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FORT STEILACOOM UNDER SCRUTINY

The 1858 Inspection of Fort  
Steilacoom by Colonel Joseph  
K.F. Mansfield, Inspector Gen-  
eral, United States Army.

by Gary Fuller Reese

ORE

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CONTENTS

Introduction.	1
Site of Fort Steilacoom	3
Mansfield's 1854 Inspection of the Fort.	5
Report of Inspection of Fort Steilacoom 14 to the 19th of December, 1958.	7
Buildings and Water	10
Garden	11
Troops	12
Guard	14
Hospital	14
Post Ordnance and magazine	14
Quartermaster Department	15
Commissary Department	16
Command, Chaplain, Payments, Sutler, etc.	16
Drills and Target firing	17
Indians	18
Colonel Mansfield's Comments about deserters	19
Mansfield's visit from the Kautz Diary	20
Notes from the Cover of the inspection report	22
Officers mentioned by Colonel Mansfield	23
Joseph King Fenno Mansfield, biography.	25
Maps and Charts.	26

Fort Steilacoom in 1854 (Showing structures built by Joseph Thomas Heath and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company as well as those built by Grier Tallmadge and his successors.)	28
Diagram of the region of Fort Steilacoom in 1858.	29
Fort Steilacoom before Reconstruction  (Drawn by August V. Kautz showing the Fort as it was before the major rebuilding of 1858.)	31
Fort Steilacoom after Reconstruction  (Showing the buildings as they were in 1858 with notes as to which re- main today.)	33
Notes	34
Bibliography	37

## INTRODUCTION

Colonel Joseph K. F. Mansfield was Inspector General of the United States Army from 1853 until 1861. During his period of service he made two tours of inspection in the Pacific Northwest, one in 1854 and the second during the fall and winter of 1858-59.

The report of his first visit to Fort Steilacoom is quite brief as were his reports of other posts in the area. As he gained experience he apparently became more detailed in his inspections and in their reports. August Kautz,<sup>1</sup> in his diary account of Colonel Mansfield's visit to the military escort to the Boundary Commission at Semiahmoo Bay, recorded that the inspection there was brief and perfunctory but that the mere presence of the Inspector General caused much commotion.

At the time of Mansfield's first inspection of Fort Steilacoom the place was little more than a series of log cabins either built by the Army or inherited from the Hudson's Bay Company. The original site had been settled as early as 1842 but was soon abandoned and the next settler, Joseph Thomas Heath, constructed five buildings which the Army used when they arrived in the summer of 1849.

Lieutenant Grier Tallmadge,<sup>2</sup> who served as quartermaster officer with the original Army detachment assigned to Steilacoom, was responsible for the construction of the log buildings seen by Colonel Mansfield in 1854.

The inspection of Fort Steilacoom in December, 1858, was more detailed and much more was reported. Lieutenant August V. Kautz had finished the major reconstruction of the fort before he was assigned to Semiahmoo Bay so nearly everything was new or in good condition and all the old structures had been replaced.

The Washington Territorial Legislature had memorialized Congress in 1855 requesting that an armed Steamer be stationed in the area and apparently local leaders had discussed the matter at length with Colonel Mansfield for he included a similiar recommendation in his report.

The documents included in this paper are of interest in the study of the 1858 inspection most particularly, to the career of Colonel Mansfield, to the status of the Fort at that time, and to local reactions of the inspection.

### THE SITE OF FORT STEILACOOM

The prairie lands which stretched inland from the shores of Puget Sound afforded little opportunity for settlement before the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company in the early 1830s. Local Indians preferred to live on the banks of the streams which flowed through the area or near the mouths of the rivers and streams that emptied into Puget Sound. With a water related economy and the lack of horses for quick transportation Indians usually avoided the open spaces on the prairie lands.

When the Hudson's Bay Company arrived in 1833 and founded Fort Nisqually they brought with them horses, cattle, and finally sheep and for the first time the rich grasses of the prairies found a commercial use.

Because control of the Puget Sound Country became an issue between the United States and Great Britain, the Hudson's Bay Company undertook to strengthen British claims to the area by importing a number of permanent settlers loyal to the Crown who would settle in the Northwest most notably on the prairies surrounding Fort Nisqually.<sup>3</sup>

Thus in the winter of 1841-42 a party of settlers arrived from the Red River settlements in present Manitoba to secure lands in the Northwest. Because of a number of problems the scheme developed by the Hudson's Bay Company failed but not before a number of families came to the Fort Nisqually area. One of these families settled on the prairie lands above Steilacoom Bay and started a farm on what was to become the site for Fort Steilacoom.

Within two years all the Red River settlers had given up and left the area and it was not until early 1845 that another Englishman, Joseph Thomas Heath, arrived on the prairie lands to begin a farm. Heath had arranged to lease land from the Hudson's Bay Company and selected the site for his farm in the area of an abandoned Red River settler's cabin. There Heath built his own home, barn, and several outbuildings. He began to farm and was soon raising potatoes, peas and other crops.

Heath died during the winter of 1848-1849 and his farm was taken over by an arm of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. This company was founded in 1838 to take advantage of the agricultural possibilities of the Pacific Northwest.

Following the 1849 attack on Fort Nisqually by local Indians a detachment of the United States Army was sent to protect American interests in the area for the Puget Sound country was now under the sovereignty of the United States. <sup>4</sup> Searching for a site for an army encampment officers were taken to the Heath farm and because buildings were immediately available it was decided that the detachment would quarter there.

Upon arrival of the troops more quarters were needed and were built out of locally available materials. By the winter of 1849 the troops were encamped at what would become Fort Steilacom.

MANSFIELD'S 1854 INSPECTION OF THE FORT

FORT STEILACOOM.

It is in latitude 47° 10' 57" and longitude 122° 33' occupying ground and some buildings of the Hudson Bay Company, and is six miles north of Fort Nisqually of that Company, and two miles from the shores of Puget Sound, and the town of Steilacoom where there may be 100 Americans population.

It is 170 miles from Fort Vancouver via the Cowlitz River and 25 miles from Olympia where there may be a population of 500 Americans. Its supplies excepting fresh beef are received through Fort Vancouver and direct from San Francisco. There is abundant wood and grazing here. No reservation has been made, but one is in contemplation about five miles to the Northeast of the present site, where the garrison has an excellent garden, and is the nearest point capable of cultivation to the present site or on the emigrant trail from Wallah Wallah through the Nachess pass of the Cascade Mountains.

This is the only post in this quarter. It should be preserved as indispensable as a depot and rallying point for the inhabitants in case of attack. The Indians about here number 900 warriors but very much scattered on the shores and Islands of Puget Sound.

From Steilacoom there is a direct water communication to Olympia and other posts on Puget Sound. A military road of about 100 miles should be opened direct to Fort Vancouver and another to Fort Dalles, which would increase the safety of each post, as well as the population by a communication at all times not interrupted by ice of the rivers, etc. and would



open the country to the control of the Americans.

