

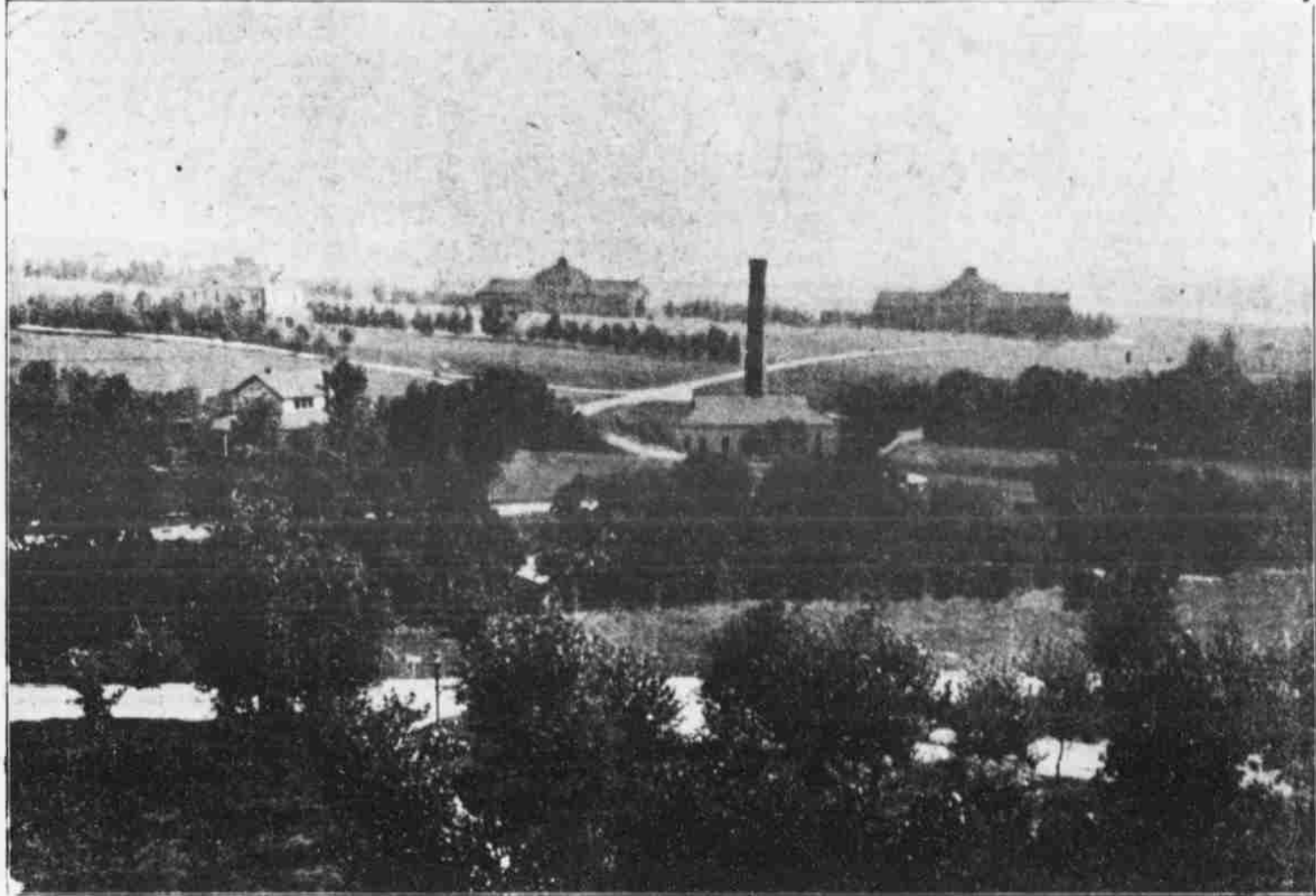
# Fort Riley--A Great Military Camp



OFFICERS QUARTERS AT FORT RILEY.—ADMINISTRATION BUILDING WITH TOWER.



MONUMENT TO THE SEVENTH CAVALRY DEAD AT FORT RILEY.



