



Nebraska History posts materials online for your personal use. Please remember that the contents of *Nebraska History* are copyrighted by the Nebraska State Historical Society (except for materials credited to other institutions). The NSHS retains its copyrights even to materials it posts on the web.

For permission to re-use materials or for photo ordering information, please see:

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/magazine/permission.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society members receive four issues of *Nebraska History* and four issues of *Nebraska History News* annually. For membership information, see:

<http://nebraskahistory.org/admin/members/index.htm>

Article Title: In the Old Army: Harry K Hollenbach at Fort Robinson, 1911-1913

Full Citation: Thomas R Buecker, "In the Old Army: Harry K Hollenbach at Fort Robinson, 1911-1913," *Nebraska History* 71 (1990): 13-22.

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1990Hollenbach.pdf>

Date: 1/29/2014

Article Summary: Harry K Hollenbach enlisted in the Army early in 1911, spent thirty days at Fort Slocum and was then assigned to the Twelfth Cavalry. At that time he was sent to Fort Robinson. Sixty years later, Hollenbach wrote a memoir of his military experiences, recalling how the new soldiers traveled by rail westward to their new station and what life was like there. This article presents those reminiscences.

Cataloging Information:

Names: Harry K Hollenbach, Jay K Hollenbach, Charles J Nickels Jr, William F "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Nelson Miles, Horatio Sickel, E H Hartnett, Johnny Baker, Courtney Riley Cooper, Hugh L Scott, Marion P Maus

Keywords: Twelfth US Cavalry; Fort Slocum (New York); "Klondike" (fur cap); *The Pharmacopeia of the United States*; *National Formulary*; *Masons Handbook*; Col W F Cody Historical Pictures Company; Battles of Summit Springs, Warbonnet Creek, and Wounded Knee; Ogallala; Helen Gould cots; Hospital Corps; Gallup, New Mexico; Tohatchi (Indian Mission in New Mexico); Gatling gun; Navajos; Fort Bliss (El Paso, Texas);

Photographs / Images: Private Harry K Hollenbach, Troop G, Twelfth Cavalry, June 4, 1911; Private Harry K Hollenbach in Hospital Corps Uniform, January 5, 1913; Dress review of Troop A, Twelfth Cavalry about 1912 at Fort Robinson; Ward B Post Hospital, about 1912, Fort Robinson; Fort Robinson Post Hospital built in 1902 and demolished in 1956; Colonel H G Sickel, commander of Fort Robinson; Hospital Corps Sergeant Hollenbach and four-mule ambulance at Pine Ridge during 1913 Wounded Knee filming; the filming of a re-enactment of Wounded Knee in 1913, Buffalo Bill Cody, Nelson A Miles, John Baker, Marion P Maus

IN THE OLD ARMY: HARRY K. HOLLENBACH AT FORT ROBINSON, 1911-1913

Edited by Thomas R. Buecker

The years between the Spanish-American War and World War I were a period of unheralded peacetime activity for the United States Army. For cavalry units, particularly those stationed at older western posts, duties changed greatly. The monotony of garrison duty, target practice, field training, and maneuvers was broken when troops were called out for civil disturbances, Philippine duty, or Mexican border service. The army adapted to features of modernization: rapid-fire weapons, improved field equipment, and the khaki uniform. One western post whose troops were so affected was Fort Robinson, Nebraska.

Fort Robinson was one of the true survivor posts from the Indian War period. After the turn of the century, it continued as a regimental headquarters. Modernization between 1906 and 1909 brought permanent brick buildings. In 1911 the fort became headquarters for the Twelfth U.S. Cavalry, with two squadrons (eight troops) stationed there.¹ Over the next several years the garrison, numbering over 500 officers and enlisted men, was slowly siphoned off, as Twelfth Cavalry men were sent to the Southwest.

Army life has always held a fascination for certain young men, ready to leave home for the travel and adventure it offered. One such recruit was

Harry K. Hollenbach, who enlisted in Reading, Pennsylvania, early in 1911. Hollenbach, a minor at the time, had intended to enlist in the infantry. However, as he later recalled, "on the way up the steps I met a man who was coming down and after talking to him he sold me on the idea of riding a horse instead of walking while in the army."²

Hollenbach managed to be accepted into the service on February 1, 1911, and was sent the same day to a recruit depot at Fort Slocum, New York. Here the introduction to army life became a harsh reality to him and several hundred other new recruits. After thirty days at Fort Slocum, a group of 320, including Harry Hollenbach, was assigned to the Twelfth Cavalry. Most of the men were sent to Fort Robinson.

Over sixty years later, Hollenbach wrote a memoir of his military experiences.³ He recalled how the new soldiers traveled by rail westward to their new station. Hollenbach's spelling and punctuation have been retained.

REMINISCENCE

After three nights and four days on the train we arrived at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Our tourist class coaches were so constructed that two passengers were assigned to one seat. A wood board was located hanging against the side of the coach and this was raised at meal time for a table. Also, overhead was located a folding

bed for one while the other slept on the up-turned seat.

Arriving, we were lined up at headquarters building and assigned to a troop. I was assigned to troop "G",⁴ taken now to my troop I was issued two olive drab blankets, mess kit with knife, fork, and spoon, extra pair of shoes, a fur cap called a "Klondike," all leather gauntlets, a felt campaign hat with yellow color hat cord, brass spurs, a saddle, saddle blanket and cover for same, a bridle with curb bit and a watering bridle, also a horse and its number burned on its right front hoof, curry comb and brush, also a set of woolen underwear.