The magnificent Mount Rainier covered with its snowy mantle is in full view bearing about S.E. and just to the northward of it is the Nachess Pass. Port Townsend is about 100 miles and Bellingham Bay 50 miles by water. Coal has been discovered in large quantities at the latter place and on the Dwamish River. Lumber is abundant as there are two sawmills in this vicinity and several at Olympia. And Salmon, Clams, and Oysters abundant.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTION OF FORT STEILACOOM

14 to the 19th of Dec.1858

On the 12th of December I left Semi-ah-moo at 12 m. in the Revenue Cutter Jefferson Davis, with a fair wind, and without making a tack we reached by sailing our most direct course through the broad channel, the Strait of Haro, Port Townsend, at 12 at midnight, and the next night, the 13th I was so fortunate as to take passage in the Pacific Mail Steamer Panama, and was landed at Steilacoom early in the morning of the 14th and have now the honor to report to the General-in-Chief, the result of my inspection of Fort Steilacoom as follows:

Fort Steilacoom is located about one and a half miles from the town of that name, on the eastern shore of Puget Sound, on an old Hudson Bay Trading post; in latitude  $47^{\circ} 10' 57''$  and longitude  $122^{\circ} 33' 00''$ . It is about 25 miles from Olympia both by land and water. It is in direct communication by land say 115 to Monticello near the mouth of the Cowlitz River: thence by Steamer some 50 miles up the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver.

Hence it is conveniently situated to receive reinforcements from Fort Vancouver, so long in time of war as the river is not occupied by enemy's navy. It is about 70 miles from Port Townsend by water only. It is about 100 miles from Bellingham Bay via a road for which appropriations were once made, and which has been cut out nearly to Seattle, say <sup>6</sup>40 miles from this post and from Fort Bellingham say 5 miles to Whatcom. This road should be opened without further delay

and additional appropriations made therefor. It is about 125 miles by water from Fort Bellingham. It is convenient to communicate across the Cascade Mountains through both the Snoqualimi and the Naches passes.

I regard it as a well located post in a military point of view, as a depot post of troops to meet any emergency in this quarter. It is so far up the sound as to be secure, when proper fortifications will be erected on Point Defiance,<sup>7</sup> etc. against any armed attack direct from the Navy of an enemy.

I look upon this post as of the first importance and one where the gravelly prairie all around it is such that troops, both horse and foot, can drill, and be instructed at all seasons of the year, as the ground is not materially softened by the rains of the wet season, which are intermittent, and not continuous, and the snows are merely nominal. Such is the importance of this post it should never have less than three companies, always highly instructed in the use of their arms, in every particular, and commanded by an officer of character; and there should be here a first rate small steamer, always ready at any time, and capable of moving rapidly and calculated for the rough sea and weather of the waters of Puget Sound and the northern Pacific ocean. With this boat supplies could be sent, and troops on emergency landed at any spot against the Indians. Here I take the liberty to remark that at Olympia in the Government Records, I read a paragraph in the letter of Governor Douglas to Gov. Stevens, in which he significantly remarks that in case of a want of harmony between the two governments, it would be impossible for him to restrain the northern Indians.

Now these northern Indians number as follows, according to the census taken by the Hudson Bay Company in 1856; as furnished me by Mr. Geo. Gibbs, a citizen of Washington Territory; to wit, on Vancouvers Island 25,373 under 12 different tribes, which might be estimated at 4,000 warriors. And other Indians on the northwest coast south of 56°40' at 20,000 and north of 54°60' at 25,000 say 45,000 or 8,000 warriors all in the aggregate 12,000 fighting men, always ready for murder and plunder. Many of these Indians are cannibals, and are always ready to capture the Indians within our territory and make slaves of them. With a steamer at command here, and a system of telegraphs from the tops of the heights of the Islands, from Fort Townsend and Bellingham Bay to this post a force could be brought down on these northern intruders within our waters unexpectedly to them, and sink their large canoes at once.

Here I will remark that the British and Russian Governments should be required to keep these Indians within their own limits, and to deliver up the murderers of Col. Ebey.<sup>9</sup>

There is no safety without a steamer and I most urgently recommend one to be built expressly for this object and kept subject to the orders of the commanding officer of this post.

A plan of the reservation is herewith accompanying marked A, and a plan of the post marked B, and a plan of the post on the 1st of July 1857 marked C.

This post is rebuilt on the old spot<sup>10</sup> claimed by the Puget Sound

Agricultural Company. A contract was entered into by Lt. A.V. Kautz of the 4th Infantry, acting Assistant Quartermaster, dated 30 July 1847(sic) and approved by Bvt. Brig Genl Clark on the 27 August 1857 giving to that company an annual rent of 600 dollars for one square mile of ten years; unless the right be extinguished as per treaty of 1846. At the expiration of 10 years, 6 months notice is sufficient to terminate the contract. Nothing is said about the buildings at the expiration of the lease; and nothing about the buildings which previously existed. In this particular the contract is very defective.

In view of this state of the matter here and a like state of affairs at Fort Vancouver, I would recommend that Congress make an appropriation of 200,000 dollars to liquidate all their claims to soil within our Territory and north of the Columbia River.

There was expended at this post from the 1st July 1856 to the 30th of Sept. 1858 by Lieut A.V. Kautz acting asst. Q.M. 150,956.00 dollars. A part of this amount was for current expenses, and the expenses of the war of 1856. There has since been expended to the 15th of December 1858, by Lieut E.J. Harvie 4,244.75 dollars as Act. Asst. Quartermaster making an aggregate say 155,201.37. Of this amount as near as I can judge from the statements 55,000 dollars was probably applied to the buildings.

#### BUILDINGS AND WATER

These quarters were planned and erected for a post of three companies and a field officer and probably is the best arranged post as a whole in this Department and amply provided. They are arranged on 4 sides

of a square(see plan marked B). On the north side are the officers quarters, in the center is the commanding officer, and the adjutants office under the same roof. Then 6 buildings right and left for officers of the line and in rear a resevoir of water.

On the west side is a mess room and quartermaster and commissary office and a barrack for one company. On the east side is the chaplain's quarters and chapel in one building; a barrack for one company and a magazine and in rear the ordnance sergeant and smith and carpenters shops & without the enclosure barning. On the south side a barrack for one company, quartermaster store house; guard house; clothing house and commissary store; and in rear without the enclosure laundresses. Without the enclosure off the northwest angle is the hospital and surgeons quarters. The sutler has a building without the enclosure.

These buildings are all new with but trifling exception and ample for all the command. The soldiers are very well provided for. There seems to be nothing more required for buildings. The post is supplied by a magnificent spring some 500 years off and the water thrown into a resevoir, without the enclosure by means of a hydraulic ram, and if necessary might be carried into every building.

#### GARDEN

An excellent garden is on a reserve where it was at one time contemplated to establish the post, say 4 miles off and is the only suitable spot for that purpose. It yields abundant vegetables for both summer

and winter. Each company had 500 bushels of potatoes for the winter, besides other vegetables.

#### TROOPS

The force here is as follows: Field and staff, Lt. Col. S. Casey, of the 9th Infantry in command from the 1st of January 1856 to the 12 of Jan 1857 when he went on leave, and returned on the 22nd of December 1857. Asst. Surgeon H.R. Wirtz; ordnance sergeant and hospital steward Company A 4th Infantry, Captain M. Maloney; 1st Lt. A.V. Kautz in detached service, as quartermaster and commissary at Semi-ah-moo, with the Military Escort with Company F 9th Infantry; 2nd Lt. E.J. Conner acting Adjutant provst. 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 2 musicians, 74 privates of these 10 sick, 4 confined, 20 on extra duty, 1 absent with leave, 2 absent without leave, 1 absent confined at Benicia. <sup>12</sup>

This company was provided with old knapsacks, tin canteens, old caps, and recently newly equipped with the new pattern rifled musket, and accoutrements, and was supplied with 9,000 rifled ball cartridges, and in addition it had on hand its entire old equipment of smooth barrel muskets etc. ready to be turned in to the arsenal.

