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## Article Title: Ladies of the Regiment: Their Influence on the Frontier Army

Full Citation: Mary L Williams, "Ladies of the Regiment: Their Influence on the Frontier Army," *Nebraska History* 78 (1997): 158-164

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1997Ladies Reg.pdf>

Date: 3/05/2013

Article Summary: Wives of officers assigned to western military posts helped to shape the environments within their garrisons. They made comfortable homes for their families and used their influence to refine frontier army life.

### Cataloging Information:

Names: Elizabeth (Mrs George) Custer, Alice Kirk (Mrs Benjamin H) Grierson, Helen Fuller, Grace Fuller, Olive McFarland, Sadie Morley, Mollie Garnett McIntosh, Katie Garnett, Alice Bullock, Mary (Mrs George) Crook, Martha (Mrs John W) Summerhayes, Joel M "Mat" Moss, Edward Lewis, Mrs Clarence A Stedman, Simpson Mann, Susie Barton, Hattie (Mrs. Edward) Hatch, Clara (Mrs John W) Davidson, Henry O Flipper, Lydia (Mrs William B) Lane, James Will Myers, Lizzie Myers, Quincy O'Mahan Gillmore, Philip H Sheridan, Nelson H Davis

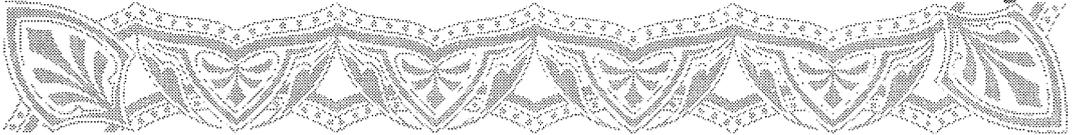
Keywords: Elizabeth Custer, Alice Kirk Grierson, Mary Crook, Hattie Hatch, Clara Davidson, Lydia Lane, Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Agassiz Association

Photographs / Images: Elizabeth Custer with her husband at Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota Territory; Alice Kirk Grierson, a champion for the rights of black soldiers; Grace and Helen Fuller, beneficiaries of Alice Grierson's matchmaking skills; Colonel Edward Hatch, who wished that his wife would "let me run the post"



# Ladies of the Regiment

## Their Influence on the Frontier Army



By Mary L. Williams

Much has been written by the wives of army officers who served on the western frontier during the last half of the nineteenth century. In fact, the wealth of materials they produced may be termed remarkable in comparison to their relatively small numbers. More remarkable may be the fact that a fair number of these women had their works in print prior to 1900.

Margaret I. Carrington's *Ab-sa-ra-ka, Home of the Crows* was first published in 1868. By 1890 all three of Elizabeth B. Custer's works were available for the public to read. Lydia Spencer Lane's *I Married A Soldier* appeared in print in 1893, and the following year *Cavalry Life in Tent and Field* by Frances B. Boyd was available for purchase.<sup>1</sup>

From these ladies we have learned a great deal about life in the West and in particular about life at frontier military posts. Their writings are filled with minute details beginning with graphic descriptions of their westward journeys. In reading of their adventures one can almost feel the hot, dry, dusty winds of the Southwest experienced by Martha Summerhayes and Fanny Corbusier, or picture the frozen plains and frightening snowdrifts vividly depicted by Fannie Boyd, Elizabeth Burt, and Alice Blackwood Baldwin.

Their accounts reflect their apprehensions of not being able to obtain adequate housing or secure and keep servants. These women wrote of their fears

of bearing children "along the way" or in primitive surroundings void of family members, a physician or midwife, of not seeing their husbands return from scouting expeditions, and of simply just surviving in totally alien surroundings. Although their writings focus mainly on the "domestic side" of garrison life, officers' wives were keen observers and educated chroniclers. Their reminiscences help to clarify the sometimes hazy picture of what life was like at a frontier military fort.

Indeed much has been written by these temporarily transplanted eastern ladies, and so also, much has been written about them. In *The Gentle Tamers*, one of the first publications to bring attention to the fact that women, too, ventured west in the nineteenth century, author Dee Brown devoted a chapter to the ladies he termed "the Army Girls." Patricia Stallard's *Glittering Misery*, printed in 1978, helped to awaken interest in the lives of frontier officers' wives as well as to provide a wealth of information about other army dependents of the Indian-fighting army. In the past twenty years the works of others including Shirley A. Leckie, Darlis A. Miller, Sandra L. Myres, and Sherry L. Smith have encouraged us to rethink the frontier military experience from a woman's perspective. *Army Wives on the American Frontier* by Anne Bruner Eales is one of the latest books that provides new insight into the lives of these exceptional women. This essay, therefore, will not attempt to retell the story others have told so well. It will, however, focus on the influence officers' wives had on the frontier army.<sup>2</sup>

In examining their situations it may be somewhat surprising that frontier officers' wives were able to have any influence at all on their environments. For it was the institution of the United States Army that stringently regulated the lives of these women. The army literally dictated where they lived, what they ate, when they moved, with whom they associated, and how they raised their children. Unlike many of their Victorian peers, these women did not have a say in the basic decisions that directed their lives. In the "official" eyes of the nineteenth century army, they were invisible.