If it was found necessary at any time to condemn a horse the initials I.D. were burned under the mane on the side of the neck so the Army remount service would not again buy this mount.

We were now issued a sabre, a pistol, and the rifle. Also saddle bags and a nose bag which was hung over the neck of the mount on a march or in the "field."

The barracks, where we were quartered, were two story brick or one story adobe, about 75 men assigned to a building. The adobe were dried ground bricks, which had been sun baked mud.⁵

Nebraska, being west of the 100th meridian, was known at that time as a land of no or very little rainfall. Therefore many early ranchers as well as the Army used adobe quarters.

On one of my first nights sleep I woke

Thomas R. Buecker is curator of the Nebraska State Historical Society's Fort Robinson Museum. He is a frequent contributor to historical journals.

up to noises which I found out later was the howling of coyotees. These animals, the size of large dogs, roamed the sand hills in large numbers, and at night appeared in the Fort to upset the garbage cans foraging for food.

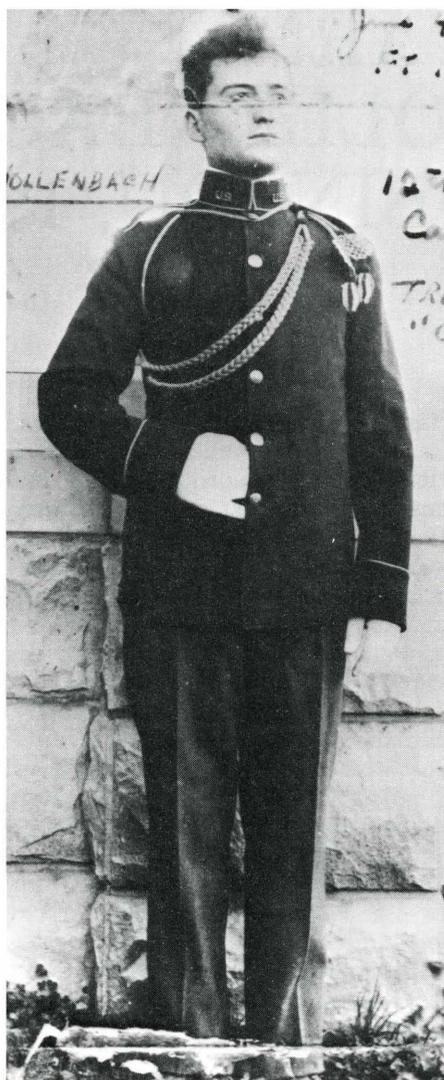
Outstanding was the absence of rain and the numerous sand storms, the sand was of such a fine texture that even though doors and windows of all buildings were equipped to ward off this sand, one often woke up with sand on the bed covers.

A small stream of water, called "Soldiers Creek," ran close to the Fort. No trees or plants could grow unless they were irrigated.

After the second day at this remote rural Army Post, which was originally laid out by General MacArthur, the father of Gen. MacArthur [MacArthur] who Pres. Truman made more famous,⁶ we were taken out for our first drill with the horse (now called a mount) assigned. This consisted of approximately twenty riders kept going in a circle with the drill sergeant on foot in the centre. No saddles were in use, only saddle blankets held in place by a cinch. After about two hours of this, quite a few recruits suffered buttock sores, some even showed blood, but after this all healed no such soreness ever appeared again.

After one week of this training, we were ordered to place saddles on the mount and taught how to first place the saddle blanket by first moving it in a front to rear motion on the back of the horse to smooth the hair, then lifting it free and finally placing it in its proper position, so that when the saddle is placed there is ample room for your hand to move between the top of the front leg haunches and the saddle blanket.

Now again comes the circular movement as described above, and after some riders fatigued and leaned back, the familiar voice of the drill sergeant could be heard in a loud and no uncertain language calling the riders name "Sit up in that saddle, you want to give your horse a sore back." If this did not



Private Harry K. Hollenbach, Troop G, Twelfth Cavalry, June 4, 1911. Courtesy of Jay K. Hollenbach.

bring results the rider was ordered to dismount, lead his horse, and carry the saddle until the drill period was over.

After thirty days of this, the recruits were allowed to march in sets of four with the trained troopers at drill time.

The assembly for this formation, after the bugle call, was always a straight formation line facing the Commander, and after roll call the famous command first call order of all cavalry troops was and is: Right forward fours

right, the first four move straight to the front and the rest in sets of four angle to follow.

Saddle bags and blanket rolls were only used while on the march on detached service, or in actual combat.

The new recruit was continually watched for minor infractions by the older servicemen non-commissioned officers, and my first indoctrination came sometime in my first months service: I shall never forget this, since I do not smoke nor chew and therefore have no habitual expectorations. However, one day, in coming down a stairway, I must have mildly spit out some small object and a drill sergeant observing this said to me: "You go to the quartermaster and ask for a bucket and brush and scrub down every step on this stairway."

My name also appeared in the recreation room roster to report for kitchen police the next day. I want to mention that on the next, my next pay day, there was also a deduction made for a broken wooden mixing bowl, this in addition to my canteen check and laundry deduction. Not having been guilty of breaking this bowl, old troopers told me that the quartermaster was short this article, either by theft or otherwise, and this was the way usually things were done.

My morale as to my army life at this point was pretty low and I was seriously thinking of deserting, and my bunk partner agreed, but realizing that such a move would strip our citizenship, and also posters showing our picture would be hung in our home town Post Office, I thought I would stick it out the three years.

