiding patrols. In one incident a deserter hid in the kitchen of a Mrs. McConnell, much to the consternation of the ladies present. Eventually captured, he was "presented with certain heavy jewelry consisting of bracelets and ball and chain and entered on the register of the barracks jail."¹⁴

The spring of 1868 brought an increase of Indian activity in the North Platte area. Most of the Indians were in small bands on their way to the Republican Valley to hunt; however, there were enough depredations to warrant additional military guards. With 2nd Cavalry companies from Fort McPherson patrolling east of North Platte, soldiers from the post were sent out as guards to small railroad stations. O'Fallon's, Ogallala, and Maxwell stations were usual duty points for five-man details.¹⁵ Guards were also sent with section crews doing routine maintenance. Besides giving a feeling of security to railroad employees, soldiers could observe Indian movements. A typical incident of Indian harassment occurred at O'Fallon's station when a section crew rushed into the station pursued by Indians. When soldiers returned with section men to recover tools, about 75 Indians on the bluffs fired on the party. The men again retreated to O'Fallon's to telegraph for help. A lieutenant and 10 enlisted men arrived from North Platte to assist the detachment, but the Indians had disappeared.¹⁶ For several years guarding small railroad stations remained the main activity of infantrymen at North Platte.

The abandonment of the Bozeman Trail in Wyoming and Montana in 1868 freed a regiment and a half, and General Augur spread its complement of men along the Union Pacific Railroad. In June Company D, 18th Infantry, arrived at

North Platte for duty, and by October companies of the 18th were found at every station between Fort Kearny and Cheyenne. When incidents with hostiles were reported west of North Platte, soldiers were hurried to investigate. Usually they returned without sighting Indians, hostile or friendly, but the presence of soldiers reassured settlers and railroad employees. By 1870 it was determined that a cavalry company should occupy North Platte Station. Although infantry detachments continued as station guards, cavalry units were mobile and more effective for scouting and pursuit. That fall the garrison, Company I, 9th Infantry, was replaced by Company F, 5th Cavalry.¹⁷ A stable to hold 85 horses and a small grain storehouse were constructed in the spring of 1871 as the cavalry period at North Platte Station began.

Another change took place in 1871 as Fort Sedgwick was abandoned and its men and material moved to Sidney Barracks. Afterward Fort McPherson furnished troops and supplies for North Platte Station until it was declared an independent post four years later. The post took on an improved appearance with the addition of gravel walks and a carriage way. Trees were also set out around the parade ground.¹⁸

Scouting was the main preoccupation for the cavalry garrison. Shortly after Company F arrived at North Platte, most of the men were sent with several companies of Pawnee Scouts to the Republican River country. They returned a month later having found no Indians, a common result of scouting expeditions. In March, 1871, one officer and 27 men of the company scouted three days toward Ogallala for Oglala Sioux without a sign of hostiles.¹⁹ It was not uncommon for most men to be absent on scout for days or weeks. On March 12, 1871, Captain William H. Brown,²⁰ post commander, and 30 men moved against Indians who were driving off stock within 3 miles of town. The detachment chased the Indians 40 miles through "swamps and over sand hills" but failed to overtake them. The troops returned the next day after traveling about 80 miles.²¹

In May, 1872, Company M, 3rd Cavalry, Captain Anson Mills²² commanding, arrived for duty and remained for three years. Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka,²³ later famous as an Arctic explorer, served with the company. Besides regular scouting patrols and other routine duties, Company M provided escorts for hunting excursions. Because North Platte was the

closest railroad point to buffalo ranges of the Republican Valley, parties of businessmen, politicians, and high ranking military officers from the East made the post a staging area. As a courtesy and for security, escorts for the hunters were provided from the garrison. In the autumn of 1872, William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody arrived with a group of businessmen from Omaha to hunt. Lieutenant Schwatka provided equipment and a squad of cavalymen as their escort.²⁴ In another instance Lieutenant General Philip Sheridan was at North Platte with a party planning a hunting expedition toward Fort Hays, Kansas, to the south. Company F, 5th Cavalry, then stationed at the post, and a detail from Fort McPherson under the command of Captain Brown provided escort.²⁵