In "*Boots and Saddles*" Elizabeth Custer echoed the sentiments of many of her frontier sisters when she wrote:

It seems very strange to me that with all the value that is set on the presence of the women of an officer's family at the frontier posts, the book of army regulations makes no provisions for them, but in fact ignores them entirely! It entered into such minute details in its instructions, even giving the number of hours that bean soup should boil, that it would be natural to suppose that a paragraph or two might be wasted on an officer's wife!<sup>3</sup>

Yet, as Libbie Custer stated, value was indeed placed on the presence of officers' wives in the West. In 1866 Gen. William T. Sherman encouraged the wives of officers to accompany their husbands to the frontier and "to take with them all needed comforts for a pleasant garrison life in the newly opened country, where all would be healthful, with pleasant service and absolute peace."<sup>4</sup>

It seems almost ironic that Sherman lured these ladies westward with promises that everything would be healthy,

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**Elizabeth Custer** (seated, middle row, left), **the most famous wife of a frontier army officer, with her husband at Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota Territory.**  
Courtesy of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

pleasant, and peaceful, when regulations and unofficial army traditions severely restricted and molded their worlds. Many, however, followed Sherman's advice, and as Libbie Custer penned, "[A]lthough army women have no visible thrones or scepters, nor any acknowledged rights according to military law, I never knew such queens as they, or saw more willing subjects than they govern." And it is here in the phrase "willing subjects that they govern" that one can see most clearly the influence of these ladies on the frontier army.<sup>5</sup>

Not only did the ladies of the regiment exercise control over their husbands in respect to military matters, but their jurisdiction extended over those whom their husbands outranked. Rank was unmistakably the most visible sign of authority in the army, and as officers' wives took on the ranks of their spouses, so too they often received the same respect and treat-

ment afforded their husbands. Although not having "visible thrones or scepters," officers' wives did hold commanding positions of authority.<sup>6</sup>

Within the social arena their power was omnipotent. They orchestrated most social functions and heavily ordained the social intercourse of all officers, both married and single. In their determination to retain the social traditions and manners of their upbringing, they looked for every opportunity to incorporate eastern culture and Victorian etiquette into their frontier worlds. They planned dinner parties, hops, dances, card parties, picnics, and even fishing trips. In 1878 Frances M. A. Roe, wife of 2d Lt. Fayette W. Roe, Third U.S. Infantry, wrote from Fort Shaw, Montana Territory:

Consequently, now that everyone is settled [after the companies had returned from summer campaigns] the dining and wining has begun. Almost every day there

is a dinner or card party . . . , and several delightful luncheons have been given.<sup>7</sup>

A commanding officer's wife usually set the social tone at the post her husband commanded. In turn, the other officers and their wives followed suit.

The hosting of social events such as card parties, hops, and balls not only helped to relieve the monotony associated with frontier life, but it provided officers' wives with a discrete way of engaging in one of their favorite pastimes—that of playing matchmakers. Libbie Custer wrote that she "dreaded the arrival" of young, single officers to the frontier for she feared "that the sameness and inactivity of garrison life would be a test to which their character would succumb." In believing that marriage was the only salvation for these men, she often invited young single female friends to visit her on the frontier.<sup>8</sup>

Other officers' wives, too, encouraged their single, female friends and relatives to pay them extended visits in the West. They enlisted unattached sisters, nieces, and cousins as companions for themselves and as tutors and governesses for their children. Alice Kirk Grierson, wife of Col. Benjamin H. Grierson, Tenth U.S. Cavalry, succeeded in finding prospective husbands among the officers of the Tenth for two of her husband's nieces. Helen Fuller accompanied Alice to Fort Concho, Texas, as governess for the Grierson children in 1876. After Helen's marriage two years later to 1st Lt. William Davis, Jr., her younger sister Grace came West to become the children's tutor. In October 1882 Grace relinquished the position to marry 1st Lt. Mason M. Maxon.<sup>9</sup>