It was well quartered, the men slept in double bunks, two tiers high; a good mess room, and kitchen well provided. Two laundresses <sup>13</sup> attached to this company, and a fund of 454.39 dollars. The books were written up and in order. There were 4 desertions in 1856, 11 in 1857, and 10 in 1858 say 25 in 3 years.

Company C. 4th Infantry. Capt. L.C.Hunt, joined on the 14th Instant, but not able to appear on inspection; 1st Lieut.J. Withers Act. Asst. Adjut General from 10 Sep 1856; 2nd Lieut A. Shaaff in command of Company on parade: 4 sergeants, 3 corporals, 2 musicians, 71 privates, of these 7 sick, 5 confined, 14 on extra duty, 4 on detached service at Puyallup blockhouse. This company had old knapsacks, and gutta puncher canteens, old caps and was armed with the new rifled musket, and supplies with 9,000 rifled ball cartridges. Three laundresses attached to this company and a fund of 182.97 dollars. It was well quartered with mess room and kitchen. The books were written up in order. There were 5 desertions in 1856, 15 in 1857 and 10 in 1858 say 30 in three years.

Company H 9th Infantry. Capt. T.C. English commanding, 1st Lt. E.I. Harvie Act. Asst. Quartermaster and Commissary of the post; 2nd Lt. C.A.Reynolds, 4 sergeants , 4 corporals, 2 musicians, 49 privates; of these 7 sick, 3 confined, 14 extra duty, 10 on detached service at the Muckleshute Blockhouse.

This company was armed with the Harpers ferry rifle, much worn and many out of order and sword bayonet, and supplied with 2076 rifle blank cartridges, 3200 expanding ball, and 800 rifle ball cartridges. It was well quartered with mess room and kitchen. The men slept in double bunks two tiers high. Two laundresses, and well provided except in the article of shoes and drawers. The books were in order and written up. There were 21 desertions in 1856, 23 in 1857, 3 in 1858, Say 47 in three years. A fund of 130.93. dollars.



#### GUARD

The guard is 9 privates, 2 corporals, 1 sergeant. The building is made of logs - 7 cells and 1 prison room. There were 9 soldiers and 3 citizens prisoners - 4 undergoing sentence, 4 minor offences, 1 for theft, 2 citizens waiting trial, 1 citizen sentenced for selling liquor to Indians, to one years imprisonment.

#### HOSPITAL.

Is under direction of Asst. Surgeon Wirtz since the 30th Jan, 1857. He has a steward, 2 nurses - 1 cook - 1 matron - 18 in the hospital diseased principally. The post not sickly. The building ample with 3 ward rooms 6 iron bedsteads - kitchen - messroom - dispensary, and store room. and the records in order and the whole unexceptionable. The vegetables for the sick obtained from the general garden.

I will remark here that Asst. Surgeon Wirtz declined by an official note to attend on Col. Caseys family. The Colonel knows of no reason therefore. I enclosed a copy of the note to Genl. Harney in Command of the Department.

#### POST ORDNANCE AND MAGAZINE

There are 3 twelve pound mountain howitzers in excellent order placed under the portico of the magazine; 180 twelve pd stripped shot; 97 twelve pd canister shot; 145 spherical case shot, 8 shells; 20 muskets; 34 rifles; 3 pistols; 1 revolver; 29,200 percussion caps,

3,900 pistol ball cartridges, 41 blank howitzer cartridges; 20,700 rifle ball cartridges; 5,000 rifle balls; 2,000 rifle blank cartridges.

The ordnance is well stored in a good wooden magazine, well constructed for the purpose, and a good ordnance sergeant has the charge of the same.

#### QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

1st Lieut. E.J. Harvie of the 9th Infantry relieved 1st Lt. A.V. Kautz 4th, Infantry on the 1st October 1858, in the duties of this department. Lieut. Harvie is now engaged in completing a quartermaster's storehouse, which will soon be done, and has in his employ 1 master carpenter @ 5 dollars and rations and 9 carpenters @ 4 dollars and a ration per day, one express man @ 4 dollars and a ration; one herder and teamster at 2 dollars and a ration; and extra duty men as carpenters etc. 33 and one clerk and one acting quartermaster sergeant. This large force will be dropped as soon as practicable. I observed an extra duty man at work on a bureau, to which I called the attention of Col. Casey and he ordered such worked stopped for the future.

He keeps 29 horses, 50 mules, 6 oxen, 18 wagons of 6 mules each, 1 ambulance, 1 cart. He pays for oats 74 cts the bushel, and 14 dollars the ton for hay and 37 1/2 cts the bushel for charcoal, which is high. Fuel is furnished by extra duty men.

He receives his funds from the Chief Quartermaster at San Francisco

and has expended since the 1st of October 4,244.75 dollars. All his returns and accounts to the close of November have been forwarded. At that date there was due the U.S. 1982.40 dollars. Expended since 821 dollars, leaving a balance of 1156.40 dollars of which 618.20 dollars is in the Assist. Treasury at San Francisco and 517.20 dollars in cash on hand.

The supplies are ample except small sized shoes, and stockings, and drawers, which are wanted. The barns and sheds are all sufficient and he had on hand about 50 tons of hay. The animals were out grazing.

#### COMMISSARY DEPARTMENT.

Lieut E.J. Harvie is also commissary for the same date. His supplies are good, but was in want of rice and candles; and feed stored, and his accounts and returns have all been forwarded to the close of November when there was due the U.S. 824.52 dollars, of which 488.50 dollars was in the Assist. Treasury at San Francisco and 619 in cash on hand. Flour costs 13.80 dollars the bushel and beef 18 cts. the pound, sugar 15 cts and crushed sugar 18 1/2 cts. There are two flouring mills, within a mile and a half; and another year flour will be lower.

He receives his funds from Major Lee, chief commissary at San Francisco as well as his supplies generally.

COMMAND, CHAPLAIN, PAYMENTS, SUTLER, ETC.

This post is extremely well commanded by Lt. Col. Casey, an officer of high military attainments and character and in case of a war he is well qualified to command on these waters. The discipline is good and harmony both among the officers and men. The unmarried officers have a mess. The soldiers appear contented, and have got up a literary society and some books as a library. There is no chaplain at present, but a chaplains quarters and a chapel, in the same building. 2nd Lt. E. I. Conner 4th Infantry is the acting adjutant of the post. and all the post records are well kept. He is also post treasurer and has at date in his hands 178.50 dollars. 2nd Lieut. A. Shaaf is recruiting officer and has in his hands 23.86 dollars.

A good sutlers store is just outside the enclosure and well supplied and J. M. Bachelder is the sutler.

16

At the Muckle-shute prairie, about 25 miles distant among a band of about 500 Indians Col. Casey has established a detachment of ten men. The Indians have not yet been taken charge of by Indian agents. It is presumed eventually they will be assigned to a reserve.