Besides serving as guards for hunting parties, the men themselves hunted in the Dismal and Loup Valleys to the north. In October, 1874, Lieutenant Schwatka and a 29-man detail hunted for a month and returned with a large quantity of game to supplement the garrison later. The party covered a distance of over 475 miles.²⁶ As a result of another hunt, troopers returned with 11 elk calves which they corralled. The newspaper stated "it would pay anyone for the time spent visiting the barracks to see the trophies of the hunt." When the company changed stations, the elk were sent to a park near Cincinnati.²⁷

While Captain Mills was the commanding officer, he attempted to improve the buildings and grounds. A new fence replaced the one put up in 1867. The dilapidated old fence allowed wandering livestock, particularly hogs, to roam the post to the annoyance of the garrison.²⁸ It was also proposed to align post streets with those of the town, but the plan was never totally carried out. A hospital containing a ward room, kitchen, and dispensary was erected in 1874 from lumber salvaged from Fort Kearny (abandoned in 1871).²⁹ Mills' request for remodeling buildings in 1873 was denied because of a lack of quartermaster funds. Although the buildings presented a generally neat appearance, a few were still unpainted. An article in the *North Platte Enterprise* of May 23, 1874, commented:

We wish Uncle Sam would have the barracks and the residences of the officers painted a brighter and more colorful color than [that] which now covers them. To do so would add greatly to the otherwise handsome and

beautiful grounds of the military and be more in keeping with the cheerful spirits and deportment of the officers and their fair and charming ladies.

Between August 17 and October 2, 1874, Company M participated in an expedition into the Sweetwater country of Wyoming. Captain Mills commanded 400 enlisted men and officers, 30 teamsters, and five scouts (headed by Buffalo Bill Cody). Its objective was to search out hostile Sioux then raiding miners and settlers near the South Pass. In the absence of the cavalrymen, an infantry company from Omaha Barracks served as a temporary garrison at North Platte. The soldiers in west-central Wyoming encountered no hostiles and marched back to North Platte. The local newspaper reported, "the hearty cheers of Company M could be heard for miles as they neared the town."³⁰

Duty at western military posts often put soldiers in remote locations, but the troops at North Platte Station were near a growing frontier town on the railroad. North Platte in the middle 1870s had a population of 1,500 and probably a dozen saloons. Besides being the location of major Union Pacific shops, the town served as a center for the growing number of ranching operations. Proximity of civilians and soldiers frequently benefited both parties. Talented musicians of Company M formed a string quartet that entertained locally. Their music at one fair "enlivened the occasion with some choice selections" and raised money for a Catholic congregation.³¹ Recreational activities for officers and civilians included dinner parties, croquet, and holiday festivals.

However, at other times the interaction of soldier and civilian brought hard feelings and occasional violence. Bi-monthly paydays found scores of soldiers from the post and Fort McPherson in town for a spree. After payday Front Street saloons on occasion became boisterous. After a May, 1874, payday a local paper commented:

The soldiers at Fort McPherson were paid off Wednesday and at this point on Thursday last, since such time a number of them industriously sampling "bock" beer and "anti-crusade juice." As a result of their too frequent libations several of them came very near to receiving marching orders to that country where cremation is the order of the day.

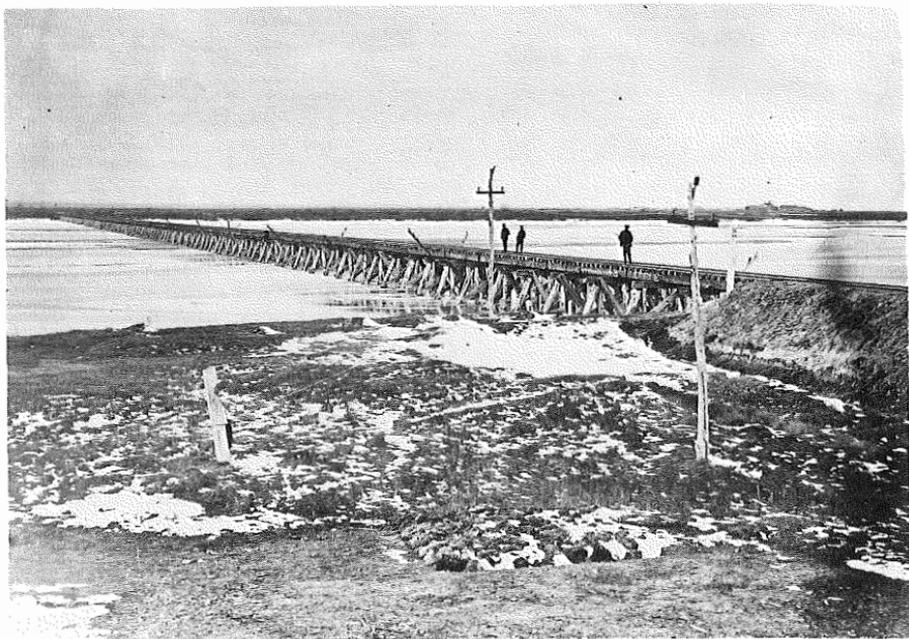
Quite a row took place on front street last evening between soldiers and citizens, a soldier named Kaiser severely cut on the head and otherwise seriously bruised. Our city has been remarkably quiet for months from rows, and citizens approve promptness of the sheriff to repress attempts at renewal of disgraceful scenes.³²