Mrs. Grierson's attempts at finding husbands for relatives were not always successful. Cousins Olive McFarland and Sadie Morley had opportunities, but nothing materialized. Miss McFarland had "set her sights" on Maj. Samuel L. Woodward, a confirmed bachelor, while it was hinted that Miss Morley may have been too selective.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to Libbie Custer and Alice Grierson, other officers' wives en-

gaged in the social diversion of match-making. Mollie Garnett McIntosh, wife of 1st Lt. Donald McIntosh, Seventh U.S. Cavalry, was so instrumental in fostering the courtship of her younger sister Katie to 1st Lt. Francis M. Gibson that she boasted that she had it planned even before Katie left home for the West. The presence of Alice Bullock, the sister-in-law of 2d Lt. Frederick F. Kislingbury, Eleventh U.S. Infantry at Fort Concho in 1875, caused considerable interest among the unmarried officers. Thanks in part to her sister Agnes's introductions and social planning, Allie became engaged to Maj. George W. Schofield of the Tenth Cavalry, only seventeen days after meeting him.<sup>11</sup>

On the frontier the wives, as well as their husbands, eagerly looked forward to visits from dignitaries and high ranking officers. The visits provided opportunities for the officers to hear the latest military news and to seek support for operations and projects. Such occasions gave the ladies, and especially the commanding officer's wife, the chance to show off their expertise at entertaining. At the same time conversations with those in power, whether they took place on the frontier or in the East, afforded the officers' wives the liberty to delicately, but decidedly, voice their opinions and concerns.

According to an article in the *Arizona Sentinel*, a Yuma newspaper, it was through the intervention of Mary, his wife, that Brig. Gen. George Crook was transferred in 1875 from Arizona Territory to the Department of the Platte in Omaha. Mrs. Crook reportedly broached the subject with President Ulysses S. Grant at a White House reception. A similar conversation between Martha Summerhayes, wife of John W. Summerhayes, and President Grover Cleveland resulted in her husband's reassignment to the Quartermaster Department from the Eighth U.S. Infantry and a promotion from first lieutenant to captain.<sup>12</sup>

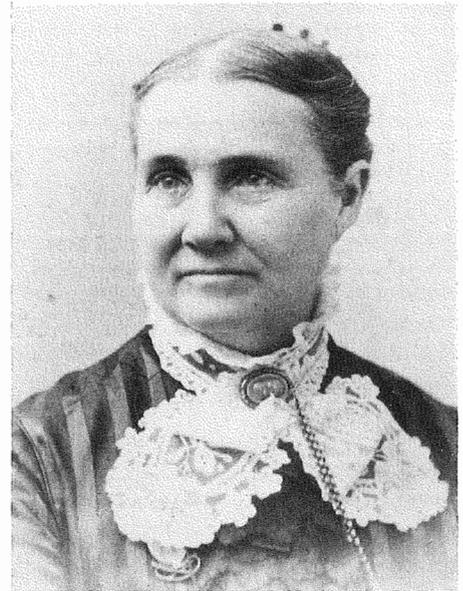
Alice Grierson never attempted to promote her husband's military career through either written or verbal ex-

changes with high ranking officers or officials. She did, however, encourage enlisted men, if they had concerns, to share them with her and with those in positions of authority. Mrs. Grierson shared her husband's sentiments regarding fair treatment for the black soldiers, or "buffalo soldiers," of his regiment. When Ben Grierson was away from the garrison, Alice copiously informed him of everything that was happening. She was especially sensitive to any and all matters that might affect the well-being of the men.

In November 1869, when Asst. Inspector General Nelson H. Davis came to Fort Sill, Indian Territory, to examine the post and "to hear the grievances soldiers may wish to complain of," Alice was delighted that several of the enlisted men met with him. "I am glad of it," she wrote in a letter to her eldest son Charles, "[I]t will tend to prevent company commanders from abusing their men."<sup>13</sup>

Alice vigilantly protected all enlisted men, but especially the black soldiers of her husband's regiment, and her letters ascertain that she often came to their defense. On one such occasion when her husband was in the field, Alice took it upon herself to investigate a matter which had resulted in three enlisted men being placed in the guardhouse. Mrs. Grierson even went so far as to have one of the men brought to her so that she could "hear his side of the story from himself." Convinced that the men had received unjust treatment, in part due to the actions of another officer's wife, Alice not only reprimanded the lady for her actions, but she immediately advised her husband of the affair. Soon all three men were back with their respective companies.<sup>14</sup>

Eight months later Mrs. Grierson was again "going to bat" for another enlisted man. This time it was in defense of Pvt. Joel M. "Mat" Moss. The private had written a letter to Mrs. Grierson asking her to use her influence in getting him released for killing another private in, what Moss termed, self-defense. In a letter to her husband, Alice Grierson wrote that