Two other things happened about this time. I had written to my old public school teacher back home who was a politician and a friend of our Congressman and had asked him to get me an appointment to "West Point." I had the high school and teachers college background. He never answered my letter, a financial reimbursement later to be made had also been promised him. The other matter that annoyed me was that

Harry K. Hollenbach

after my first pay I made a trip to Crawford, Nebr. located three miles from the Fort and while there noticed that no civilian looked at me, I was completely ignored. I walked back to my barracks and when I mentioned this to some old soldiers there, one of them told me that when he was stationed in Texas, that on the front lawn of a Church in the nearby town there was a sign which stated "soldiers and dogs" not allowed.

On nearly every occasion, while my troop was training in the field, at some time or other I heard the drill sergeant shout to some recruit some criticism and mention that he would have him transferred to the "Jack Ass Battery." This battery I found out later was the "Machine Gun Battalion." Every troop [regiment] of cavalry had such a Company attached. It consisted of each cavalryman leading a mule on whose back was attached some item, either ammunition, or machine gun parts. The unit followed to the rear of every marching Cavalry regiment.⁷

During the summer months of 1912, while with my troop on practice marches on the prairie away from the fort, I had learned to "throw a Diamond Hitch" on a pack mule securing the materials, also been on kitchen details to follow the escort wagons on foot and pick up "Buffalo Chips" and place them in the rear of the wagon for the cooks to use as fuel to cook the evening meal.

In my troop, from the 1st Sergeant down to other Sergeants, Corporals, cooks, bakers, farriers, trumpeters and other personnel comprising on an average 70 to 80 troopers: there was not one that had the equivalent of a better than grade school [education].

So I appointed a committee of one to look for a change in my status, and I put myself on that committee.

I had formed the acquaintance of a Post Hospital Corps man. The hospital was located adjacent to my troop "G" headquarters,⁸ and he indoctrined me in the fact that training there had a future in civil life after expiration of an enlistment.



Private Harry K. Hollenbach in Hospital Corps Uniform, January 5, 1913. Courtesy of Jay K. Hollenbach.

My mind was made up, and I presented myself in the "orderly room" and asked the first Sgt. for a transfer. His answer was whether I knew how to cut off a man's leg, and he replied no further.

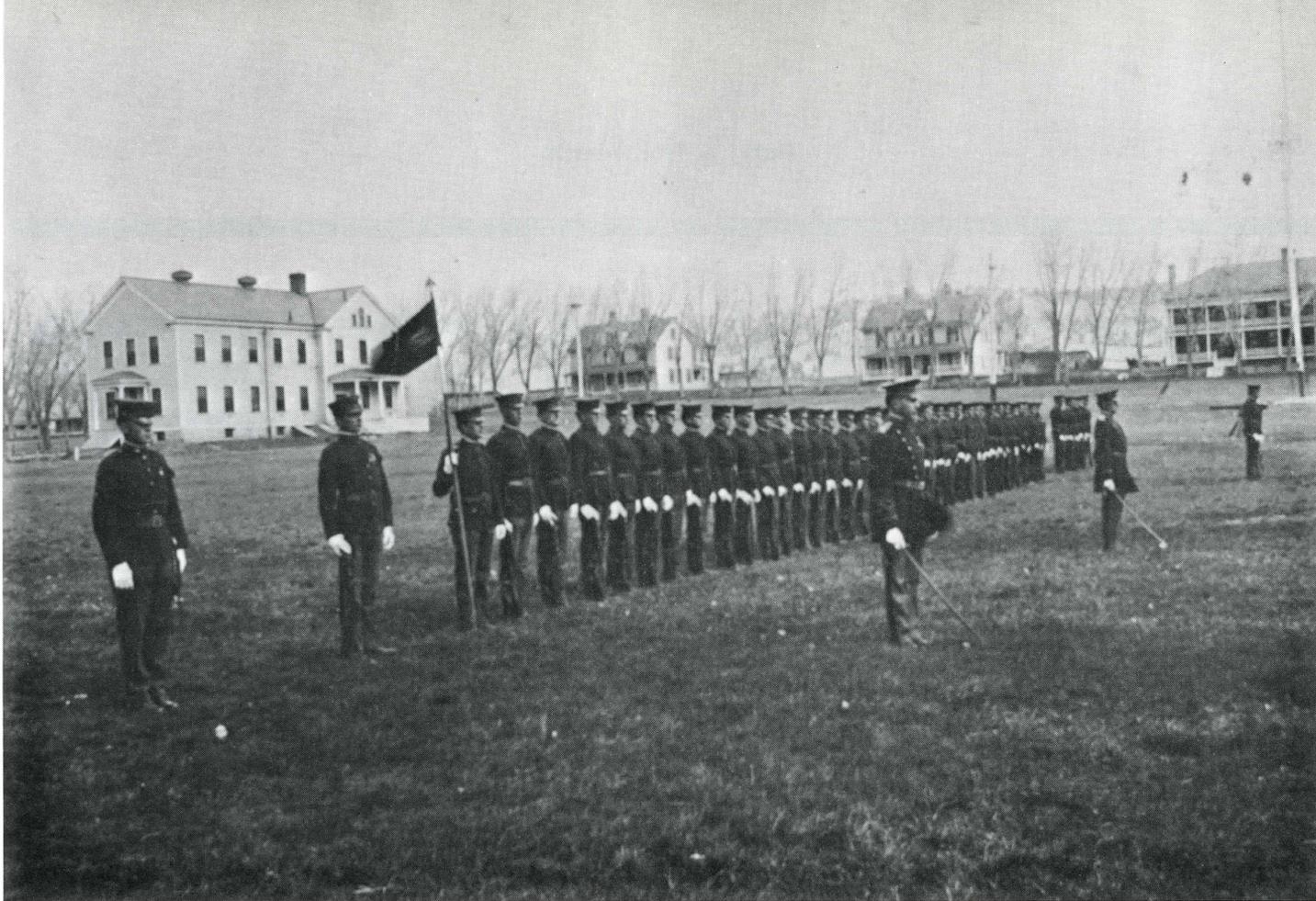
On the following Sunday forenoon I walked up on the Officers Row, spotted my Commanding Officer, a Captain saluted him and asked his permission to talk to him.⁹ He replied just what I wanted and I told him of my desire to transfer to the Hospital Corps, he replied "that has to come from the other end" meaning the Commanding Officer of the Hospital has to request and recommend it.¹⁰