ARTILLERY BARRACKS AT FORT RILEY, LOOKING EAST.—WATER WORKS IN FOREGROUND.

**T**HE autumn army maneuvers now in progress at Fort Riley, Kan., and which will continue until the last of October, has brought together the largest body of military forces ever assembled in the west. As a consequence all eyes are directed toward this military post, which is the second largest in the United States, and is excelled in beauty and dimensions by few military establishments in the world.

Fort Riley is located on a commanding bluff, or series of bluffs, overlooking the junction of the Smoky Hill and Republican rivers, which here form the Kansas river, and four miles northeast of the town of Junction City, Kan., and is very nearly in the geographical center of the continental United States.

The post was first established in the year 1852, in the then Territory of Nebraska. The establishment of the post at this point was for two reasons: First, for the protection of emigrants to the Pacific coast, the trails to New Mexico, California and Oregon converging at this point; second, for the moral effect on the powerful Indian tribes who then inhabited that portion of the west. Troops could take the field from a month to six weeks earlier in the spring and remain in the field for the same period later than from Fort Leavenworth. The site was selected by a board of officers appointed September 21, 1852, by the secretary of war, and the building of the post began in the following March and was named Camp Center, because of being near the geographical center of the United States. Pursuant with general orders No. 17, War department, A. G. O., dated June 17, 1853, the name was changed to Fort Riley, in honor of Brevet Major General Bennett Riley, colonel of the First Infantry, who died June 9, 1853.

Major E. A. Ogden, quartermaster, escorted by Troop B, First dragoons, under Major Chilton, proceeded from Fort Leavenworth to the new post at Camp Center, with orders to erect the necessary buildings and some temporary buildings were erected in 1853 and 1854, the original plan being for an eight-company post. Five hundred laborers were brought from Fort Leavenworth by wagon and work begun in July, 1855.

The troops were sent out on a summer campaign, leaving at the post only Major Ogden, Surgeon Simmons, Chaplain Clarkson, Bandmaster Jackson, Wagonmaster P.

G. Lowe, the hospital steward and a few of the band of the Sixth Infantry. On August 1, 1855, cholera broke out and a panic among the workmen ensued. Major Ogden was taken down with the scourge on the 2d and died the following day. The disease ran its course in six days, during which time there were nearly 100 deaths. The workmen became unmanageable and demanded their pay. There was no one to pay them and the money was locked in the safe. A gang of laborers broke into the sutler's store, rolled out a barrel of whisky, knocked in the head and helped themselves with tin cups until they became very much intoxicated and mutinous. They then broke into the ordnance storehouse, armed themselves and threatened to break into the safe and take their pay. They were about to make the attack, when Wagonmaster Lowe rode into the post from the camp on the Republican. The leader of the mob threatened Lowe with a revolver. Lowe knocked him down and held a revolver on him until he begged for his life. The panic was thus allayed and the various trades organized into squads to preserve order when the work of construction was resumed.

The post as completed under Major Ogden's orders remained practically the same until 1885, and was much smaller than at present, and was built in the form of a rectangle.

The plan of the present post began to take form about 1885 and was prepared by and under the direction of Colonel George E. Pond, assistant quartermaster general, who was selected for the duty by General

P. H. Sheridan. Colonel Pond was sent to Fort Riley in 1885 and remained in charge of the work until 1891, expending more than \$1,000,000 in the work of construction. In addition to the plans of the post he prepared the plans for the waterworks, the sewerage system, the beautiful roads on the reservation and through the post, and also the splendid steel bridge which spans the Republican river.