**Alice Kirk Grierson, wife of the commanding officer of the Ninth Cavalry, became a champion for the rights of black soldiers.**  
Courtesy of Fort Davis National Historic Site

though she was well aware that she could "really do nothing about it, but . . . if there is a chance of his being cleared" then she saw no reason why he could not "be out of the wretched Guard House as soon as possible." Private Moss soon was released after having been cleared of the charges in the death of Pvt. John Maybee. For the remainder of his military career Moss continued to receive the protection of Alice Grierson. The private was transferred from his company to the Tenth Cavalry band and become a striker for the Grierson family. After receiving a disability discharge in 1877, Moss remained in the service of the family.<sup>15</sup>

Two weeks after the incident involving Private Moss, Mrs. Grierson presented another case before her husband. This time it was on behalf of Pvt. Edward Lewis who had been placed in the guardhouse for drunkenness. Lewis, who had worked as an orderly for Capt. Henry E. Alvord, Tenth Cavalry, for over nine months, desperately wanted to return to his company. Whether or not it was through Mrs. Grierson's intervention, Private Lewis was soon released

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**Grace Fuller (left) and her sister Helen (right) were the beneficiaries of Alice Grierson's matchmaking skills. Both came West and married Ninth Cavalry officers.** Courtesy of Fort Davis National Historic Site

and permitted to rejoin his troop.<sup>16</sup>

While Alice Grierson can be seen as *the* champion for the rights of black soldiers on the frontier, other officers' wives—although in some cases for less humanitarian reasons—came to the aid of enlisted men and civilians who found themselves in unpleasant situations. Because of the difficulties experienced in securing and keeping good help, officers' wives tended to be overprotective of competent servants. In 1888 Simpson Mann enlisted in the army and received orders to join Troop F of the Ninth U.S. Cavalry stationed at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Soon the new private found himself in the employment of Captain and Mrs. Clarence A. Stedman. When a gallon of whiskey was discovered in Mann's footlocker, Mrs. Stedman's intervention kept him tending to her garden rather than doing time in the guardhouse.<sup>17</sup>

Two years later at Fort Robinson Col. Joseph G. Tilford ordered Susie Barton, the wife of a Ninth Cavalry trooper, from the post instructing her never to return. The colonel, however, withdrew the order when he learned that Mrs. Barton's services were needed by the wife of 1st

Lt. Edgar Hubert. Although Mrs. Barton had an extremely blemished reputation and her behavior was considered "scandalous," she was permitted to remain at the fort until Mrs. Hubert no longer required her services.<sup>18</sup>

Some officers' wives, such as Hattie Hatch, wife of Col. Edward Hatch of the Ninth Cavalry, and Clara Davidson, wife of Col. John W. "Black Jack" Davidson, Second U.S. Cavalry, had reputations of managing the posts their husbands commanded. Both of these overbearing ladies rendered their husbands counsel and advice in military as well as family affairs.

In his memoirs Lt. William Paulding, Tenth U.S. Infantry, described Mrs. Hatch as a "terror," who often tormented her husband until she got her own way. On one occasion Mrs. Hatch desired the colonel to issue an order to disallow gambling. According to Paulding, her husband's response was "My God, Hattie, I wish you would mind your own business and let me run the post."<sup>19</sup>

An incident that took place at Fort Sill involving 2d Lt. Henry O. Flipper, Tenth Cavalry, demonstrates that Mrs.

Davidson was no less opinionated. Flipper, serving as officer of the day, had been instructed by Davidson, who was in command of the post, to arrest anyone—military or civilian—who walked across the grass of the parade ground. When Davidson's teenage son was brought to the guardhouse for disobeying his father's order, Clara Davidson insisted upon the boy's immediate release. The colonel, however, wanted to teach his son a lesson and ordered that he be kept under guard. A shouting match erupted between the colonel and his wife. According to Lieutenant Flipper, Davidson said, "Madam, I'll have you to know I'm the commanding officer at this post" to which Mrs. Davidson replied, "I'll have you understand I'm your commanding officer." Needless to say the young Davidson was released.<sup>20</sup>

When left alone on post, some wives, either through "unofficial orders" from their husbands or because of their own tenaciousness, took on official duties. In 1861 1st Lt. William B. Lane of the Mounted Rifles left his wife Lydia in charge of Fort Fillmore, New Mexico Territory, when ordered out in pursuit of Indians. Mrs. Lane wrote, "All public funds were turned over to me and the sergeant"—who was one of eleven enlisted men who remained at the fort—"reported to me every day."<sup>21</sup>