Although troops were generally well behaved, drinking incidents, brawls in bars, and a dislike of Captain Mills by a small group of civilians caused a deterioration to the civil-military relationship that nearly resulted in abandoning the post.

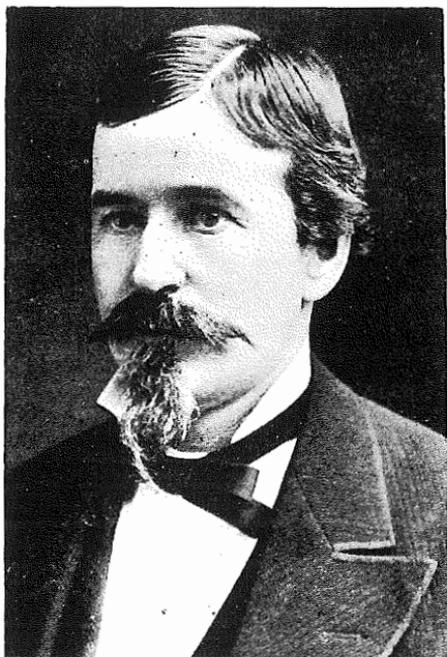
A scandal surfaced in the winter of 1874-1875 when Post Commissary Sergeant Page was arrested for selling government coal and oats to civilians. Page was put in the guard house but escaped the night of January 30. He was pursued by patrols, which fired reckless shots that struck several North Platte houses, and which stopped and questioned citizens on the streets. The conduct of the patrol was not well accepted in North Platte, Captain Mills surmised that the escape was too well planned to have been carried out without civilian collaboration and that someone was harboring Page in the town. Guards were posted at intervals on North Platte streets.³³

Knowing that Page faced a court-martial, some civilians made it known they hoped he would escape, to avoid the exposure of their involvement with illegal sales of government supplies. Captain Mills reported the incident to Major Nathan A. M. Dudley,³⁴ his superior at Fort McPherson. When word of the incident reached Washington, Secretary of War William W. Belknap ordered Dudley to abandon the subpost of North Platte until the citizens learned "to respect the soldiers sent to protect them."³⁵

Commissary and quartermaster supplies were to be moved to Fort McPherson and an infantry detachment of 14 men was sent from Omaha to take charge of the public buildings. Faced with abandonment of the post, citizens who realized the post was an asset to the town took action to convince the military not to withdraw the troops. Two representatives of the town bearing a petition of more than 100 names, hurried to Omaha to try to convince the department commander General Edward O. C. Ord to intercede on behalf of North Platte and not to abandon the post. On February 5 a telegram to suspend the abandonment was received at Fort McPherson. The people of the town felt that Captain Mills had exaggerated the state of affairs and denied there was a citizen conspiracy to conceal Page. Major Dudley arrived in town to make peace and later reported to Secretary Belknap that the citizens and the military were reconciled, and the post was ordered saved.



The first Union Pacific bridge across the Platte at North Platte was at one time guarded by soldiers from the post. Courtesy of UP Railroad Museum, Omaha.



Captain Anson Mills, 3rd Cavalry, at North Platte Station, 1872-1874. From My Story (1918) by Mills.