The present reservation contains 19,899 acres and is about eight miles in its greatest length and six miles in its greatest breadth. In 1857 4,000 acres of land belonging to the reservation, lying between the two rivers and Junction City, were given to a local company for the building of a bridge across the Republican river. The bridge fell into the river before it had been used, but the company retained possession of the land. The bridge was finally built by the government in 1885. There are three regular drill grounds on the reservation, each comprising 3,000 or 4,000 acres. They are known respectively as Smoky Hill Flat, Republican Flat and Pawnee Flat. On this latter is the target range which has a limit of 1,000 yards. North of the post about a mile and a quarter, along the Kansas river, and closely shut in by bluffs, is the drill ground known as Pawnee Flat. This was the site of Pawnee City, the original capital of the Territory of Kansas. Two ruined stone buildings still remain to mark the spot; the larger and better preserved one being the capitol building, where met the first legislature of Kansas, July 2, 1856.

Junction City, the nearest town, is about four miles southwest of the post and is

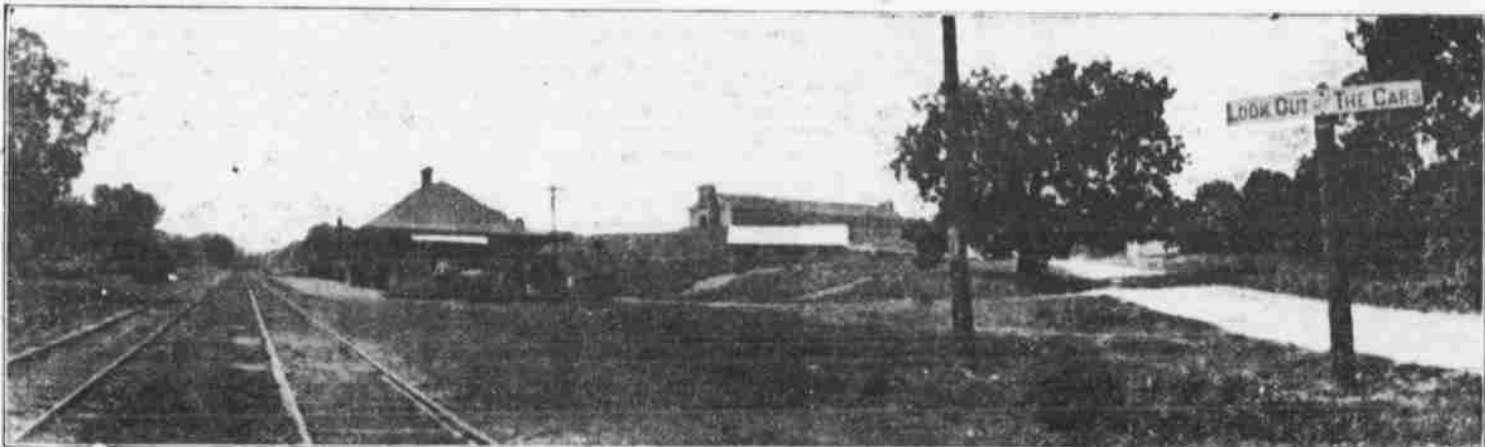
connected by an electric car line. Cars run every hour during the day and every half hour from 6:30 p. m. until midnight.

Fort Riley was originally constructed as an exclusively cavalry post, although at times batteries of artillery have been stationed there. In 1887 it was decided to add artillery barracks to the post, and the fort now virtually comprises two posts, one for cavalry, with accommodations for twelve companies, and one for five batteries of field artillery.

A magnificent stone riding school 100x300 feet has been built and is one of the finest buildings of its kind in the world. The old post consisted almost entirely of frame buildings. The present post, with the exception of the noncommissioned staff quarters, both frame buildings, is built entirely of stone, with slate or tin roofs.

On a high eminence overlooking the post is a monument erected to the memory of Major Ogden. It is surrounded by a neat iron fence and the shaft, which is twelve feet high, is suitably inscribed in memory of the dead founder of the post. The body of Major Ogden was some years after his death disinterred and now lies buried at his old home in Unadilla, N. Y.

Fort Riley was for some years the station of the Seventh United States cavalry and there was erected then at the head of Sheridan avenue a handsome granite monument to the memory of the officers and soldiers of that regiment who lost their lives in the battle of Wounded Knee. The monument with its pedestal is about twenty-five feet in height.



DEPOT OF THE UNION PACIFIC AT FORT RILEY.