In March 1869 Col. De Lancey Floyd-Jones with six companies of the Sixth U.S. Infantry arrived at Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. The colonel assumed command of the post as replacement for Colonel Grierson who had been ordered to Camp Wichita (soon to be renamed Fort Sill). Mrs. Grierson, who was pregnant with her sixth child, and the Grierson children, however, had stayed behind at the post. When Colonel Floyd-Jones ordered Alice to vacate her quarters, she refused stating that her husband had made prior arrangements with Gen. Philip H. Sheridan which permitted her to reside in her present house. Further attempts by the colonel to convince Mrs. Grierson to move were

fruitless. She and the children remained in the quarters designated for the post commander until Colonel Grierson came for them a month later.<sup>22</sup>

At times the presence of officers' wives on the frontier had detrimental effects on military operations, their husbands' careers, and the careers of others. Many attribute the irrational behavior of George Custer in the summer of 1867 to his obsession of wanting to rejoin his wife who was at Fort Riley, Kansas. Custer, lieutenant colonel of the Seventh Cavalry, and his troops were in camp near Fort Wallace, Kansas, some 150 miles from Riley when he abruptly set off. His actions, which included being "Absent without leave from his Command," ordering four officers and seventy-two enlisted men on a forced march, and ordering deserters shot, led to his being court-martialed. He was found guilty of eight charges and sentenced "to be suspended from rank & Command for one (1) year, and to forfeit his pay."<sup>23</sup>

In the history of the frontier Indian wars there are several accounts of adulterous affairs between officers and the wives of other officers that led to scandals, resignations, court-martials, and personal tragedies. Perhaps the events that took place at Fort Sill in 1874 most dramatically bring the seriousness of such situations to light. At the time Lieutenant Colonel Davidson was in command of the post, which boasted a complement of over six hundred enlisted men and thirty-two officers. Petty jealousies among many of the officers gravely affected morale, and the post buzzed with incriminating gossip. Rumors concerning the romantic involvement of the colonel's unmarried daughter Elizabeth with married Capt. Alexander S. B. Keyes of the Tenth Cavalry bore substantial weight, but it was another affair on post that had by far the most devastating results. The parties were 2d Lt. James Will Myers, Tenth Cavalry, his wife Lizzie, and recent West Point graduate Quincy O'Mahar Gillmore, the son of Lt. Col. Quincy A. Gillmore of the Corps of Engineers.<sup>24</sup>

Will Myers, a heavy drinker, was often in the field leaving his wife and daughter alone on post. Boredom, loneliness, and arguments with Will over the bottle led Lizzie to seek the friendship of single officers. One of these officers



**A frustrated Col. Edward Hatch, commanding officer of Fort Davis, Texas, wished his wife Hattie would "let me run the post."** Courtesy of Fort Davis National Historic Site

was the young, handsome Quincy Gillmore. Soon the exchange of romantic notes and of the not-so-secret meetings between the two became the talk of the garrison. In July 1874 the demoralized Myers, feeling powerless to put a stop to the affair and in possession of some of the lovers' correspondence, turned over the letters to Davidson.<sup>25</sup>

When all was said and done, Gillmore had left the army, and the Myerses were permanently separated. More damaging was the fact that General Sheridan had resolved to break up what he referred to as "the nest" at Fort Sill. The general, anxious to punish Davidson for what he considered the poor handling of the Myers-Gillmore affair, especially for forcing the young officer to resign, set a plan in motion that resulted in the transfer—or banishment as some saw it—of the Tenth Cavalry to Texas.<sup>26</sup>

In general, though, the influence of officers' wives on the frontier army was far more positive than negative. In their attempts to provide their husbands and families with some of the amenities readily available to eastern society, they became involved in all facets of garrison life.

The arrival of women at frontier posts immediately influenced the types and variety of products carried by the post sutlers and traders, those enterprising civilian merchants who operated mercantile establishments. A sutler at Fort Gibson boasted that he carried "813 items, including 142 different kinds of textiles and sewing supplies, and 214 articles of clothing and accessories, of which 72 were specifically for women and children." Frances Roe wrote that when she was at Fort Lyon, Colorado Territory, the post trader sent to "St. Louis for turkeys, celery, canned oysters and other things" in order to provide more variety for the officers and their families during the holidays. A ledger belonging to William Moore, the post sutler at Fort Union, New Mexico Territory, in the 1860s, showed that in addition to liquor and food items, married officers also paid for "women's shoes, hoop skirts, hairpins, children's hats and shoes, toys, table linens, flatware, cooking utensils, dishes of all kinds, and a variety of cloth and sewing materials."<sup>27</sup>

While contributing to the prosperity of the post traders, some wives like Alice Grierson, who supported the efforts of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, indirectly hastened their decline. The organization worked tirelessly for legislation that would prohibit the consumption of intoxicating liquor. At the strong urging of the Union, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed legislation in 1881 prohibiting the traders from selling liquor on military reservations.<sup>28</sup>

