

## FORT SANFORD, IOWA.

For this historical sketch of Fort Sanford, Iowa Territory, THE ANNALS is indebted to Col. William H. Carter, Assistant Adjutant General U. S. Army. It is believed that it presents every important fact relating to that frontier post, as well as the reasons for its establishment. No cuts or drawings of the old log buildings are in existence, nor is a vestige of any one of them left to mark the spot where they stood. A rocky bluff rises about one-fourth of a mile south of the supposed site, and this is called "Garrison Rock." The tract has been plowed over many times. For this information we are indebted to Capt. S. B. Evans of Ottumwa.—EDITOR OF THE ANNALS.

Governor Chambers, of the then Territory Iowa, apprehensive of further encroachments on the reservation occupied by the Sac and Fox Indians, and of the various unlawful and destructive acts of such intruders, early in the year 1842 called on the Washington authorities for aid in the expulsion of these squatters and in the preservation of order. The general government responded by sending a detachment of the 1st Dragoons under the command of Captain Beach\* to aid the Governor in his efforts. These troops, after having accomplished the purpose for which they were detached, returned to their proper station at Fort Atkinson.

Lieutenant Leonidas Jenkins,† of the 1st Dragoons, in a letter to the Governor stated it to be his opinion that a suf-

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\*John Beach was appointed a cadet in the Military Academy at West Point, from New Hampshire, July 1, 1823, graduating No. 38 in his class of 45. His first service was as brevet 2d lieutenant in the 1st Regular Infantry. October 25, 1835, he was promoted to 2d lieutenant, and December 31, 1837, to 1st lieutenant of the same regiment. He served on frontier duty at Fort Armstrong, Ill., at Fort Crawford, Wis., and on recruiting service. He resigned June 30, 1838. From 1840 to 1847 he was U. S. Indian Agent at Agency City, in the county of Wapello, Iowa. At the expiration of this service he became a farmer and merchant at Agency City. During the Civil War, he organized and drilled volunteers, his loss of hearing having disqualified him for service in the field. He was engaged in literary pursuits from 1863 to 1874. He died at Agency City, August 31, 1874, at the age of 62. During his connection with the army and Indian affairs, Lieut. Beach became widely known in Iowa and Wisconsin.

†Leonidas Jenkins was appointed to the Military Academy from New York, July 1, 1837. He graduated four years later, No. 13 in a class of 52, entering the army as brevet 2d lieutenant of the 1st Dragoons, July 1, 1841. On the 31st of December following he was promoted to 2d lieutenant. He served at the Cavalry School for Practice, at Carlisle, Pa., 1841-42, on frontier duty at Fort Atkinson, and the Sac and Fox Agency, Iowa, 1842. Returning to Fort Atkinson he served against the Winnebago Indians. He remained at Fort Atkinson until 1845 when he was promoted to 1st lieutenant. He was ordered to Mexico during the war with that country, and died at Vera Cruz at the early age of 28.

ficient force should be held at or near the agency in readiness to prevent the return of the expelled intruders and the consequent disquieting of the Indians. Governor Chambers endorsed this opinion in the form of a request by a letter, dated Executive Office, Burlington, Iowa Territory, July 2, 1842, addressed to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs:

SIR:—With my letter of the 21st ultimo I sent you copies of my letters of that date to Captain Beach and Lieutenant Jenkins, of the Dragoons, (in command at the Sac and Fox Agency). I have received an answer from the latter gentleman in which he states that "The orders of Col. [William] Davenport\* were to remove the lawless intruders on the south side of the Des Moines and return immediately to Fort Atkinson;" he adds, "I think I have complied with the first part of these instructions and see no reasons why I should not now comply with the second."

I have placed the Department in full possession of the course pursued by me in relation to this unpleasant business and of the conduct of the military officers, with whom I have found it necessary to correspond, and think the necessity will be apparent that they should be instructed that in matters of this sort they must conform to the requisitions I may make upon them, except in such cases as the Department may think proper to leave an express discretionary power with them, and that instead of issuing orders to commandants of detachments, as in this case, "to remove the lawless intruders," they should leave them to the direction of the agents, who will act under my directions. I am by no means ambitious of command or authority of any kind over the military, and still less of any controversy with the officers, having had sufficient experience to know that nothing is to be gained by either, and that a subaltern on separate command generally considers himself a commander-in-chief as to all the world except his immediate superior.

I still fear that a portion of these intruders will return to the Sac and Fox country and though the number will probably be small, there may be enough to irritate the Indians and induce them to act rashly. Without the title of the Sacs and Foxes should soon be extinguished to the country on the Des Moines, I still think it would be advisable to station a small force near the agency.

(Signed) JOHN CHAMBERS.

[SEAL]

On this request the War Department a few weeks later directed Colonel Davenport to furnish a detachment of Dra-

\*This officer was born in North Carolina, and died in Philadelphia in 1858. He was appointed from civil life captain in the 16th Infantry, and distinguished himself in the battles on the Canadian frontier. He was made major of the 6th Infantry in 1825 and lieutenant-colonel of the 1st Infantry in 1832. He was also distinguished at the Battle of Bad Axe and in the Seminole War. He was promoted to Colonel of the 6th Infantry in 1842, transferred to the 1st Infantry in 1843 and resigned in 1850.

goons who were to establish themselves at such point as the Governor of the Territory might direct.