I had put one over my 1st sgt. and gotten away with it, so now appearing in the office of the Post Hospital I filled out a set of papers as given by the office clerk. Remember that the Sergeant First Class (an office which one cannot be demoted only discharged) asked me whether I drank and whether I smoked, to which I replied "no." He jokingly told the clerk to put me out. (He was a heavy

drinker and constant smoker.) He resided in a private house with his wife located next to the hospital.¹¹ A Sergeant First Class Hospital Corps outranked a first sergeant of line troops and also got more pay.

After my first sgt. saw the approved papers to this transfer, he asked me to stay and said I would work in the orderly room with him and get to be a Corporal and then Sergeant later. But the die was cast, and after several weeks I was issued the white uniform of a Private first class hospital Corps man with my status thus.

My morale shot up fast now, and I remember sending to my mother in Bernville, Pa. some five grain phenacitin tablets in a little card board box, remembering that she had complained about chronic headaches. I was playing Doctor. Life now to me was a bed of roses I liked this work. Again I had more schooling than any other hospital man except the Post Surgeon who was a Major or his assistant, a 1st Lieut.¹²



Dress review of Troop A, Twelfth Cavalry, about 1912. Post Headquarters building, now Fort Robinson Museum, appears in left background. (NSHS-R659-523)

One of my first fellow hospital corps men I got acquainted with, was a man about my age, Charles J. Nickels, Jr. He was in charge of the pharmacy, a former student of medicine in Syracuse University.¹³ He took a liking to me and from him I learned never to inhale cocaine. He said if you do it once, you will do it again. He stated tasting it is O.K. Also, he did not drink or smoke. Many times in my life I have felt kindly towards this advise. He taught me how to take x-rays. We had at that time a machine called a "static" a large wheel about 4' in diam. which was turned by hand. A short time after a more modern machine appeared called a "Coil." This was electrically operated and very efficient.

After 6 months of nursing duties I was taught how to read and compound prescriptions by using the two books, The Pharmacopeia of the United States and the "National Formulary."¹⁴ Every hospital corps man was issued a

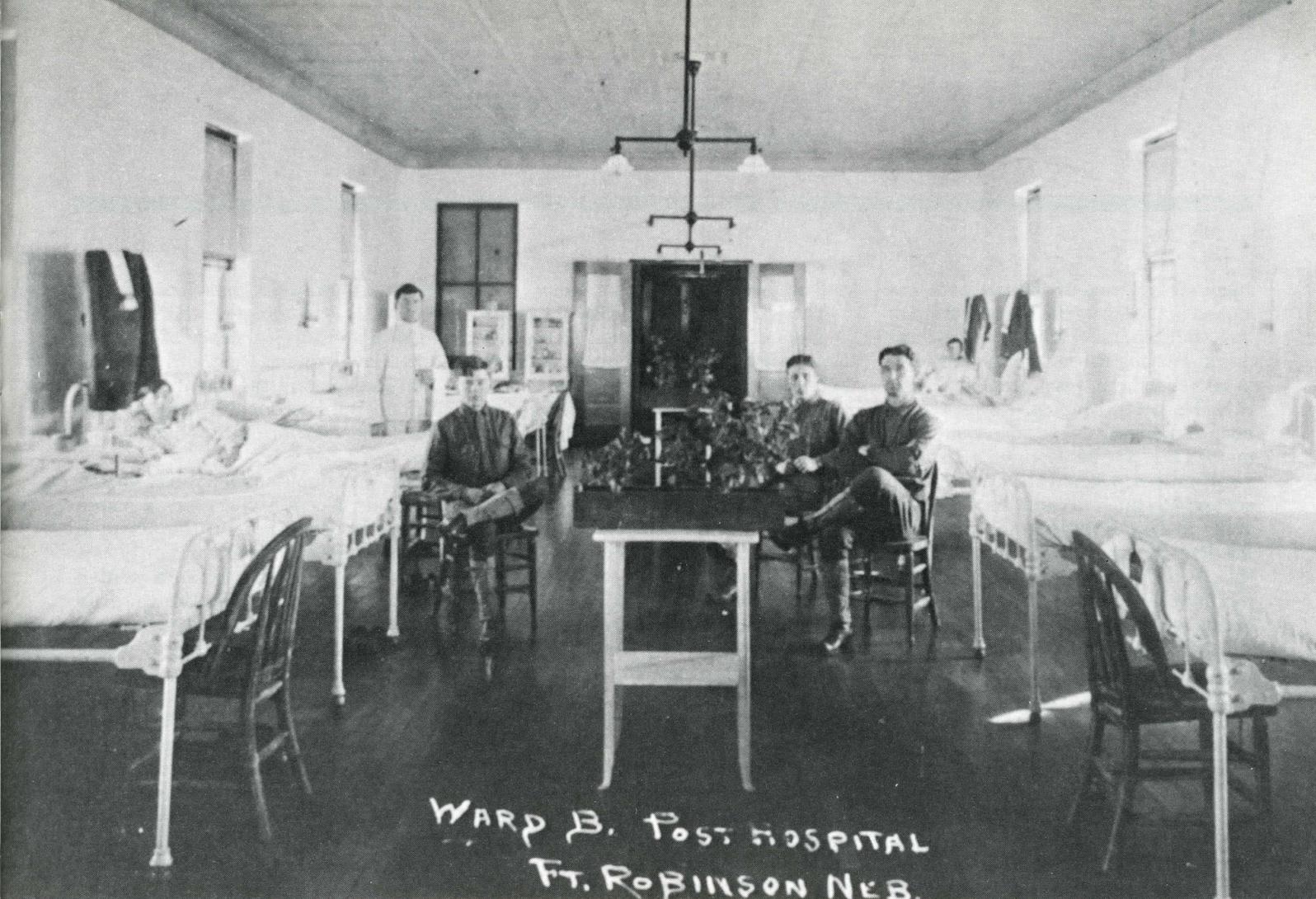
book called "Masons handbook." This book covered just about every duty pertaining to hospital work, including cooking and mess management. It gave a description of every medicine issued on the Army supply table, with its physiological & therapeutic effect on the human body, also instructions in minor surgery. A Sergeant Hospital Corps was authorized to practice minor surgery and issued a warrant signed personally by the Surgeon General of the Army, Washington, D.C.