Later Page was captured and sentenced to military prison, and as the *North Platte Republican* remarked; the hatchet was buried and "peace reigns in the breast of all."³⁶

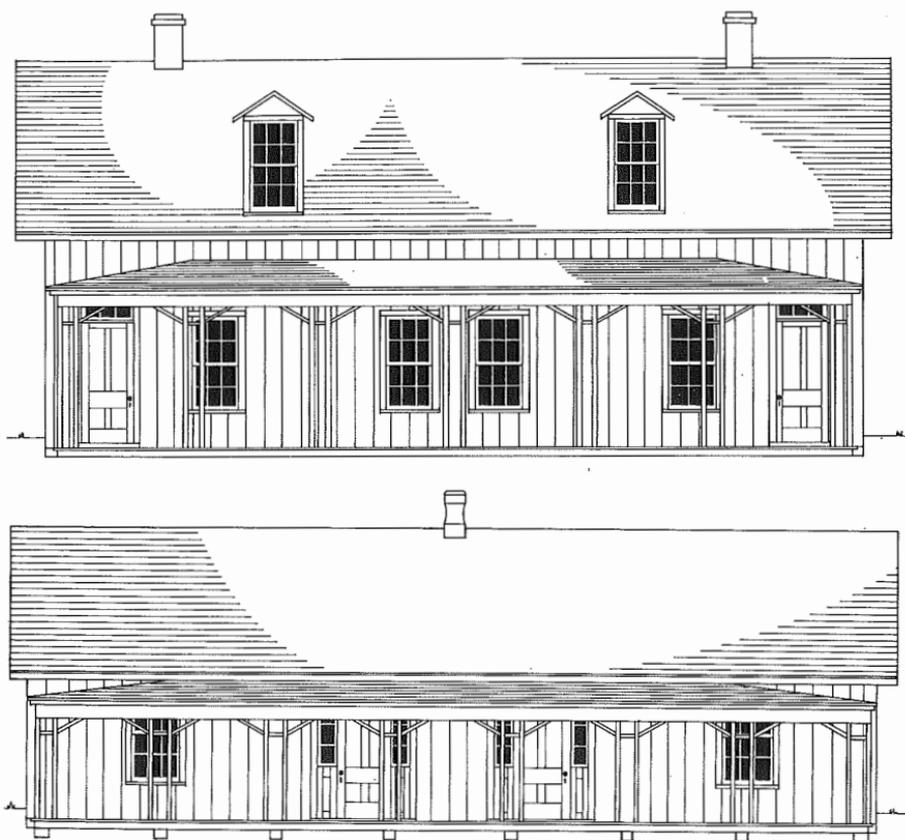
In March, 1875, North Platte Station was declared an independent post and Captain Mills and his cavalymen were transferred to Camp Sheridan near the Spotted Tail Agency in northwest Nebraska. Afterward infantry troops were again used as the garrison of the post.

The new commander, Captain James Henton,³⁷ improved relations between town and post by entertaining civilians and parading the soldiers through the streets on holidays. During the winter of 1875-1876 when prairie fires threatened the town, troops were dispatched to put out the flames. In another instance Captain Henton's company fought a fire in a stable in North Platte.³⁸

Fire, a constant danger to the town and post, burned the post stable on September 11, 1875, and gave North Platte a spectacular display of fireworks. With the cavalry no longer at the post, the stable had been used to store forage and ammunition. At 8:45 p.m. the building was struck by lightning and 15 minutes later the magazine blew up. In the building were 12,000 rounds of rifle cartridges and 80 12-pound howitzer shells. A hail of bullets clattered against the fence and buildings of the post and from a distance the passing of shells presented a magnificent sight. Luckily no one was seriously injured, but 100 tons of hay, several hundred bushels of corn, stoves, 10 mules, harness and ordnance material were lost.³⁹

With the discovery of gold in the Black Hills, North Platte and other towns along the Union Pacific trumpeted their advantages as "jumping off" points for the gold fields. In addition, the establishment of the Spotted Tail Agency and Camp Sheridan in 1874, led businessmen to realize the benefit of having a trail start north at their city. Townsmen believed that a larger military post at the start of the trail would encourage increased government usage of the route.

In 1874 meetings were held to encourage the government to enlarge the post⁴⁰ and move the Department of the Platte headquarters to North Platte. Businessmen were confident that they would get a route and could then demand a railroad line to the north. The declaration of North Platte Station as an independent post, they reasoned, meant abandonment of Fort



Engineers' plans for officers' quarters, Quartermaster Records, North Platte Station, National Archives.

McPherson, after which North Platte would become the most important military town in Nebraska.⁴¹

The plans of the North Platte citizens were further encouraged when they found out that as Captain Mills and his company were traveling to Camp Sheridan, they were to find the practicality of a road for the transportation of government supplies. The land commission of the Union Pacific, sensing the possible sale of land to the government, wrote the Army that the railroad extended "every possible facility in the way of grounds or whatever needed for their use."⁴² Regardless of the elaborate planning, by late 1875 it was evident that Sidney would be the starting point for government supplies bound to the north. North Platte Station remained as originally built, a one-company post on the railroad.