On the 26th of September, Co. I, of the 1st Dragoons, left Fort Atkinson with a complement of forty-four men and one officer, 2d Lieutenant Charles M. Ruff; Captain James Allen and 1st Lieutenant William N. Grier, of that company, being left at Fort Atkinson on special duty. The detachment proceeded to Iowa City and there went into camp. On being joined by Captain Allen the command moved west toward the Des Moines River where, by permission of Mr. J. Sanford, of the American Fur Company, it went into quarters in an abandoned trading station of that company, and in a report to the Adjutant General of the Army Captain Allen describes the fort and its situation and recommends that it be designated as Fort Sanford in recognition of the courtesy of and in compliment to Mr. Sanford of the above named company:

Sir:—I have the honor to report that, in pursuance with the requisition of Governor Chambers, of this Territory and the instructions contained in your letter to Colonel Kearny, dated 30th ultimo, I have stationed my company at this post, expecting to occupy it during the winter.

I have named it Fort Sanford, to which I have to ask, respectfully, the sanction of the War Department.

It consists of eight rooms of huts or rude log cabins which lately constituted a trading establishment of the American Fur Company, and I am permitted by J. Sanford, Esq., of that company, to occupy them, rent free. They will make quarters for the men of my company and the requisite store-room, and a single cabin for one officer. I am building huts for two officers, and stables for my complement of horses, all of which I hope to have completed by the end of next month,—if I shall receive the timely aid of funds, tools and implements, etc., for which the proper requisitions have been made on the Quartermaster's Department at St. Louis.

My company present is forty-four, total. I have this day under authority of the Colonel Commanding this Department, ordered Lieutenant Grier and a detachment, eighteen men, of my company, left at Fort Atkinson, to join me immediately.

I marched here from my camp at Sac and Fox agency on the 12th instant, and then made an expedition with a portion of the company to the mouth of the Raccoon River from which I returned on the 22d instant.

This post is on the left bank of Des Moines River, sixty-five miles west from Fort Madison on the Mississippi, four miles west of second Fox

agency and about twenty-five miles north of the upper disputed boundary of Missouri. My nearest postoffice is Fairfield, Iowa Territory, twenty-one miles distant with which I communicate once a week by express.

I am, Sir, Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

(Signed) J. ALLEN.

TO BRIG. GEN. R. JONES,  
Adjutant General, U. S. A.,  
Washington, D. C.

[SEAL]

The Department was of the opinion, in view of the temporary nature of the post, that the station of the troops should be known as the "Sac and Fox Agency" rather than "Fort Sanford."

On December 12th, Captain Allen, in an attempt to secure double rations, addressed a letter to the Adjutant General, requesting a decision as to whether or not this post was of such nature as to be construed under the Act of Congress, dated August 23, 1842, as being "established and fixed":

FORT SANFORD, DES MOINES RIVER, NEAR FAIRFIELD,  
IOWA TERRITORY, Dec., 12, 1842.

SIR:—To enable me to obtain my proper allowances from the Pay Department, I have to request the Adjutant General to inform the Paymaster General that this post was established and "fixed" from and after the 12th of October, 1842, and that being the date from which it has been occupied by my company in obedience to your instructions to Col. Kearny, dated September 30th, 1842. (See my official report to your office 28th October, 1842.)

By my construction of the Act of Congress, of 23rd August, 1842, the commandant of this post is entitled to allowance of *double rations* from the date at which it was established, or fixed, by proper authority. It was so fixed on the 12th October, 1842, under the authority and instructions from the headquarters of Army above mentioned.

If the War Department entertains a different construction of the law referred to, I beg the Adjutant General to inform me as about the time from which, under such construction, the commander of this post may charge for double rations.

I have the honor to be, Very respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant,

(Sgd) J. ALLEN,

Capt. 1st Dgns.

TO BRIG. GEN. R. JONES,  
Adjt. Gen. U. S. A.,  
Washington, D. C.

[SEAL]

The Secretary of War, in an endorsement on this letter

under date of January 10, 1843, decided that the post was a temporary one and not of such nature as to fall within the Act.

On November 14, 1842, Lieutenant Grier, of the 1st Dragoons, was relieved from further duty at Fort Atkinson, and reported at Fort Sanford on December 7th, bringing with him a detachment of eighteen enlisted men of Company I, who had not accompanied the first expedition.

Captain James Allen,\* the commanding officer of this fort and of Company I, of the 1st U. S. Dragoons, was born in Ohio and appointed to the Military Academy at West Point from Indiana on July 1, 1825; he was appointed a Second Lieutenant in the 5th Infantry on July 20, 1829, and transferred to the 1st Dragoons March 4, 1833; appointed First Lieutenant May 31, 1835, and a Captain June 30, 1837, died August 23, 1846.

The First Lieutenant of this company, William Nicholson Grier, was a native of Pennsylvania, and a graduate from the Military Academy. He arose through the various grades to be Colonel of the 3d Cavalry, and was retired December 15, 1870.

Lieutenant Charles Frederick Ruff, the junior subaltern, was also a Pennsylvanian and a West Pointer. He was appointed Second Lieutenant of the 1st Dragoons, July 1, 1838.

Both of the last named officers served with distinction in the Mexican and Civil Wars, and in both were brevetted for gallantry and meritorious service.

Captain Allen left Fort Sanford on the 29th of April of 1843 to locate a camp site for his command on the Raccoon Fork, and on his return the command abandoned its station at Fort Sanford (May 17, 1843) and proceeded to the mouth of the Raccoon River in connection with a company of the 1st Infantry, establishing Fort Des Moines No. 2.

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\*For the military records of Captain Allen and Lieutenants Grier and Ruff, see ANNALS for October, 1899, pp. 166, 175, and 177.

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