

Fort Steilacoom

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The Indian Family of August V. Kautz

by Carol Neufeld

This is the story of Kitty Kautz, her union with Lt. August V. Kautz, their sons Nugent and Augustus, their lives together and eventually separation. This is also the story of a Kautz and Quiemuth family tradition of leadership that continues today.

When Kitty is living at the home of Dr. Tolmie, chief factor at Fort Nisqually, she meets Lt. Kautz, an officer stationed in the Northwest from 1853-1861. Kautz is captivated by beautiful Kitty, the daughter of Quiemuth, a leader of the Nisqually tribe. Kautz proposes to Kitty, they marry, not legally, and become the parents of two sons.

Kitty, also referred to as Kate or Etta, accompanies Kautz on his Northwest assignments at Fort Steilacoom, Fort Semiahmoo, and Fort Chehalis. During times Kautz is stationed at Fort Steilacoom, the family lives in the Indian village, Simakins Camp, just outside the fort. When Kautz is away on traveling army assignments, Kitty settles at the Nisqually Indian Reservation.¹ Kautz, in his daily journal, vividly tells of family times, trials, and travels during his stay in Washington.²

Fort Steilacoom

Kitty is first mentioned in the diary on June 1, 1857, when the couple have a difference of opinion. The nature of the disagreement is not known, but his manner would indicate that Kitty has a mind of her own.

I had a row with my friend but nothing serious. I went off depending



Kitty, the daughter of Quiemuth of the Nisqually tribe, was the common law wife of Lt. August V. Kautz.

more on a system of coldness to produce subordination than by force. (p. 42)

The illness of his son, Nugent, who is also called Lugie, is detailed in the September 6th and 7th, 1857, entries.

Lugie is quite sick. His lungs affected by hooping cough and I fear he will have a wretched time. (p. 87)

We had quite a time administering to the little patient. (p. 87)

By September 19th Lugie is better.

...Lugie has recovered, all inflammatory symptoms have disappeared but he still has hooping cough. (p. 90)

During 1857 and 1858 when Kautz is busy reconstructing Fort Steilacoom,

there is no further mention of Kitty, who is living at Simakins Camp just outside of the Fort.

Fort Semiahmoo

Lt. Kautz next writes about Kitty when she is settled on the Nisqually Indian Reservation before she and Nugent sail with Kautz on the ship to his new assignment. He will join a detachment of soldiers that supports the United States-Great Britain 49th Parallel Boundary Commission.

Dec. 15, 1858. I started for Olympia in the afternoon and rode as far as the reservation when I concluded to stop overnight. I found Etta (Kitty) and Lydia very well and comfortably situated.... (p. 279)

January 14, 1859 (Friday). It rained the greater portion of the day. I bid everyone goodbye and then went to town (Steilacoom)...where we set out with a fine breeze about two o'clock p.m. A canoe came along just as we started by previous arrangement and Etta (Kitty) came on board with Lydia as passengers. (p. 294)

January 15th (Saturday) 1859. It was eleven o'clock before the tide was favorable for us to move...we...floated with baffling winds slowing towards Port Townsend where we arrived about one o'clock (A.M.)

January 17th Thursday. When I came on deck this morning we had a fine breeze and were entering the Straits of Rosario. It lasted us to Semiahmoo where we arrived about two o'clock. The tide was not favorable. (When) we came to anchor, I went ashore and sent a canoe for Etta. (p. 294)

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HISTORIC FORT STEILACOOM ASSOCIATION

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President's Message

Happy New Year! What a year of change for your Museum and Interpretive Center!

For starters, we've given the museum a new name, which more accurately describes what it is becoming. It is to be a center for the *interpretation* of the fort's role in the development of Pierce County and Puget's Sound. Exhibits have been added and others modified to better convey the stories of the Medicine Creek Treaty, the Indian War, the Pig War and of the officers and men who manned the fort.

New board members were added:

Steve Dunkelberger, a reporter for the *Lakewood Journal*, is second vice-president and chairman of the committee planning the 150th anniversary activities.

Marta Firman, retired after a number of years with the Pierce College bookstore, has, along with Pauline Hainse, undertaken to inventory and catalog every item in the museum's possession.