By the time of the major Indian campaigns of 1876, the only

Indian activity in North Platte, was an occasional rumor. The *Republican* noted that summer: "Indian rumors on our streets dwindled down to the fact that two Indians were seen on Birdwood Creek a few days ago. . . . Rumors of a massacre near Julesburg. One Redskin in the eyes of some magnifies itself into a hundred."⁴³

The decline of Indian activity brought a new duty to the troops. As cavalry companies from nearby posts were ordered to the field, infantry detachments from North Platte served as temporary guards at those posts. In June of 1876, one sergeant, one corporal, and eight privates performed guard duty at Fort McPherson during the absence of the cavalry. A like detail served at Sidney Barracks and scouted along the South Platte River.⁴⁴

With the major campaigns happening farther to the northwest North Platte soldiers watched troop trains carry soldiers to active theatres. Companies changing station and heading east stopped at the post to draw rations or rest their horses.⁴⁵

With most men on detached duty at other forts, the post mustered only 15 men—seven non-commissioned officers and eight privates. In the summer of 1877, guard mount, drill, roll call, and all bugle calls were suspended on account of scarcity of men. In August the troops were mustered in undress uniform and without arms.⁴⁶

The last major duty performed at North Platte was on September 19, 1877, when a detachment was called out to search for bandits that on the day before had robbed the Union Pacific express train at Big Springs, some 70 miles west of the post. Several days later they returned without finding any trace of the robbers, the legendary Sam Bass and five companions.

The few soldiers still at North Platte were able to raise the first successful post garden after years of failure by digging an irrigation lateral to the main water ditch running through the town. The post medical report for August noted that a quantity of sauerkraut and pickles were made up at the post.⁴⁷

On October 19 fire struck a second time, destroying the quartermaster stable with a loss of three mules, one horse, harness, and forage. The blaze was thought to be the work of an arsonist, but this was never proved.⁴⁸

With the Indian activity largely removed from Nebraska,

and the larger military posts of Sidney Barracks and Fort McPherson located on or near the railroad, it was decided to deactivate North Platte Station. The last company at the post, Company A, 9th Infantry, left November 4, 1877, for Fort McPherson. Pursuant to orders, Captain William Jordan, the company commander, remained at North Platte with 10 enlisted men detached from Fort McPherson to take charge of public property. The next several months were spent packing and removing subsistence and quartermaster stores and other property to Fort McPherson. On January 31, 1878, almost 11 years to the day after the first troops arrived at North Platte, the detail finished with its work.⁴⁹

With the garrison withdrawn, the grounds and buildings received caretaker service from Fort McPherson soldiers until the Army decided to sell the buildings in 1881.

In his annual report for 1881, General George Crook, department commander, reported the buildings were sold for "satisfactory prices."⁵⁰ Because the land used by the military was never declared a reservation and regarded as such by occupancy only, it was given up to the private owners. Most of the land belonged to the Union Pacific, but three lots were owned by Anson Mills, who had purchased them in 1874 while he was the post commander. North Platte Station was officially abandoned on May 31, 1881.⁵¹

After the buildings were removed, the town expanded over the site of the post. Today the corner of 6th and Willow Streets in west-central North Platte is the center of the old parade ground.

COMPANIES AND OFFICERS STATIONED AT NORTH PLATTE, 1867-1878

First Garrison

Co. I, 36th Inf.	Jan.-May, 1867	Capt. Arthur MacArthur 1st Lt. H. H. Linck 2nd Lt. H. G. Brown
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Battalion of Troops at North Platte

Commanding Officer, Major R. I. Dodge, 30th Infantry

Co. H, 30th Inf.	August, 1867	Capt. Eugene Wells 1st Lt. Appleton Palmer 2nd Lt. Patrick Breslin
Co. B, 4th Inf.	August, 1867	Capt. John Miller 2nd Lt. Edward Baily
Co. C, 30th Inf.	August, 1867	1st Lt. William Andrews 2nd Lt. John Bishop