The payments to the troops have here to fore been made once in four months and they were last paid in November by Major Alvord. <sup>17</sup>

#### DRILLS AND TARGET FIRING.

Col. Casey divided the command into 4 companies and took them through the battalion drill of Light Infantry and the movements were totally and well performed. It showed, however, the most of the time had been devoted to labor - Rain interrupted the drill as skirmishers. The

companies fired separately at the target of 6'x22" at 200 yards; 40 men each one round and A Company put in 8 shots, H Company 7, C Company 9 . This last is the best shots in this Department and the three companies together put in more shots than any three in this department at any one post. This is owing to the fact it was the last post of this dept inspected by me, and they had more time to be instructed since the order of Genl. Harvey on this point. I hope to see better results in the future.

#### INDIANS

There are about 2,000 Indians within 25 miles of this post and about 1,500 of them on reservations. They are all peaceable and there seems to be nothing at present to be apprehended. I would advise the immediate confirmation of all the treaties made by Gov. Stevens as the first step to a permanent confidence, and mutual trust, between the whites and Indians.

I am very respectfully,  
Your Obt. Servant.  
Joseph K.F. Mansfield.  
Col. and Inspector Genl.  
U.S.A.

San Francisco California.  
18 Jan 1859

Brevet Major Irvin McDowell  
Asst. Adjt Genl.  
Headquarters. Army.

COLONEL MANSFIELD COMMENTS ABOUT DESERTERS

Immediately prior to his inspection of Fort Steilacoom, Colonel Mansfield visited Fort Townsend near the present town of Port Townsend. There he found that seventy four men had deserted in three years at the post and attributed these desertions to four causes:

- "1. The worthless unprincipled character of many recruits.
- "2. the want of proper discipline and instructions as soldiers at the General Recruiting Depot before they are sent to join companies; a fatal error in our system.
- "3. The vicinity of this post to the British frontier, where the gold diggings are enticing, and where they cannot be seized if discovered;
- "4. The bad treatment of an orderly sergeant since reduced to the ranks."

After describing several examples of new recruits who were sent west to military posts who were known to be totally unfit for any duty, Colonel Mansfield made the following general observations:

"In this connexion I would earnestly urge that no recruits be sent from the General Depot, till they have been, disciplined & Trained to the performance of military duties. This can be better done at the depot than at Military Posts. It would prevent much desertion, & the men kept at the depot for 6 months, under strict discipline, & instructions, would not fail to show their defects; such as fits etc. and could be discharged without further expense...The pay and compensation of a soldier are ample, and none but good and active men and men of good habits should be allowed to enter the service."

COLONEL MANSFIELD VISITS THE NORTHWEST

RECORDED IN THE DIARY OF AUGUST V. KAUTZ

December 10, 1858. Friday. A vessel hove in sight this morning which proved afterwards to be the Cutter. I went over to the Spit to make some arrangements for going up the Sound. <sup>18</sup> Soon after I returned Mr. White came on shore with his boat having Col. Mansfield, the Inspector Genl., Mr. King, Mr. Major and Dr. Kuhn. The Col. inspected my Depts. this evening and he will inspect the commands tomorrow. The Capt. (Dickinson Woodruff) was in great trouble about this unexpected arrival, the mess is badly provided, the command is not in the best order and altogether it is an unpleasant surprise and an unfavorable time both as regards weather and the condition of the post for an inspection. The day was cold, stormy, and wet.

December 11, 1858. Saturday. The Col. inspected the Company today but his inspection was not very minute. The men had many complaints to make which were listened to very patiently by the Col. Shean brought up his charges against King. His story first excited the Col's indignation, but subsequently he learned from Mr. Parke that King was invaluable and has tried to affect a compromise. Shean led him to suppose that he would accept a consideration to stop proceedings and he was offered a hundred dollars which he refused and said he would refuse a thousand which turned the Col. against Shean.

December 12, 1858. Sunday. The Col. intended to leave last night but the weather was so impossible that he and Mr. Frost remained on

shore. I went on board this morning with them and about twelve o'clock sailed for Port Townsend. We went through the Straits of Haro and without a single tack arrived at Port Townsend about twelve o'clock at night, without any trouble or mishap. Warren then intended to go up the Sound also was disappointed in not getting off. I like the Col. very much, but he is strongly impregnated with (Isaac I.) Steven's doctrine and views by way of recompence for the consideration which Stevens expresses for the Col. We had several discussions but they did not amount to much as far as influencing his views was concerned.

December 15, 1858. The Col. make his inspections this morning. He seems well pleased with the post....

December 18, 1858. Spent the morning in Town and in the afternoon in the office in the garrison making out some official papers. Col. Mansfield is anxious to get off to Olympia. He is either complaisantly situated or he has demogogic ideas to present, for he talks about making inquiries into things that he certainly has nothing to do with. I think he wants to give all the aid he can to Gov. Stevens in prosecuting the claims for the war. The Col. interests himself about many things that cannot be entirely disinterested in their motives and he is beyond all doubt plotting for future advancement. Any further promotion must come to him through popular favor.

December 19, 1858. Sunday. Spent the greater part of today in the office making a plan of the post as it was before the buildings were commenced. I also drew up an estimate of the expenses of the buildings at the post, and of the War of /55 and /56.



NOTES FROM THE COVER OF THE INSPECTION REPORT

"If action has not already been taken by the Commanding officer of the Department of Oregon in the matter reported of Asst. Surgeon Wirtz by Inspector General Mansfield, that officer (Wirtz) will be brought to trial before the General Court Martial appointed in Special Orders No. 35 from the Adjutant General's office on the charge of "conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline," with two specifications, first, that he neglected and failed to give medical attendance to the family of Colonel Casey when called on; second that he refused to give such attendance when required.

"The Judge Advocate will prepare such special instructions for the Judge Advocate of the Court as the case may require. A copy of the recent decision relative to the duties of medical officers will be furnished to the Department Commander and to the Judge Advocate of the Court for his guidance.

J. B. Floyd, Secretary of War, War Dept. 5 May 1859."

"Attention is respectfully called to the subject of the Indian relations and to the necessity of having a government steamer on Puget Sound. Respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant General. and received 26 Feb. 1859."

OFFICERS MENTIONED BY COLONEL MANSFIELD

BACHELDER, JAMES. M. Bachelder was a civilian who served for many years as the Post Sutler at Fort Steilacoom. He was a U.S. Commissioner and as such issued the order for the arrest of the Pierce County Sheriff to stop the execution of Leschi, an Indian leader who was convicted of a specific murder during the Indian war of 1855-56. He was hung in effigy at Olympia and was removed from office.

CASEY, SILAS. Silas Casey graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1826. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Second Infantry and for the next ten years served on the Great Lakes and on the Frontier. He was involved in the Seminole Indian war in Florida and was severely wounded at the storming of Chapultepec during the Mexican War.

In the 1850s he was stationed principally on the West Coast and was in command of Fort Steilacoom much of the time. He was appointed a Brigadier General of Volunteers at the outset of the Civil War and was active throughout the war.

He was the author of a system of infantry tactics which was published in 1861. He retired from the service on the 8th of July 1868 and died in New York on January 22, 1882.

CONNER, EDWARD J. Conner spent much of his military career in the Pacific Northwest before the Civil War being assigned to both Fort Steilacoom and Fort Chehalis. He was born in New Hampshire and graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1857. He achieved the rank of Captain on October 24, 1861 but was retired from the service on December 8, 1863.

ENGLISH, THOMAS C. English graduated from the Military Academy in 1849 and was assigned to Fort Steilacoom as a Captain in 1858. He served during the Civil War and his highest rank was that of Lieutenant Colonel in the Second Infantry. He died in 1876.