In April 1913, at the time the Mexican "Villa" was active in armed conflicts on the Texas border, the Army decided to send Troop "E" of the 12th Cavalry from Fort Robinson, Nebraska overland to Fort D.A. Russell, Wyoming in order to be closer to the Texas border if needed, and I was ordered to accompany same with two service chests containing medicines and surgical supplies.¹⁵ This was the first time in my life that I actually had authority to

practice medicine and minor surgery. It is remembered that at the end of one days march the water in the small creek was whitish in color (alkali) and I issued every trooper two camphor & opium pills to take after the evening meal.

[The fall of 1913 brought a most unusual assignment for Fort Robinson soldiers. The day of the "Wild West Show" was over, and the premier western showman, William F. ("Buffalo Bill") Cody, turned to the medium of motion pictures. In September 1913, the Col. W.F. Cody Historical Pictures Company was formed to make movies from western history featuring Buffalo Bill himself. The battles of Summit Springs, Warbonnet Creek, and Wounded Knee were to be recreated.

It was arranged to do the filming on the Pine Ridge Reservation, the Wounded Knee sequence to be filmed on its original site.¹⁶ General Nelson Miles, present during the 1890 cam-



Ward B, Post Hospital, about 1912. Hollenbach, wearing the white uniform of the Hospital Corps, appears in left background. (NSHS-R659-2656)

paign, came along to provide technical advice. Fort Robinson post commander Colonel Horatio Sickel, who had been a young Seventh Cavalry officer at the original Wounded Knee, also went. With Sickel were three troops of the Twelfth Cavalry. Nineteenth century uniforms, equipment, and arms were provided for the military extras.

Tensions occasionally ran high during the filming at Wounded Knee, as it was an emotional experience for Indian participants. Hollenbach recalls his experiences in this pioneering epic of western cinema.]

REMINISCENCE

Returning to the Post Hospital, Fort Robinson and on duty there on October 7, 1913 received orders to accompany the 12th Cavalry to Wounded Knee, S. Dakota and left this date with field infantry, four medical corps men and ambulance driven with four mules.¹⁷ On our first days march, while fording a



Fort Robinson Post Hospital, built in 1901 and demolished in 1956. (NSHS-R659-2530)

small stream, one of the troopers was kicked in the leg by the horse in front of him which horse wanted to stop and drink. Passing through Rushville, Nebraska that day it was ordered by Major E.H. Hartnett, Medical Corps U.S.A. my immediate superior that this injured trooper be dropped off at this small station in Rushville and myself to accompany him in a caboose of a freight going to Fort Robinson and placed in the Post Hospital there. Having done this, I was ordered to take the next freight train back, and my horse and an escort would be waiting for me there.

Rushville was, and still is, the closest railroad station to Wounded Knee, about 9 miles S.W. of Pine Ridge, South Dakota on the Ogalla [Oglala] Indian Reservation.

Arriving in Rushville, I found no one and I was stranded. Later in the evening while darkness set in I met a civilian barber who also was headed for Wounded Knee. He stated he had a room reserved for the night and I could share it with him. All houses and streets were dark, there had been no electricity ever in Rushville up to that era.

The barber had left his suitcase with towels etc. in his room, and when we entered this house the landlady had his suitcase at the front door and informed him his reservation was cancelled and gave him his money back. (P.S. Let the reader of this guess why).

Both of us slept on the sandy prairie that night, a few hundred feet from the row of houses on the two block long street. The barber hired a rig and driver to take him the next morning, but my orders called for me to stay, which I did, all the following day and again slept one more night under the star lit sky. On this next day, while visiting a small store, I spotted an Army Captain in uniform with his wife who were probably tourists. I saluted him and told him of my problems, having in mind that he would be my witness that I was not a deserter, and he told me that Buffalo Bill and his party were staying at the only hotel in town and were leaving the next morning for "Wounded Knee,"

and advised me to contact him.