Co. A, Pawnee Scouts	August 1867	1st Lt. Isaac Davis
	<i>Camp Sargent</i>	
Co. B, 4th Inf.	Sept.,-Oct., 1867	(same as above)
	<i>North Platte Station</i>	
Co. C, 30th Inf.	Oct., 1867-June, 1868	(same as above)
Co. D, 18th Inf.	July, 1868-April, 1869	Capt. Richard Morris
		1st Lt. A. S. Galbreath ¹
		1st Lt. J. H. Counselman
Co. E, 27th Inf. ²	April-July, 1869	Capt. Isaac D'Isay
		1st Lt. Winfield Matson
Co. K, 9th Inf.	July-Sept. 1869	Capt. Campbell Emory
		1st Lt. Bowman
		2nd Lt. Thomas Tracy
Co. F, 9th Inf.	Sept.-Oct., 1869	(on temporary duty)
Co. K, 9th Inf.	Oct. 1869-Sept., 1870	(same as above)
Co. F, 5th Cav.	Sept. 1870-Nov. 1871	Capt. William Brown
		1st Lt. John Babcock
		2nd Lt. William Hall
Co. K, 2nd Cav.	Nov. 1871-April 1872	Capt. James Egan
		1st Lt. Joshua Fowler
		2nd Lt. James Allison
Co. M, 3rd Cav.	May, 1872-Aug., 1874	Capt. Anson Mills
		1st Lt. Henry Wessells ³
		1st Lt. Augustus Paul
		2nd Lt. Frederick Schwatka
Co. H, 13th Inf. ⁴	Aug.-Oct., 1874	Capt. Ferdinand De Courcy
		1st Lt. Jesse Chance
Co. M, 3rd Cav.	Oct., 1874-April, 1875	(same as above)
Co. B, 23rd Inf.	April, 1875-Nov., 1876	Capt. James Henton
		2nd Lt. Calvin Cowler
		1st Lt. John Trout ⁵
Co. H, 4th Inf.	Nov. 1876-Jan., 1877	Capt. William Bisbee
		1st Lt. James Spencer
		2nd Lt. Robert Young
Co. A, 9th Inf.	Jan.-Nov., 1877	Capt. William Jordan
		2nd Lt. Thomas McCaleb

1. Left post August 12, 1868; replaced by Counselman.

2. Consolidated with the 9th Infantry in July, 1869.

3. Left post in April, 1873, and replaced with Lt. Paul.

4. Temporary guards to post while Co. M was on the Sweetwater Expedition.

5. Lt. Trout arrived for duty in July, 1876.

LIST OF SURGEONS STATIONED AT THE POST

H. A. Mann, A.A.S., August to September, 1867.

M. W. Stone, A.A.S., September to November, 1868.

F. W. Elbrey, A.S., April to August, 1870.

Edward Lauderdale, A.A.S., August, 1870, to January, 1874.

A. J. Flint, A.S., June 1869, to April, 1870; Aug., 1872 to Jan., 1874.

Charles Stephans, A.A.S., January, 1874, to October, 1875.