HARVIE, EDWARD J. After graduating from the Military Academy, Lieut. Harvie came to the Northwest. He became a First Lieutenant in December of 1857 and resigned from the Army in March of 1861 and was from the State of Virginia.

HUNT, LEWIS C. After serving in the Fourth Infantry during the 1850s, Captain Hunt rose to the rank of Brevet Brigadier General for his Civil War service. He married a daughter of Silas Casey at Fort Steilacoom in 1861. He died 16 September 1886.

KAUTZ, AUGUST V. After serving as an enlisted man in the Mexican War,

Kautz received an appointment to the Military Academy as a member of the class of 1852. After serving briefly in New York upon graduation Kautz was assigned to the Fourth Infantry which was then serving on the West Coast. After reporting to California he was assigned to the Northwest and served at Fort Steilacoom beginning in 1853. He spent time in Southern Oregon and was active in the Indian War of 1855-56.

Kautz did the major reconstruction of the Fort during 1858 and thereafter was assigned to the escort of the joint United States-Great Britain boundary commission for the forty-ninth parallel. In 1859 he went to Europe for the "grand tour."

Returning in 1860 Kautz took command of part of the Blake Expedition which sailed up the Missouri River and then took the Mullan Road west of the Mountains. He returned to Fort Steilacoom but was assigned to Fort Chehalis where he remained until he returned east to fight in the Civil War.

He rose to the rank of Major General of Volunteers during the war and after service in the Southwest he commanded the Army department for the west coast and retired to Seattle.

MALONEY, MAURICE. Maloney began his military career as a private in the 4th Infantry. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1846 and a Captain in 1854. He was born in Ireland and joined the Army where he fought in Florida and Mexico. He was in command of Fort Chehalis, Washington, during nearly all of its pre-Civil War existence. He retired from the Army in 1870 and died in 1872.

REYNOLDS, CHARLES A. Reynolds served first in the ranks and was later appointed a Second Lieutenant in the 9th Infantry. He served throughout the Civil War and served much of the time in the Quartermaster Corps. He retired in 1887 and died in 1896.

SHAAFF, ARTHUR. Shaaff was a southerner who resigned his commission at the beginning of the Civil War. He served as a Major in the 1st Battalion of the Georgia Sharpshooters.

WIRTZ, HORACE. Dr. Wirtz was post surgeon at Fort Steilacoom and later at Fort Chehalis. He was from the state of Pennsylvania and served as an assistant surgeon beginning in 1846. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel at the close of the Civil War.

WITHERS, JOHN. Withers graduated from the Military Academy with the Class of 1849. He served in the 4th Infantry as a Second Lieutenant, a First Lieutenant and a Brevet Captain. He resigned his commission on March 1, 1861 and returned to the South.

JOSEPH KING FENNO MANSFIELD  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joseph King Fenno Mansfield, the son of Henry and Mary Mansfield was born December 22, 1803 in New Haven, Connecticut. He joined the class of 1822 at the United States Military Academy in 1817 and received the rank of Second Lieutenant in the Engineers on July 1, 1822.

His early career was spent mostly in the Southern Atlantic states where he worked on the construction of a number of military posts which were to be used for coastal defence. He held a responsible position in the construction of Fort Pulaski at the mouth of the Savannah River.

He remained a Second Lieutenant for ten years being promoted to First Lieutenant in 1832 and to Captain in 1838, the year he married Louisa Maria Mather.

During the War with Mexico he was chief engineer of the army under the command of General Zachary Taylor and as such was given several brevet or honorary ranks. He was made a brevet Major for his conduct during the defence of Fort Brown, Texas and later in the fall of 1846 was breveted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel during the battle of Monterey, Mexico. In early spring he received the rank of Brevet Colonel for "...gallant and meritorious conduct" at the battle of Buena Vista.

Following the conclusion of the war Mansfield worked on the construction of coastal defence works until he was named inspector-general of the Army. Serving in this capacity until the beginning of the Civil War, Mansfield traveled extensively inspecting posts in the Southwest, California and the Pacific Northwest.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Colonel Mansfield was promoted to the rank of brigadier general and was assigned to command the Department of Washington which included the national capital and its surrounding territory. Later when the Army was reorganized he was "...assigned to command under General Wool at Fort Monroe and in 1862 took part in the occupation of Norfolk and Suffolk, Virginia."

Following another change in the Army command structure General Mansfield was promoted to Major General of Volunteers and assigned to command the Twelfth Army Corps. It was in this capacity that the General was killed at the beginning of the battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862.

The following account was written of the death of the General by Major John M. Gould who was present when he was mortally wounded:

"The Confederate force in our front showed no colors. They appeared to be somewhat detached and in advance of the main rebel line, and were about where the left of General Duryea's brigade might be supposed to have retreated.

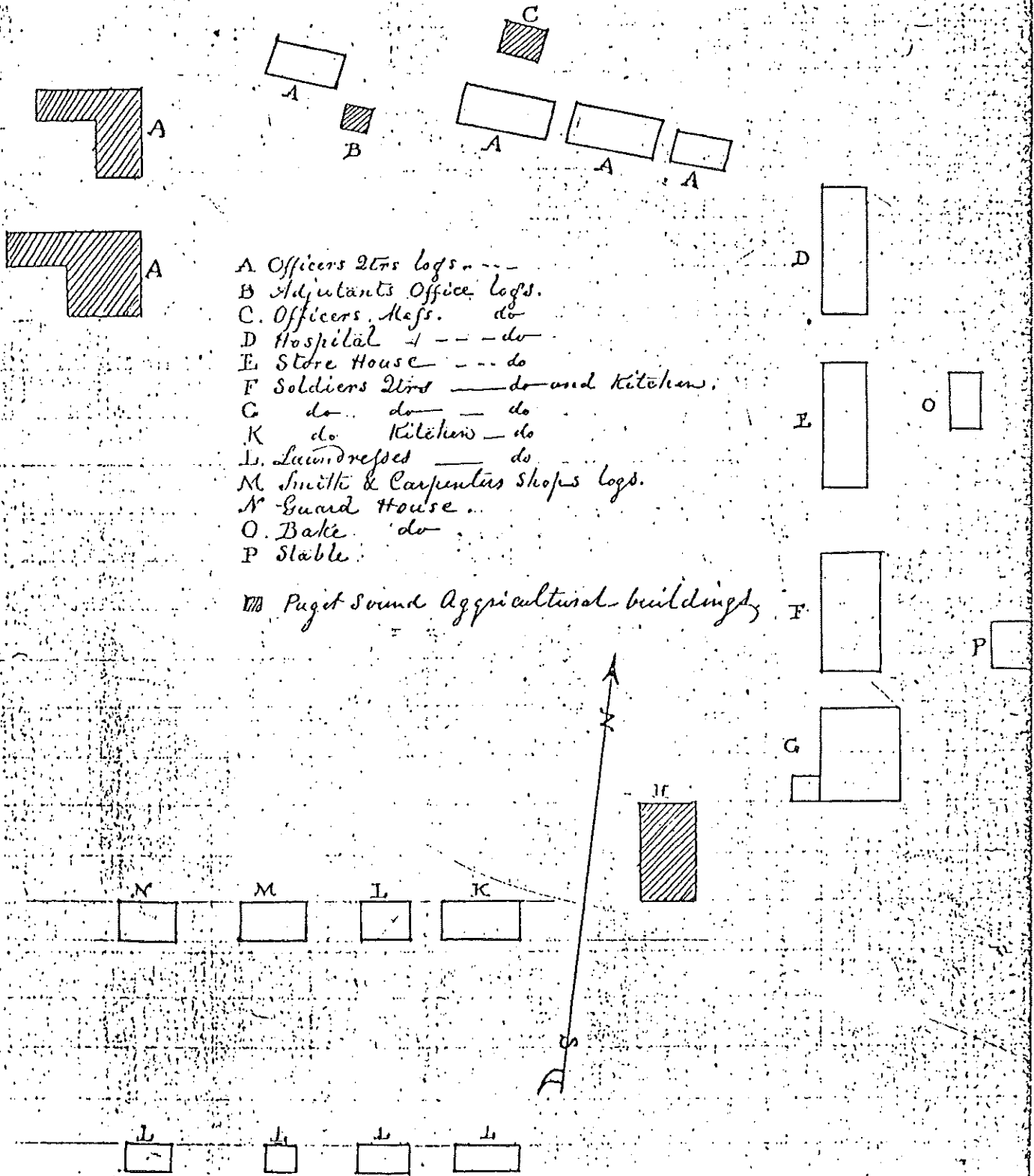
"To General Mansfield we appeared to be firing into Duryea's troops ;therefore he beckoned to us to cease firing, and as this was the very last thing we proposed to do, the few who saw him did not understand what his motions meant, and so no attention was paid to him.