Officers' wives organized literary societies, reading groups, and educational clubs for adults as well as children. Ellen Biddle, wife of then-Maj. James Biddle, Sixth U.S. Cavalry, bragged on the "most excellent Dramatic Society"

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the officers and wives had organized at Fort Whipple, Arizona Territory. Libbie Custer had nothing but praise for one of the ladies at Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota Territory, who "varied our lives and gave us something to look forward to by organizing a reading club that met every week." At Fort Union a chapter of the Agassiz Association, an international organization of youngsters dedicated to the study of nature, was organized in 1884. The purpose of the club was "to investigate the anatomy of grasshoppers, crickets, and other wild beasts."<sup>29</sup>

While on the frontier, officers' wives organized Sunday schools and religious choirs. When at Fort Lapwai, Idaho Territory, Emily McCorkle FitzGerald, wife of Post Surgeon John FitzGerald, along with Mrs. Perry, the wife of the post commander, held Sunday school classes for the children of the laundresses. The wives at Fort Union formed a choir and presented programs for the garrison. The wife of Fort Davis, Texas, commander, Lt. David R. Clendenin, was heralded as one of the Sunday school's "most valuable workers." Elizabeth Burt, wife of Maj. Andrew S. Burt, Eighth Infantry, held religious classes for all garrison children at many of the forts where she resided. At Fort Clark, Texas, officers' wives organized a theatrical company and gave charity performances. The profits helped to refurbish the building that served as the post chapel and school.<sup>30</sup>

In more indirect ways wives influenced the establishment of schools for the children of military personnel at frontier forts. Even before the Army Regulations of 1881 came into effect, directing the establishment of schools "at all posts, garrisons, and permanent camps," many officers' wives had campaigned for educational facilities on post. As early as 1870, at the urging of their wives, officers hired a private teacher to instruct the children at Fort Concho. The school met in a well-worn hospital tent.<sup>31</sup>

Wives even influenced the subject matter of the books, magazines, and

newspapers ordered for the post libraries. In addition to subscriptions to the *Army and Navy Journal*, *Forest and Stream*, and *The New York Times*, many posts regularly received *Godey's Lady's Book*, *The Temperance Journal*, *Harper's*, and *Frank Leslie's*.<sup>32</sup>

From within the confines of a restrictive military society, the wives of officers assigned to western posts helped to define and shape their environments. The freedom the West provided permitted them to be more assertive and less bound by the rules of Victorian etiquette imposed on their eastern sisters.

Officers' wives overcame the hardships, isolation, and often primitive conditions of garrison living to provide their husbands and families with as comfortable "a home away from home" as possible. Their presence and their willingness to "follow the guidon" contributed significantly to their husbands' decisions to remain in the army. Although never officially accepted, these ladies formed a significant part of each regiment's clique. Their influence can be seen as stabilizing, refining, and all-embracing. Today the story of the frontier army can no longer be told without their presence being acknowledged, and their contributions recognized.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Margaret I. Carrington, *Ab-sa-ra-ka, Home of the Crows: Being the Experience of an Officer's Wife on the Plains* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1868); Elizabeth B. Custer, "Boots and Saddles;" or *Life in Dakota with General Custer* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1885); Custer, *Tenting on the Plains; or, General Custer in Kansas and Texas* (New York: C. L. Webster & Co., 1887); Custer, *Following the Guidon; or, Into the Indian Wars with General Custer and the Seventh Cavalry* (Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1890); Lydia Spencer Blaney Lane, *I Married A Soldier; or, Old Days in the Army* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1893); and Mrs. Orsemus Bronson Boyd, *Cavalry Life in Tent and Field* (New York: J. Selwin Tait & Sons, 1894).

<sup>2</sup> D. Alexander Brown, *The Gentle Tamers: Women of the Old Wild West* (New York: Putnam, 1958); Patricia Y. Stallard, *Glittering Misery: Dependents of the Indian Fighting Army* (San Rafael, Calif. and Fort Collins, Colo.: Presidio Press and The Old Army Press, 1978); and Anne Bruner Eales, *Army*

*Wives on the American Frontier: Living by the Bugles* (Boulder: Johnson Books, 1996). See also Shirley A. Leckie, *Elizabeth Bacon Custer and the Making of a Myth* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993); Darlis A. Miller, "Foragers, Army Women and Prostitutes," in eds. Joan M. Jensen and Darlis A. Miller, *New Mexico Women: Intercultural Perspectives* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 141-68; Sandra L. Myers, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); and Sherry L. Smith, *The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Custer, "Boots and Saddles," 105.

<sup>4</sup> Frances C. Carrington, *My Army Life and the Fort Phil Kearney Massacre* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1910), 61-62.