Loren Gilbert, former regional director of the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor, is working on a portrayal of Governor Isaac Stevens.

Shirley Hainse has decades of retailing experience and has taken over management of the Sutler's Store.

Three board members left to pursue other interests:

Anna Fitzpatrick remains an active volunteer, but is devoting much of

her time and attention to the baby she and Chris are happily expecting in March.

Shea Munroe is marrying and moving to Portland.

Barbara Smith remains active with Fort Nisqually and at present is busily employed with Intel at Dupont.

All three brought great energy and insights to your museum and its board, and they'll be missed.

The McChord AFB Air Museum has generously loaned us an exhibit on the Medicine Creek Treaty. It was developed by historian George Dickey and other members of McChord's Civil Engineering department. It is mounted in Quarters 4 along with the diorama of the fort (c. 1858) created by board member Bob Demorest.

A comprehensive docent training program is underway, with over a dozen trainees enrolled. Among the speakers/instructors have been:

- Jerry Eckrom, author of *Remembered Drums, A History of the Puget Sound Indian War*.

- Ruth Kirk, award winning ethnographer and author of over 30 books on such disparate subjects as Native Americans, the Olympic National Park, and Japan.

- Board Member Ken Morgan, vice-president of the Washington Civil War Association and portrayer of Fort Steilacoom's most prominent commander, L/Col Silas Casey.

Others scheduled include Doreen Beard-Simpkins and Mike McGuire, both from Fort Nisqually Historic Site, and Fort Steilacoom Board member Walt Neary.

Finally, some of the other exciting events at your Fort Steilacoom Museum and Interpretive Center include: the Inquiring Mind Speaker Series, the Civil War encampment over Memorial Day weekend, the revamped school visitation program for 4th graders, and the on-going planning of events to mark the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Fort Steilacoom in 1849.

Make a resolution to come out and enjoy your museum in 1998.

Thank You

To **Andy Anderson**, director of the Meeker Mansion, for his delightful talk about Ezra Meeker.

To **Steve Anderson**, director of the Renton Historical Society, for his continuing contributions to and support of Fort Steilacoom.

To **Linda Clinton** for being such a strong supporter of the docent training program.

To **Dr. George Delaney**, President of Pierce College, for donating the making of a videotaped explanation of the restoration of Fort Steilacoom; and to **Tanna Lambert** for making it such a professional project.

To **Dr. Ben Keller** and the 21 members of the Lakes High School Chamber Choir for so beautifully entertaining Lt Col and Mrs. Silas Casey and their guests on December 13th.

To **Trish Laughlin** who is training our accessioners and catalogers.

To **Gloria Elena Lundgren** and her parents for their generous support.

To **Karen Meador** for taking on the unsung heroine's job of grant writing.

To **Orville Stout**, our Renaissance man-about-everything who does our printing, films our lectures and manages all our audio-visual equipment.

To **Richard White**, who has given your museum the right to publish his book on the Revenue Cutter *Jefferson Davis*. Richard has also given the fort its own web page. Look for it at [HTTP://home1.GTE.NET/5White/Fort_Steilacoom.HTML](http://home1.GTE.NET/5White/Fort_Steilacoom.HTML).

To your **Board of Directors**, who contribute countless hours to assure that this priceless artifact is maintained for the enjoyment of your children and the generations to come.

And last, but by no means least, to *Volunteer-of-the-year* **Pauline Hainse**, our treasurer and a *treasure*. Pauline is a high energy volunteer who keeps our books, does our banking, works in the Sutler's Store, is working on the huge task of cataloging our assets, managing our Christmas afternoon program, and who inspires everyone with her zest, her continual good humor and her unending store of great patience.

Raymond J. Egan

Indian Family *(from page 1)*

Kautz's brief stay at Semiahmoo is quiet. He spends time playing chess, writing letters, attending to Quartermaster duties and taking command while Captain Woodruff is off post. When Kautz is granted a six month leave of absence to tour Europe, he prepares to leave and take his family back to the reservation. The most important event of the winter is the birth of another Kautz son.