The following morning early I asked someone outside this hotel to contact Buffalo Bill for me (I had no money) and never entered this hotel.

Buffalo Bill soon appeared on the front porch and greeted me and after hearing my story told me to accompany him as they were leaving within the hour.

I only saw him once before, in 1905 while his show performed in Reading, Pa. Remember him appearing at the start on a white horse taking off his hat and announcing: "Ladies and gentlemen I present to you a Congress of Rough Riders of the World."

On this morning, Oct. 9, 1913, I sat on the back seat of a Packard touring car containing Buffalo Bill, Johnny Baker, Major Burke and moving picture equipment. In another car of the same make, folding tops down, were more equipment, Lieut Gen. Miles Ret. U.S. Army and two others unidentified to me, probably movie mechanics. We now drove overland to Pine Ridge, S.D. and from there about 9 miles to the "Wounded Knee" battlefield, finding there about 2500 Ogalla Indians under canvas, two squadrons of the 12th Cavalry and about 250 head of cattle.¹⁸ The cattle was intended to be rationed to the Indians for food [and] was the only financial reimbursement the Indians were promised.

The hospital field infirmary was set up under canvas, four Helen Gould cots were placed when we arrived.¹⁹ Major Hartnett's tent the M.D. was close by and we hospital Corps men slept on a blanket on the ground under cover of a canvas shelter tent. The battle of Wounded Knee had originally been fought in a snow storm so the movie people were looking forward to this to happen.

Now something happened! The Major, my immediate superior, got word his wife was very sick at Fort Robinson, Nebraska and he left telling me to take charge of his tent and its contents which had a lined sleeping bag.²⁰ This I used for my personal com-

fort and I always felt he surmised it.

Now I was in complete charge of the medical and surgical needs of over 500 12th Cavalrymen, their officers, the 2500 Indians and the members of the Buffalo Bill Historical [Pictures Company] Society on duty making the Movie.

Not a commissioned officer in the Medical Corps, but as a non-commissioned officer in the Hospital Corps, I had been given authority as a result of an examination in a written authorization signed by the Surgeon General of the Army (Gen. Torner) Washington, D.C. to practice medicine and minor surgery. In this case my nearest help was the hospital infirmary located in Pine Ridge Indian Agency. [I Remember that on two occasions our four mule ambulance was used to travel to this infirmary. It took the four mules to drive this vehicle because there were no roads, and in crossing streams two mules would not have been able to do it.

This was the high point of legally dispensing medicine and practicing minor surgery in my life, and on the presumption that about 95% of the soldiers and civilians mentioned herein are no longer living, I prefer not to discuss individual cases and what I treated them for.

It is remembered that after several weeks of encampment at Wounded Knee the author "Courtney Ryler Cooper" arrived for the purpose of giving publicity to this expedition,²¹ and believe it or not he had with him "Annie Oakley" the protege of "Buffalo Bill" in his wild west shows that had terminated just a few months before after giving its last performance in Denver, Colorado.²²

This is almost unbelievable but an actual fact and in that desolate uninhabitable part of South Dakota she put on an exhibition one evening just before dark of shooting down one-half silver dollars tossed up by Buffalo Bill.²³

It is remembered by me that Buffalo Bill who had been a Federal scout in

this Wounded Knee Massacre and Lieut General Nelson A. Miles now retired, who was in full authority in this field, had several arguments because Gen. Miles insisted on accurate details while Col. Cody was vent [bent] to showmanship upgrading of actualities.²⁴

After the first heavy snow we all returned to Fort Robinson. The original battle had been fought in a snow storm.

[Army troops were often called on to help restore order in times of civil disturbance, and nervous Indian agents sometimes requested troops to deter rebellion on the reservation. In the fall of 1913, a minor dispute on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico surfaced and was blown out of proportion.

The problem arose when eight Navajo resisted an order by the Indian agent. Newspapers saw a story and the incident soon took on the appearance of a large-scale Navajo revolt. Finally in November the Indian Department requested troops. The army did not want to reassign units stationed along the Mexican border so the First Squadron of the Twelfth Cavalry from Fort Robinson was sent to the New Mexico reservation.²⁵

REMINISCENCE

My next active service began on November 2nd [20] 1913. The 12th U.S. Cavalry was ordered to proceed to Gallup, New Mexico by train and await there for Gen. Hugh L. Scott to arrive from Washington, he to conduct a campaign against the Navajo Indians who had gone on a war path 90 miles north of Gallup on their reservation.²⁶ Again I had charge of the four mule ambulance, two detached medical service chests, field infirmary of 4 canvas cots and tent, we made 30 miles the first day out of Gallup. But it rained and the escort wagons containing arms and supplies ran into "gumbo mud" and it took them three days to come to our camp which was at a Indian Mission called "Tohatchi." In that three days our horses and ourselves had one ration.



Colonel H.G. Sickel, commander of Fort Robinson. (NSHS-R659-2564)

This place was then and is still a Post Office, a one frame building conducted by a civilian who traded tobacco and other items with the Indians for rugs and other Indian artifacts.

The first two squadrons [squadron] of the 12th Cavalry with Gen. Scott in Command [were] followed by a mule driven "Gatling Gun" and mule driven ammunition carrier and one half mile to the rear an Army 4 mule driven ambulance and detachment of hospital corps men now started north on the march to a spot called Mount Beautiful on top of which hostile Indians were ready to give battle.²⁷ They were a band of Navajos who had gone on the war

path, the fire lit skys were visible at night to us while our troop train had stopped in the city of Denver, Colo.,²⁸ on the way down to Gallup N.M. which city was a few blocks east of old Fort Wingate.²⁹

The Indians on top of this mountain could only be reached by a small path and thus felt they could not be invaded.