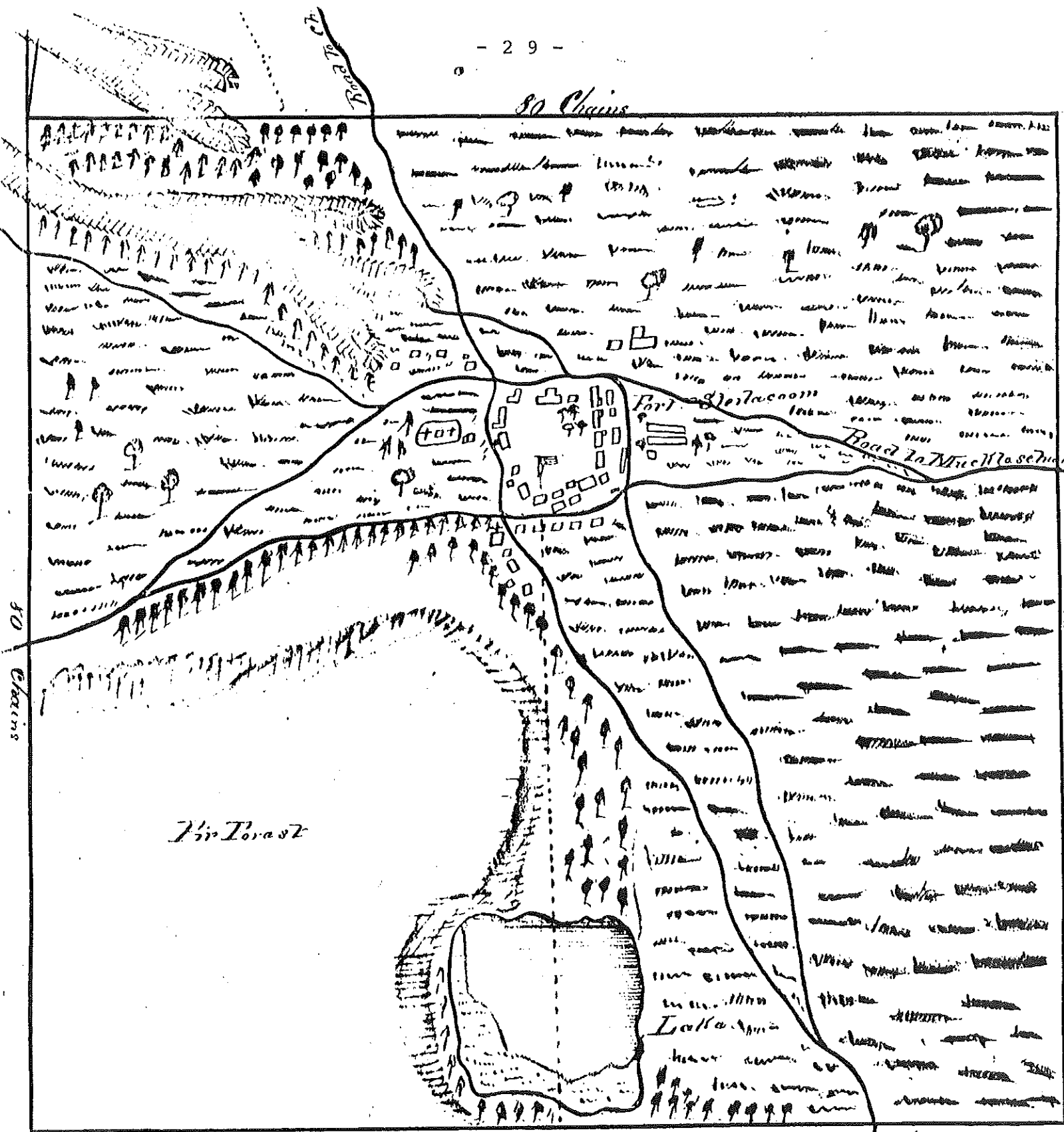
"He now rode down the hill from the 128th Pennsylvania and passing quickly through H, A, K, E, I, G, and D of the 10th Maine, ordering them to cease firing, he halted in front of C, at the earnest remonstrances of Captain Jordan and Sergeant Burnham, who asked him to see the gray coats of the enemy, and pointed out particular men of them who were then aiming their rifles at us and at him.

"The general was convinced, and remarked 'Yes, yes, you are right,' and was almost instantly hit. He turned and attempted to put his horse over the rails, but the animal had also been severely wounded, and could not go over. Thereupon the general dismounted, and a gust of wind blowing open his coat we saw that he was wounded in the body. Sergeant Joe Merritt, Storer Knight, and I took the general to the rear, assisted for a while by a negro cook from Hooker's corps. We put the general into an ambulance in the woods in front of which we had deployed...

JOHNSON, Robert Underwood. Battles and leaders of the Civil War, New York, The Century Company, 1884. Volume II, pp. 640-41.

# Fort Steilacoom





Tip Top

In accord with my Report of the inspection of Fort St. Ignace in Dec 1858.

MARKED "A" IN THE REPORT.

Gen. H. F. Mansfield  
Col & Capt Genl Ad. S. I.

Prize



DIAGRAM

MARKED "C" IN THE REPORT.

Showing the arrangement of the buildings at Fort Steilacoon on the 1st of July 1857 previous to the erection of new buildings.

- Nos. 1 to 5 Officers Quarters.
- 6 to 9 Soldier's Barracks
- 10 to 11 Q.M. and Commissary Storehouse.
- 12 & 13 Company Kitchens
- 14 Blacksmith and Carpenters Shop.
- 15 & 16 Guard House.
- 18 Laundresses Quarters.
- 19 Ordnance Sergt. Quarters and Clothing Room.
- 20 Bakehouse.
- 21 Surgeon's Quarters and Hospital.
- 22 Stables and Hay Shed.
- 23 Laundress Quarters.
- 24 Old building occupied by hired men.