Feb. 9th (1859). A brother to Lydia arrived in this world today about three o'clock p.m. The mother was out in labor more than an hour. I called in an old Lummi, but her practice of midwifery did not suit Kate and I brought Dr. Berrieh and in a short time after his arrival the boy was born, who I shall call Doctin (Augustus) in consideration of my numerous friends of the medical profession. The mother is doing well....(p. 302)

Feb. 11th 1859. The weather is fine. Etta was quite unwell. She has not got through her labor so comfortably as we were led to expect. (p. 303)

Feb. 12th. Sa(tuesday)...Etta is quite sick yet. She doesn't improve much. (p. 303)

Feb. 14th. M(onday). K is improving very slowly. (p. 304)

Feb. 17th 1859 Th(ursday)...K is quite well again. (p. 305)

Nisqually Indian Reservation, Europe Tour and Blake Expedition

March 27th Sun(day) 1859. Spent the day packing up. It hailed, rained and snowed nearly all day. I am preparing to leave on the next trip of the *Constitution* (to go to Steilacoom).

April 23 Saturday 1859...I stopped at Dr. Tolmies and made arrangements with him for taking care of my little family. I left a hundred dollars with him and shall send him ten more. They are to have a cow and the balance of the money is to be paid to them periodically...I returned to the Nisqually Reservation where I expect to spend the night. I saw Mr. Gosnell (the Indian Agent), who also

volunteered to look after my Indian (family).... (p. 320)

April 24th Sunday. I bid goodbye to my Indian friends on the reservation. Rode to Dr. Tolmies (at Fort Nisqually) where I made some additional arrangements with Dr. T. about my little ones.... (p. 330)

From May 1859 to October 1860 Lt. Kautz is away traveling in Europe and then commanding the Blake expedition leading 150 recruits up the Missouri River and traveling on the Mullan Road to Fort Colville. After an eighteen month absence, Lt. Kautz stops at the reservation before continuing on to Steilacoom.

(Oct.) 25th (1860). I went by the reservation and stopped an hour. They were glad to see me and seemed in perfect health. (pp. 349-350)

November is spent preparing to leave for Kautz's next assignment. At the end of the month Kitty, Nugent and Augustus accompany Kautz on an uneventful trip to Fort Chehalis. During the time at the fort, both boys are injured.

Fort Chehalis

Nov. 29th Th(ursday) (1860). I found the steamer had gone up when I got things to town this morning. I chartered a little vessel and started them (the family) off. I went with Mr. Wilson in his buggy.... (p. 358)

Dec. 1st Sa(tuesday). My baggage arrived late this evening. I rode until late and stopped at Mr. Mounts about twenty miles from Olympia.... (p. 359)

Dec. 3rd M(onday). Same Indians arrived about noon, but no canoe. Mr. Hill sent them off for Mr. Windsor's canoe....We did not get away from the Hills until about three p.m....We camped in an Indian lodge. (p. 360)

Dec. 4th Tu(esday). It was nine o'clock before we got underway.... We (reached) Satsop about dark. There we camped at an Indian camp in one of their lodges. (p. 360)

(Dec.) 5th W(ednesday)...We reached Mr. Biles place about noon....At dark

when the tide turned, set out for Chehalis Point, got into Chehalis about midnight....I found a set of quarters just completed and ready to be taken. (p. 365)

(Feb.) 15th 1861. K. is very unwell and has been complaining for several days. (p. 378)

March 11th, 1861 M(onday)...Lugie has been in bed all day. He fell on his abdomen and cut a wound just below the navel with a broken bottle that gave us much alarm when he was brought in by a soldier bleeding very profusely. The wound proved light but still a narrow escape. (p. 383)

(March) 26th Tu(esday). An exceedingly painful accident occurred to Doctin this morning. He ran against a bucket of hot water which his mother was carrying and severely seared his face, breast and right arm. The doctor came to his relief immediately (and) covered the wounds with sweet oil and lint and afterwards prepared a compound of sweet oil and lime water which seems to relieve his very much. (p. 386)

March 27th 1861. This day was spent in quarters. Doctin (Augustus) bears up with his misfortune exceedingly well and will recover without anything worse than a marked face.... (p. 387)

During the Fort Chehalis assignment the Southern states begin to secede from the union. One by one officers of Southern sentiments resign their commission and leave for the South. Officers from the North are assigned to Civil War duty. Kautz also prepares himself to go East to fight for the Union Army. The return trip to Steilacoom is more eventful. Their canoe is overturned and luggage is lost.