A. J. Flint, A.S., October, 1875, to November, 1877.

NOTES

1. Archibald R. Adamson, *North Platte and Its Associates* (North Platte, 1910), 18.
2. Department of the Platte, Special Orders, January 29, 1867. NARS RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General.
3. Arthur MacArthur was born in Massachusetts and served through the Civil War with the 24th Wisconsin Infantry, rising to the rank of colonel. He served as a captain in the 36th Infantry for three years on the frontier and later in the Adjutant General's Office. He was promoted to major general February 5, 1901. Heitman, *Register*, 652.
4. Department of the Platte, Special Orders, January 29, 1867. NARS RG 94.
5. "Experiences of Thomas O'Donnell While a Workman in Building the Union Pacific Railroad." Typescript, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.
6. Post Return of Fort Sedgwick, May, 1867. NARS RG 98.
7. Telegram, May 6, 1867, Telegrams Received, Department of the Platte, NARS RG 500, Series 1.
8. *Ibid.* August 2, 1867.
9. Richard I. Dodge, a graduate of the US Military Academy in 1844, served in the Civil War, was appointed major of the 30th Infantry in 1866, and was with the regiment for three years. He retired a colonel in 1891 and died in 1895. Heitman, *Register*, 377.
10. Post Return of Camp Sargent, August, 1867. NARS RG 98.
11. Letter from O. F. Davis, land commissioner, Union Pacific Railroad, to the chief engineer, Department of the Platte, November 26, 1875.
12. Medical papers of North Platte Station, 15-21. NARS RG 98.
13. Adamson, *North Platte and Its Associates*, 51-53; 73.
14. *North Platte Republican*, June 19, 1875.
15. Post Returns of Fort Sedgwick, June and July, 1868. NARS RG 98.
16. Letter, July 27, 1869, Letters Received, Department of the Platte, NARS RG 500, Series 1.
17. Post Return of Fort McPherson, September, 1870. NARS RG 98.
18. *Platte Valley Republican*, February 29, 1870.
19. Post Return of Fort McPherson, September, 1870; March, 1871. NARS RG 98.
20. William H. Brown enlisted in the 2nd Cavalry before the Civil War and served through the war as a captain in the 5th Cavalry. He remained with the 5th Cavalry until his death in June, 1875. Heitman, *Register*, 254.
21. Comment of Captain Brown on March, 1871, Post Return of Fort McPherson. NARS RG 98.
22. Anson Mills, an 1857 graduate of the US Military Academy, served in the 18th Infantry until 1870 when he transferred to the 3rd Cavalry. He was promoted to major in the 10th Cavalry in 1878 and retired a brigadier general in 1897. Heitman, *Register*, 713.
23. Frederick Schwatka, Galena, Illinois, graduated from West Point in 1871. He was engaged in frontier service with the 3rd Cavalry until he resigned in 1885. In 1878 he led an Arctic expedition that determined white men could survive in polar regions by adopting the native way of life. He engaged in other explorations and wrote several books. He died in 1892. Heitman, *Register*, 867; *Dictionary of American Biography*.
24. Bare & McDonald, *An Illustrated History of Lincoln County* (American Historical Society: Chicago, 1920), 365-370.
25. Post Return of Fort McPherson, September, 1871. NARS RG 98.

26. Post Return of Fort McPherson, October, 1873. NARS RG 98.
27. *North Platte Enterprise*, June 27, 1874; *North Platte Republican*, April 10, 1874.
28. Letter from Captain Mills to the Chief Quartermaster, Department of the Platte, September 22, 1873. Quartermaster General's Consolidated File, NARS RG.
29. Report of A. J. Flint, acting assistant surgeon, November 15, 1875, Medical Papers of North Platte Station. NARS RG 98.
30. *North Platte Western Nebraskian*, August 20, October 2, 1874; *North Platte Enterprise*, October 3, 1874.
31. *North Platte Republican*, January 30, 1875.
32. *North Platte Enterprise*, May 20, 1874.
33. *North Platte Republican*, articles of January 30 and February 6, 1875.
34. Nathan Augustus Monroe Dudley entered the Army as a 1st lieutenant of the 10th Infantry in 1855. At the end of the Civil War he was a colonel of a Massachusetts regiment. A major in the 3rd Cavalry from 1870 to 1876, he retired a colonel in 1889. Heitman, *Register*, 386.
35. Telegram from W. W. Belknap to General E. O. C. Ord, February 4, 1875.
36. *North Platte Republican*, February 13, 1875.
37. James Henton was born in England, enlisted in the Army in 1853 and became a captain at the end of the Civil War. He served with the 23rd Infantry from 1866 to 1894. He was lieutenant colonel of the regiment at the time of his death in 1895. Heitman, *Register*, 525.
38. *North Platte Republican*, February 5, 1876; February 26, 1876.
39. *North Platte Republican*, September 12, 1875; Report of A. J. Flint, November 15, 1875, Medical Papers of North Platte Station. NARS RG 98.
40. *North Platte Enterprise*, February 7, 1874; April 18, 1874.
41. *Ibid.* September 5, 1874; March 30, 1875.
42. Letter from O. F. Davis, land commissioner, UPRR, to chief engineer, Department of the Platte, dated November 26, 1875.
43. *North Platte Republican*, July 15, 1876.
44. Post Return of North Platte Station, June, 1876. NARS RG 98.
45. Medical Papers of North Platte Station, July, 1877; Post Return of North Platte Station, June, 1877. NARS RG 98.
46. Medical Papers of North Platte Station, July and August, 1877.
47. *Ibid.* September, 1877.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Post Return of North Platte Station, January, 1878 (the last return).
50. Letter sent to General Sheridan, commanding officer, Division of the Missouri, January 14, 1881, NARS GR 94; Report of General Crook, September 29, 1881, in Annual Report of the secretary of war, 1881.
51. Letters received, Department of the Platte, November 26, 1875; Data sheet, RG 393, Records of US Army Commands.