They had not figured on the small cannon "The Hotchkiss Gatling Gun." Gen. Scott ordered this into action and some time after the Indians showed a white flag and a small detachment finally came down and met Gen. Scott. Gen. Scott was one of the few men who had perfected a sign language thus enabling him to talk to all Indian Tribes.³⁰

After all of us returned to Gallup there were orders for the entire body of troops to entrain for "El Paso, Texas" and when we got there we went under canvas in the El Paso stock yards about one mile distant from Fort Bliss, Texas.³¹

Our country was on war status with the Mexican "Gen. Villa." "Pershing" of World War I fame had already arrived there and the Expedition into Mexico was well under way.³² Fort Bliss was crowded with U.S. Troops and my detachment Hospital Corps was still camped in the El Paso stock yards when my enlistment expired in Jan. 31, 1914.

Given the choice on the day of my discharge of accepting a coach class railroad ticket or cash based on three cents a mile from El Paso, Tex. to Bernville, Pa. I accepted the cash of \$45.00 and took the train for Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Arriving there and proceeded to the close ranch of "Thomas Hilton" where his daughter "Clara" and myself proceeded to Hot Springs, S. Dakota where we were married Feb. 4, 1914.³³

EPILOGUE

Hollenbach returned to Pennsylvania and was employed as a rural mail carrier. When World War I broke out,

he entered the same recruiting office in Reading and applied for reenlistment. After his service with the Hospital Corps at Fort Robinson had been noted, he was assigned to be examining officer in the Reading office. He kept this assignment until the office closed in the fall of 1918. Then he was sent to Central Officers School at Fort Lee, where he was stationed when the Armistice was signed.

After the war Hollenbach returned to the postal service as a mail carrier, first in Pennsylvania and later on a route near Worland, Wyoming. In 1930 he returned to Rehrersburg, Pennsylvania, and in 1932 took over his father's

general contracting business. When Harry Hollenbach died on January 29, 1988, he was thought to have been the oldest military veteran who served at Fort Robinson.

The Twelfth Cavalry was the last cavalry regiment stationed at Fort Robinson. The First Squadron never returned from Texas. The two troops sent to Fort Russell in 1913 went to Colorado on strike duty. The headquarters and band, machine gun platoon, and Troops F and G, left the post in March 1916 for Columbus, New Mexico, following Pancho Villa's raid. The departure of the cavalry marked the end of an era for the old army.

NOTES

¹The Twelfth Cavalry was one of the five new regiments authorized on February 2, 1901. The troop units were organized in May 1901 at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. On February 18, 1911, the First and Second Squadrons arrived at Fort Robinson from a tour of duty in the Philippines. They replaced two squadrons of the Eighth Cavalry that left for Philippine duty. The Third Squadron was stationed at Fort Meade, near Sturgis, South Dakota. Post Returns, Fort Robinson, February 1911.

²Hollenbach memoir, page 1.

³Hollenbach completed his memoir in July 1977. His son, Jay K. Hollenbach, of Rehrersburg, Pennsylvania, deposited a copy at the Fort Robinson Museum during a visit in November 1987. The author wishes to thank Mr. Hollenbach for permission to publish his father's account of army life at Fort Robinson.

⁴At this time a cavalry regiment was divided into twelve troops, designated "A" through "M." A troop normally numbered 50-75 men, seldom reaching authorized strength. Each regiment had three squadrons of four troops each.

⁵Four troops, including Hollenbach's, were quartered in two double-company brick barracks built in 1909. Hollenbach's barracks, on the west end of the barracks row, was razed in 1956. The other four troops and band were quartered in five of the old 1887 adobe barracks. Thomas R. Buecker, "The 1887 Expansion of Fort Robinson," *Nebraska History* 68 (Summer 1987): 83-93.

⁶Arthur MacArthur was the father of General Douglas MacArthur. As a captain of the Thirtieth Infantry, the senior MacArthur was the second commanding officer of Camp Robinson. Actual construction of the post at its present site began after MacArthur departed in the late spring of 1874.

⁷In 1906 machine gun platoons were organized and attached to each cavalry regiment to provide rapid fire support.

⁸The post hospital was an impressive structure. Initially constructed in 1901, there had been several additions by 1904. This hospital was the third hospital building to be erected at Fort Robinson. Like the west barracks, it was demolished by the U.S.D.A. several years after the post was abandoned.

⁹Hollenbach is probably referring to Captain Lewis W. Cass, who was promoted from first lieutenant and assigned to command Troop G in June 1911.

¹⁰Major Christopher C. Collins was post surgeon. He was replaced in October 1912 by Major Eugene H. Hartnett. Besides being in charge of the station hospital, the post surgeon also served as recruiting officer.

¹¹Hospital Steward's Quarters, built in 1910. The building still stands and is used as a staff residence at Fort Robinson State Park.

¹²The additional medical officer was First Lieutenant Henry C. Bierbower, Medical Reserve Corps. He was transferred to the Philippines in April 1913. Bierbower was replaced by Captain John B. Huggins, who was medical officer when the troops were sent to the Navajo Reservation late in 1913. Post Returns, Fort Robinson, April, November 1913.