Lt. Kautz Leaves for the East; Family Returns to Reservation

(May) 12th Sunday (1861). We sailed across the bay and up the river to Montesano by five p.m. in time to attend singing school in the evening. On the 13th we continued until twilight when we reached the mouth of the Satsop. We camped near Mr. Butler's camp. The river is high and

the current very strong. With hard work the canoes reached Fords about three and we stopped for the night. (p. 396)

15th. The men made an exchange of two canoes for one large one which proved an unfortunate exchange. The one canoe was overloaded and no room for me. So I walked up to the Smiths six miles and waited for them. About two o'clock Mr. Bur came up and reported that the canoe had been wrecked and one of my trunks (containing two previous volumes of my journals) and many loose things...were lost. The canoe having laid on the bank for some time was dry and brittle. (T)he current forced (the canoe) upon a snag where it split and went into pieces leaving (Kitty) and two children...clinging to the wreck with two white men. The other two were able to bring up one of the other canoes and take (everyone) off (the wreckage)...Kate is much worried about her losses. (p. 397)

After arriving at Fort Steilacoom, Kautz rides twice to the Chehalis River to search for his trunk. The river is too high, so he returns to see his family at the reservation.

(May) 25th Sa(turday). Rode to Olympia this morning having spent the night at the Reservation. The North is gaining ground (in the Civil War). (p. 399)

May 30th Th(ursday)...The (Chehalis) river is still rising. I therefore took my departure. I rode on to the

Nisqually Reservation. Etta was absent. I took up my lodgings for the night in the lodge.... (p. 400)

May 31st Fr(iday). I reached Ft. Steilacoom about noon. Etta arrived with her children and camped at Simakins Camp, beyond Steilacoom Creek not far from Byrds mill. (p. 401)

June 8th 1861...I bid them goodbye at the reservation this morning...(p. 402)

This is Kautz's final farewell to his Indian family. Though it is obvious he cares for them, he must leave to continue his army career, rising to the rank of Brigadier General. He will not return to the Northwest for thirty years. Lt. Kautz again provides for his family's care with the help of Edward Huggins of Fort Nisqually. Huggins recalls in a letter written to C. B. Bagley of Seattle on August 4, 1905:

You must have known Kitty Kautz, as she was often in Olympia, and her good looks made her quite conspicuous. I saw a good deal of Kitty, as I acted for Lt. Kautz, later General Kautz, and looked after (her) as far as paying her \$20.00 a month for several years...\$10.00 a month for each of the boys, Gus and Nugent, until I placed them, Gus with Captain Gove, and Nugent with Wesley Gasnell...

After their separation, both Kitty and General Kautz remarry. Kitty remarries twice, first in 1875 to William Diggins. She divorces him

after a few years, and in 1884 marries Henry Walker, a wealthy man from Thurston County. She lives with him until her death in 1891.³

When General Kautz returns to retire in Seattle in 1892, his grown sons Nugent and Augustus have assumed leadership roles in their communities. Nugent marries a woman from Oregon and moves there to teach at Carlisle Indian College. Augustus, an influential Puyallup tribal member, is a farmer on an allotment of Puyallup Indian land granted to his mother, Kitty.

Descendants of General August Kautz and Kitty, daughter of Quiemuth, have returned to the Nisqually Indian Reservation. Frankie Kautz McCloud, the daughter of Julius Kautz and granddaughter of Augustus Kautz, serves as the tribal Social Service Director. Two of the McCloud family are anthropologists for the tribe. The tradition of family leadership continues.⁴

¹Gary Fuller Reese, *A Documentary History of Fort Steilacoom*, (Tacoma Public Library) pp. 20-21.

²Gary Fuller Reese (Editor), *Nothing Worthy of Note Transpired Today, The Northwest Journals of August V. Kautz* (Tacoma Public Library).

³A. Baston Tilicum, Esq., *Tacoma Daily News Print*, Tacoma, Wash., 1892.

⁴Interview, Frankie Kautz McCloud by Carol Neufeld, December 18, 1997.

Historic Fort Steilacoom

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