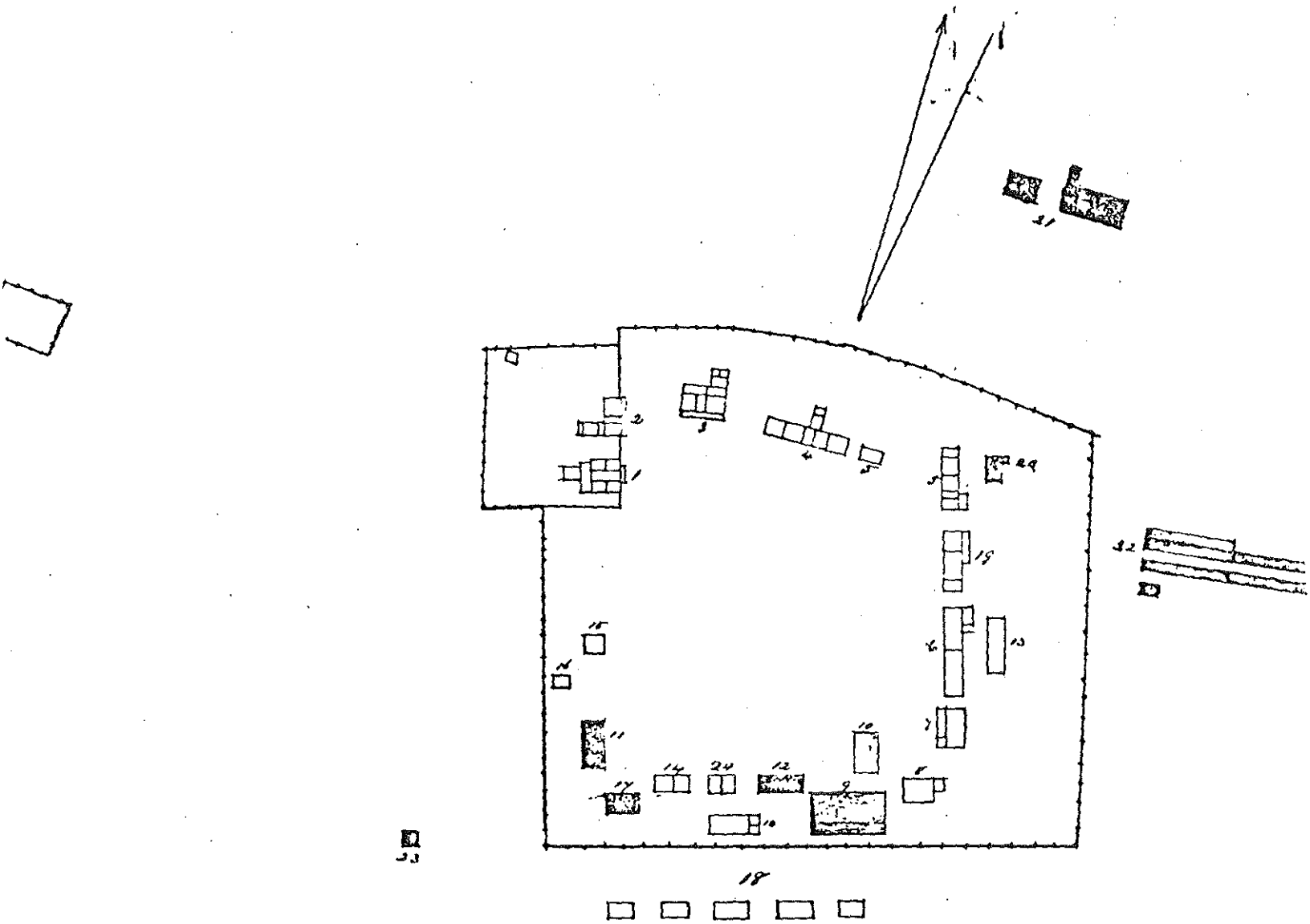
The buildings in Red ink were the only buildings of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company remaining. The buildings in blue are the only buildings retained. Those in black have all been or are to be torn down.

Fort Steilacoom, W.T.  
December 18th, 1858.

August V. Kautz.  
1st Lt. 4th Infantry.

Forwarded with my report of the inspection of Fort Steilacoom in December 1858. Joseph K.F. Mansfield, Col. and Inspector General U.S.A.

FORT STEILACOOM BEFORE RECONSTRUCTION



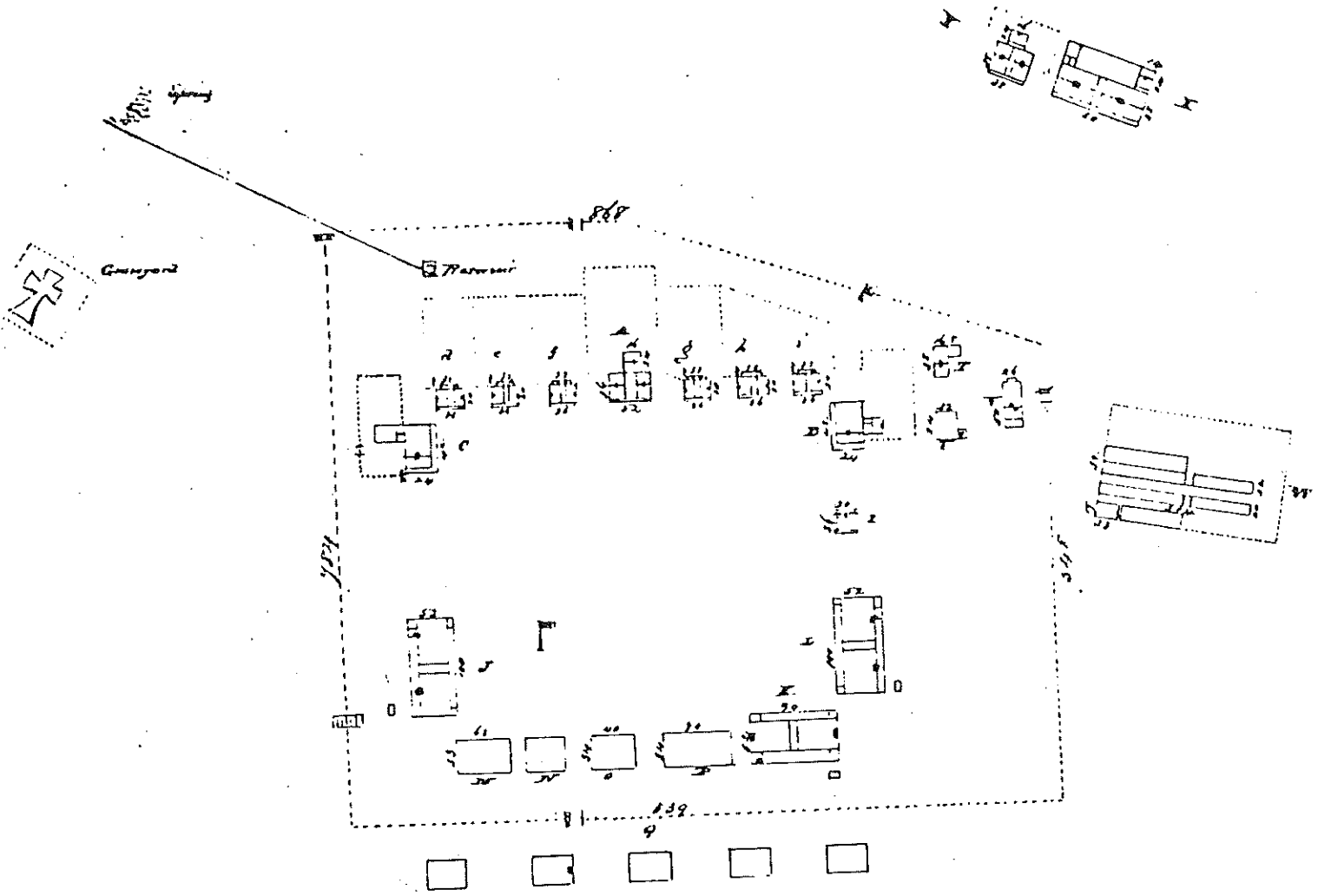
FORT STEILACOOM      DIAGRAM B.