<sup>5</sup> Custer, "Boots and Saddles," 106.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Frances M. A. Roe, *Army Letters from an Officer's Wife, 1871-1888* (New York: D. Appleton, 1909), 216.

<sup>8</sup> Custer, "Boots and Saddles," 181.

<sup>9</sup> Helen and Grace Fuller were the daughters of Ben Grierson's sister Susan Grierson Fuller. Ben felt responsible for providing financially for his nieces after the death of their mother. After Grace's marriage to Lieutenant Maxon, Alice Grierson's cousin Sarah (Sadie) Morley came West as a governess for the boys and a companion to Alice.

<sup>10</sup> Shirley Anne Leckie, ed., *The Colonel's Lady on the Western Frontier: The Correspondence of Alice Kirk Grierson* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 88.

<sup>11</sup> Eales, *Army Wives on the American Frontier*, 117; and Susan Miles, "A Fort Concho Wedding," *West Texas Historical Association Year Book* 36 (Oct. 1960):63.

<sup>12</sup> Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 104; and Martha Summerhayes, *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of the Army Life of a New England Woman* (Salem, Mass.: Salem Press, 1911), 254-56.

<sup>13</sup> Alice K. Grierson to Charles H. Grierson, Nov. 16, 1869, Benjamin H. Grierson Papers, Illinois State Historical Library (ISHL), Springfield, Ill. Fort Davis National Historic Site (FDNHS), Fort Davis, Tex., holds a microfilm copy. Alice in her letter mistakenly referred to the assistant inspector general as Gen. H. N. Davis.

<sup>14</sup> Alice K. Grierson to Benjamin H. Grierson, July 5, 1868, ISHL.

<sup>15</sup> Alice K. Grierson to Benjamin H. Grierson, Mar. 1, 1869, ISHL. According to the Register of Enlistments of the U.S. Army, Joel M. Moss first enlisted in the army on July 22, 1867, and was assigned to the Tenth Cavalry. Upon his discharge on July 21, 1872, at Fort Gibson, Indian Terr., he

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reenlisted. He was discharged on February 18, 1877, while serving at Fort Concho, Tex.

<sup>16</sup> Alice K. Grierson to Benjamin H. Grierson, Mar. 12, 1869, ISHL.

<sup>17</sup> Interview of Simpson Mann, Troop F, Ninth Cavalry, 1888–91, by Don Rickey, Jr., National Park Service, Febr. 1965, typescript at the Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, and FDNHS.

<sup>18</sup> Frank N. Schubert, *Buffalo Soldiers, Braves, and the Brass: The Story of Fort Robinson, Nebraska* (Shippensburg, Penn.: White Mane Publishing Company, Inc., 1993), 65–66.

<sup>19</sup> Stallard, *Glittering Misery*, 104.

<sup>20</sup> Theodore D. Harris, ed., *Negro Frontiersman: The Western Memoirs of Henry O. Flipper* (El Paso: Texas Western College Press, 1963), 3–4.

<sup>21</sup> Lane, *I Married a Soldier*, 100–1.

<sup>22</sup> Benjamin H. Grierson to Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, Febr. 22, 1869, ISHL; Alice K. Grierson to Col. DeLancey Floyd-Jones, Apr. 12, 1869, ISHL.

<sup>23</sup> Robert M. Utley, *Cavalier in Buckskin: George Armstrong Custer and the Western Military Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 53; Evan S. Connell, *Son of the Morning Star* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984), 173.

<sup>24</sup> Bruce J. Dinges, "Scandal in the Tenth Cavalry: A Fort Sill Case History, 1874," *Arizona and the West* 28 (Summer 1986):126–28.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 134–35.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 125; Paul Andrew Hutton, *Phil Sheridan and His Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 240.

<sup>27</sup> Eales, *Army Wives on the American Frontier*, 69; Roe, *Army Letters from an Officer's Wife*, 28; Darlis A. Miller, "The Perils of a Post Sutler: William H. Moore at Fort Union, New Mexico, 1859–1870," *Journal of the West* 32 (Apr. 1993):13.

<sup>28</sup> The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, founded in Cleveland, Oh., in 1874, not only campaigned against the evils of alcoholism, but attempted to educate the public, especially women, about other social issues. For example, the group was largely responsible for introducing the study of hygiene and physiology into public schools.