¹³Charles J. Nickels, Jr., was listed as a private first class on a 1913 Thanksgiving dinner menu

Hospital Corps Sergeant Hollenbach (left) and four-mule ambulance at Pine Ridge during 1913 Wounded Knee filming. (NSHS-R659-2657)



Harry K. Hollenbach



The filming of a re-enactment of Wounded Knee in 1913 included William F. ("Buffalo Bill") Cody (left), General Nelson A. Miles (second from left), John Baker (second from right), and Colonel Marion P. Maus (right). Courtesy of South Dakota State Historical Society.

for the Hospital Corps. Hollenbach was listed on the same menu as a sergeant. At the time the detachment consisted of sergeants first class (2), sergeant (1), privates first class (5), privates (8), and acting cook (1).

¹⁴*Pharmacopoeia of the United States* and *National Formulary* were standard texts required at pharmacies and places preparing and distributing medicines. These standard references contained formulas for drug preparations and descriptions of each medicine. The *Phar-*

macopoeia was first compiled in 1833.

¹⁵Civil strife and political unrest in Mexico brought a threat of violence along the border. In response army units were hurried south. Early in 1913 the Fourth Field Artillery and Eleventh Infantry stationed at Fort D.A. Russell, near Cheyenne, Wyoming, were transferred to Texas City, Texas. Troop E left Fort Robinson April 22 for Cheyenne to guard the post in the absence of a regular garrison. In July Troop H departed for Cheyenne on the same temporary duty. Post

Returns, Fort Robinson, March-April, 1913; author's correspondence with Colonel Gerald Adams, January 24, 1989.

¹⁶A good source on the Wounded Knee filming is found in Kevin Brownlow, *The War, the West, and the Wilderness* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1979), 222-35. Richard J. Walsh also mentions the filming in his book *The Making of Buffalo Bill* (New York: A.L. Burt), 344-47.

¹⁷Troops A, B, and D and medical detachment left post October 6, marching overland to Pine

Ridge Agency. Colonel Horatio G. Sickel accompanied the command to assist "in placing troops in scenes of combat reproducing the Battle of Wounded Knee." After the filming, all of the troops had returned to post by October 31. Post Returns, Fort Robinson, October 1913.

¹⁸Only one squadron of the Twelfth Cavalry was actually present for the filming.

¹⁹Helen Miller Gould, daughter of financier Jay Gould, expended a large part of her share of her father's fortune in philanthropic projects. Included was an 1898 donation to a New York convalescent camp for solidiers wounded in the Spanish American war. Such a temporary field hospital would probably have used the type of field cots with which her name became associated.

²⁰Major Hartnett returned to Fort Robinson on October 21.

²¹Cooper was officially involved as a reporter for the *Denver Post*. Brownlow, 229.

²²No sources on the Wounded Knee filming make mention of Annie Oakley's presence. Two biographies of Oakley place her elsewhere at this time. Walter Havighurst, *Annie Oakley of the Wild West* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1954) and Courtney Ryley Cooper, *Annie Oakley, Woman at Arms* (New York: Duffield & Co., 1927).

²³Courtney Cooper records such a shooting exhibition put on by Johnny Baker. Baker was Cody's adopted son and a crack marksman.

Cooper, 107-8.

²⁴Miles's passion for detail complicated the project in several instances. At the end of the 1890-91 campaign, a large review of some 4,000 soldiers was held. Miles thought this sequence should be filmed as accurately as possible, so the single cavalry squadron was continually marched in front of the cameras. Apparently no one told Miles the cameras were empty after the first two passes. Walsh, 346; Brownlow, 230.

²⁵For a comprehensive history of this incident, see Davidson B. McKibbin, "Revolt of the Navaho, 1913," *New Mexico Historical Review* 29 (October 1954), 259-89. Also General Hugh Scott wrote his version in his *Some Memories of a Soldier* (New York: Century Co., 1928), 487-95.

²⁶On November 20 the entire First Squadron (Troops A, B, C, D) under command of Captain John W. Craig, left post by rail for the Navajo Reservation. Post Returns Fort Robinson, November 1913.

²⁷Beautiful Mountain (el. 9,388 feet) is about thirty miles southwest of Shiprock in northwestern New Mexico. The First Squadron was on the reservation from December 1 to 5.

²⁸Apparently a bit of fantasy on the part of the author. Beautiful Mountain is some 350 miles southwest of Denver, across the southern Rocky Mountains.

²⁹Fort Wingate had its garrison withdrawn the previous March. There was some hope by Gallup

residents that the reservation troubles would lead the army to regarrison the post. McKibbin, "Navaho," 282.

³⁰General Scott was then the commanding general of the Second Cavalry Brigade. Although Scott was proficient with sign language, he used a prominent Indian mediator, Chee Dodge, in his negotiations with the Navajo. *Ibid.*, 272-73.

³¹The First Squadron was moved from the Navajo Reservation to El Paso on December 6 as part of the buildup of U.S. forces along the Mexican border.

³²Hollenbach here is referring to the expedition against Vera Cruz in April 1914, not the more familiar Punitive Expedition of 1916-17.

³³Clara Hilton was working as a maid for one of the officers on the post when she met Hollenbach. Her family lived west of the post toward Harrison. Phone conversation with Jay K. Hollenbach, May 1, 1989.

³⁴During World War I, the post was occasionally garrisoned by National Guard and United States Guards units. In 1919 Fort Robinson became a Quartermaster Remount Depot. The troops stationed there were Quartermaster Corps solidiers, not line troops. However, between 1928 and 1931 a battalion of the Fourth Field Artillery was also stationed at the post. During World War II, besides QM personnel, Military Police and S.C.U. [Security Command Unit] personnel manned a prisoner of war camp built east of the main post area.