Scale 1/2 inch to 100 feet.

- A.    Commanding Officer's Quarters.
- B.    Chaplains Quarters and Chapel.
- C.    Officers Mess Room, Q.M. and Commissary Officer.  
      Captains and Subalterns Quarters.( a, e, f, g, h, i.).
- J.    Barrack Company H, 9th Infantry.
- K.    Barrack Company A, 4th Infantry.
- L.    Barrack Company C, 4th Infantry.
- M.    Commissary Store
- N.    Guard House.
- O.    Clothing Room.
- P.    Store House, Q. Masters.
- Q.    Laundresses Quarters.
- T.    Ordnance Sergts. Quarters.
- U.    Bakehouse.
- V.    Carpenter's Shop.
- W.    Stables, Hay shed and Granary.
- X.    Hospital.
- Y.    Surgeon's Quarters.
- Z.    Magazine.

Fort Steilacoom 17 December 1858. Forwarded with my report of the inspection of this post. Joseph K.F.Mansfield, Col. and Inspector General.

FORT STEILACOOM AFTER KAUTZ RECONSTRUCTION.



Buildings e, A, h, and D remain today.

Notes

1. August V. Kautz joined the United States Army during the Mexican War and was appointed to the Class of 1852 at the United States Military Academy. When he arrived at West Point he began to keep a journal which he continued until the end of his military career. Unfortunately the first two volumes of the journal which covered his career until June 30, 1857 have been destroyed. The remainder of the journal for his years in the Pacific Northwest has been edited and transcribed and is available under the title, Nothing Worthy of Note Transpired Today, the Northwest Journals of August V. Kautz.
2. Lieutenant Grier Talladge arrived at Steilacoom on August 27, 1849. He began immediately to construct log buildings for the troops and supplies. He wrote: " Three days was the average length of time required to complete the body of the house. When the work was advanced thus far, another party took charge of the roofing, another of the building of the chimneys, and still another getting out the materials for doors and windows."
3. Official records of the Hudson's Bay Company report that:

"...we hope that so favorable a report may be given (that it)...will induce others to follow: this will not only relieve the Red River Settlement of its surplus population but strengthen the claims of Great Britain to the territory, and increase of the British population in that quarter must operate to the benefit of this Nation whenever a division of the Country takes place."
4. In May of 1849 Indians attacked Fort Nisqually in an attempt to kidnap Indians living at the Fort. The attack was a failure but since the area was under the control of the United States pleas for assistance were sent to Territorial Governor Joseph Lane. In August of 1849 elements of the First United States Artillery arrived at Fort Nisqually looking to punish organizers of the May attack.

Military officers searching for a site for a military headquarters were invited to visit the farm of Joseph Thomas Heath. William F. Tolmie, factor at Fort Nisqually, showed the officers the Heath farm and a site on Sequelitchew Creek, but the officers chose the Steilacoom site "...on account of the number of buildings already erected there."
5. Joseph Thomas Heath had been somewhat successful in growing crops on the Fort site and bottom lands along the rivers were good for growing crops especially in the Nisqually area. Generations of lawn growers in the Lakewood area would agree with Colonel Mansfield about the general unfavorableness of the land for crops.

6. The use of the term "say" by the Colonel in lieu of "estimated to be" is standard throughout his reports. He in some cases contracts dollars to "dolls," etc. In most cases dollars has been spelled out.
7. The concept of building fortifications at Point Defiance had been discussed for many years by military officers. As late as 1864 during the Civil War Brigadier General Benjamin Alvord, commander of local troops, asked that "...application should be made for a fortification at Point Defiance." The Federal Government retained control of the site until well into the 20th Century when the land was finally deeded to the City of Tacoma for Park purposes.
8. After graduation from law school and service as a librarian at the New York Historical Society, George Gibbs came west in 1849 to search for gold in California. He was collector of customs at several locations in the northwest and filed for a Donation Land Claim in Pierce County. He was assigned to the United States boundary commission as a geologist and became a Brigadier General in the Washington Territorial Militia during the Indian War of 1855-56. After returning East he published many of his scientific findings. He died in 1873.
9. Colonel Ebey arrived in the Northwest in 1848. He took up a land claim in 1850 in the west side of Whibey Island one mile south of Penn's Cove after an extensive search of the area. He was the first attorney on Puget Sound. Isaac Neff Ebey became prosecuting attorney and a collector of customs. He was murdered by Indians in 1857.
10. It is of interest to note that Mansfield called it an "old spot." Fort Nisqually was founded in 1833 and the Hudson's Bay Company people from the Red River Settlements did not arrive until 1842 so when Mansfield arrived white men had been in the area only twenty five years.
11. Herbert Hunt in his history of Tacoma mentioned that Kautz had spent \$200,000 on the project of restoration. Obviously Hunt took his figures from the totals spent rather than the construction itself.
12. The base pay of a private of Infantry at this time was \$11 per month. Unions in the northern states were trying at that time to obtain up to two dollars a day for skilled workmen and factory workers in Massachusetts who received the highest pay for their work were receiving five dollars per week. In addition, a soldier received food, clothing, shelter and medical assistance. He also received an increase of \$2 per month for the first and \$1 per month for each successive reenlistment. In addition a soldier could earn extra money. There were, of course many deductions. (Gates, Charles Marvin, ed. Readings in Pacific Northwest History Washington, 1790-1895. Seattle:University of Washington, 1941. p. 161.).
13. Each company was authorized four laundresses who received pay directly from the soldiers for their labors.

14. August V. Kautz installed the ram and had much difficulty getting the machinery to work properly. It ran for many many years producing water for the Fort and for what became Western State Hospital.
15. The Army seemed, in principle, against hiring extra workers to complete projects. Kautz, who rebuilt much of the fort, often records the difficulties he experienced in getting civilian workers such as carpenters to work for the army especially with his masters in the quartermaster corps constantly complaining about their use.
16. The blockhouse on Muckleshute prairie was occupied from time to time by the Army. It was locally known as Fort Slaughter for William A. Slaughter who was killed in 1855 near the present site of Bonney Lake. It was manned and supplied by Fort Steilacoom.
17. Benjamin Alvord came three times a year to pay the troops. During the Civil War he commanded troops in the Northwest from 1863 to the end of the War. He died in 1884.
18. The Boundary Commission had assigned to it elements of the 9th Infantry. Many of the individuals spoken of by Kautz were either Army officers, surveyors or other members of the Commission. They had a semi permanent camp at Semiahmoo Bay commanded by Captain Dickinson Woodruff and during the summers had a number of camps along the 49th parallel as the boundary was surveyed. King had gotten into a fight but was too valuable to either jail or discharge.

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