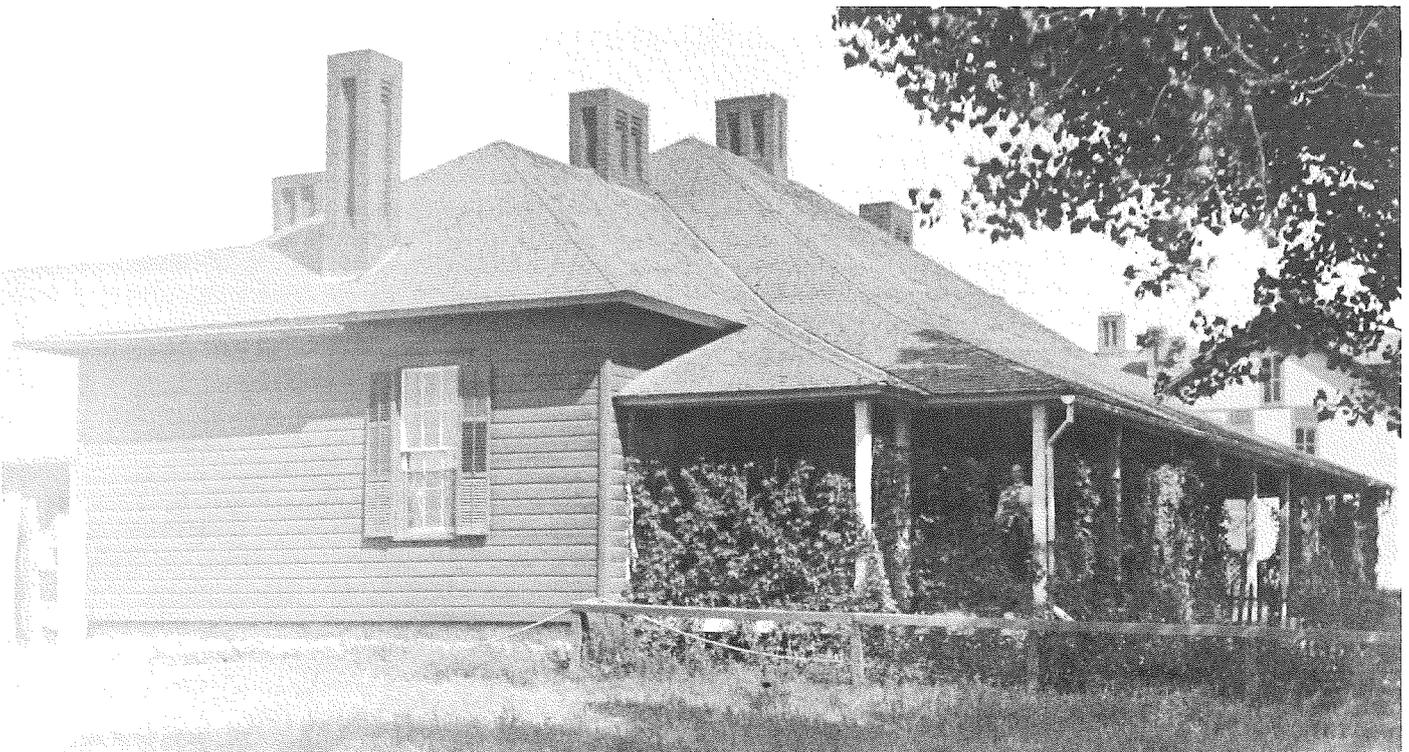
<sup>29</sup> Ellen McGowan Biddle, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1907), 167; Custer, "Boots and Saddles," 79; Dale Frederick Giese, "Social Life at Fort Union, New Mexico in the 1880s" (Master's thesis, New Mexico Highlands University 1964), 56.

<sup>30</sup> Emily McCorkle FitzGerald, *An Army Doctor's Wife on the Frontier: The Letters of Emily McCorkle*

*FitzGerald from Alaska and the Far West, 1874–1878* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962), 231; Giese, "Social History at Fort Union," 12; *Army and Navy Journal*, May 28, 1887, 875. Other references to theatricals may be found in Merrill J. Mattes, *Indians, Infants and Infantry: Andrew and Elizabeth Burt on the Frontier* (Denver: The Old West Publishing Company, 1960), passim; and Eales, *Army Wives on the American Frontier*, 76.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. War Department, *Regulations for the Army of the United States and the General Orders in Force on the 17th of February, 1881* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), 56; Bill Green, *The Dancing Was Lively: Fort Concho, Texas, A Social History, 1867 to 1882* (San Angelo, Tex.: Priv. publ., 1974), 80–81.

<sup>32</sup> The records of numerous military posts attest to the variety of magazines and newspapers of particular interest to women that was received. Good listings may be found in Giese's, "Social Life at Fort Union." See also Selected Documents from Consolidated Files, Fort Davis, Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office; a microfilm copy is held by FDNHS.



"Our Quarters," August 1897, from the Fort Robinson album of Kate C. Hamilton, wife of Lt. George E. Hamilton, Ninth Cavalry. Col. Adna A. Hamilton Collection, NSHS-H216.5-1