

Ned sent keys to Father's desk. [Gen. Silas Casey's desk]. Dress makers still busy on Bessie's clothes. College begins today. Rob joined the Students Cooperative Society.

**September 29, 1884:**

Ned came up from Detroit and spent the day with us. Rob and I drove to the depot with Ned at 5 p.m.

**October, Friday 10, 1884:**

Left Ann Arbor for Washington about 3:15 p.m. Much alarmed about my sister Bessie.

Abby traveled to Washington D.C. to see her family. She visited with her sister and brother-in-law, Bessie and Robert Scott; her brother and sister-in-law, Silas and Sophie Casey; brother and sister-in-law, Tom and Emma Casey; brother-in-law and his wife, General Henry and Mary Hunt; and her brother, Edward (Ned) Casey.

**October, Saturday 11, 1884:**

Reached Washington about 6:30 p.m. Robert met me at the depot and I was relieved to find Bessie better. Found Silas; Sophie and Ned were at dinner. Saw Bessie after dinner. She was much changed. General Henry Hunt and Mary also.

**October 13, 1884:**

Ned left this evening for N.Y. and from there to Fort Lewis, Colorado. I went down in the afternoon to see Emma and Sophie. Saw Tom at his office. Silas was in Baltimore.

**October 23, 1884:**

Bessie continued to improve a little and today seems decidedly better—I wrote to Gen'l and Harry. Silas and Sophie spent the evening with us.

**December 4, 1884:**

Left Washington at 7:40 p.m. Robert and Henry Hunt to depot with me.

**December 5, 1884:**

Reached Detroit at midnight this night....a trying, disagreeable trip.

**December 8, 1884:**

Left Detroit at 4:20 p.m. Reached home in time for tea—found all well and things in good order.

**December 31, 1884:**

Last night I had a bad dream about Bessie and it fairly haunts me today.

Abby Pearce Casey and General Lewis Cass Hunt lived less than two years after the last diary entry. Abby died from cancer on February 25, 1886, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. According to *Generals in Blue*, Lewis, who had intestinal problems since childhood in Missouri and also suffered with chronic dysentery after service in the Mexican War, died September 6, 1886, at Fort Union, New Mexico. After temporary internment in the post cemetery, his remains were conveyed to the National Cemetery at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

**Descendants of Abby and Lewis Hunt in the Military**

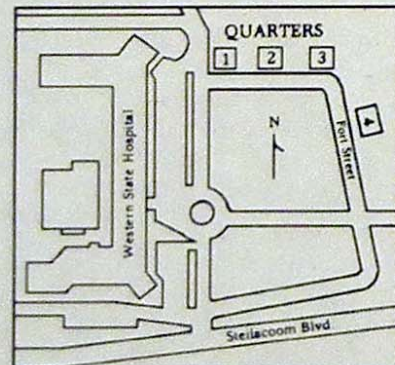
The "Descendants of William Hunt" indicates that the family allegiance to military duty did not end with Abby Casey and Lewis Cass Hunt. After his parent's death, the youngest son, Henry Jackson Hunt, also followed a military career, fighting in the Spanish American War, Philippine Insurrection and WWI. And his West Point graduate son, Henry Jackson Hunt, Jr., was awarded the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the Croix de Guerre with Palm in WWII.

Allison Hunt Douthitt, daughter of Henry Jackson Hunt, Jr., continued the family tradition when she married Robert Douthitt, an army career man. Allison and the family accompanied him everywhere, except on hardship tours to places such as Africa or Vietnam. Then Allison and the eight children remained where they were or lived near her parents in Bradenton, Florida.

The devotion to the military in the Casey and Hunt families has been outstanding. The long tradition of individual and family sacrifices made for obedience to duty began before the time of Abby Pearce Casey and Lewis Cass Hunt. Their legacy of service to country above self continues to the present.

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# Fort Steilacoom

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Winter, 2000

## The Life of a Military Family: Abby Pearce Casey Hunt and General Lewis Cass Hunt

by Carol E. Neufeld

**Part 2: (continued from last issue)**

*The life of a U.S. military family from 1860 to 1868 is revealed in letters, a diary, family histories, National Archive records, newspaper clippings, a military dispatch, and military books. The information in this article is from Allison Hunt Douthitt's family history research.*

*In part 1 of this article, Carol Neufeld began with Lieutenant Col. Silas Casey's Daughter Abby and her marriage to Captain Lewis Cass Hunt at Fort Steilacoom in 1860 and followed the new family as Lewis was transferred from one post to another.*

By 1884 Lewis, exhausted from 37 years of sickness and army life, was at home with Abby and the family. Abby's one-year diary written in Ann Arbor, Michigan, during 1884 vividly reveals details of daily life. Allison Douthitt, a great granddaughter of Abby Pearce Casey and Lewis Cass Hunt, who transcribed the document, writes:

As the diary begins, Lewis is on leave due to a variety of ailments....He tries to extend his leave to recover, but is refused. He departs to join his regiment...in San Diego on light duty.

Abby remains at home to care for their four school age children: Bessie, 23; Lewis Casey, 21; Robert, 19; and Henry Jackson, 15. While the three oldest attend university and Henry studies at high school,



Courtesy Allison Hunt Douthitt

**Henry Jackson Hunt**  
*Son of Abby and Lewis Hunt*

Abby manages the household, carries on a social life and corresponds with Lewis. The diary entries show Abby's concern for her children and husband, the "Gen'l."

**January, Tuesday 1, 1884:**

Bessie and I received assisted by Mrs. Weples (?) and Berdi Dunster. Had about 60 callers and a pleasant day—Gen'l made himself comfortable upstairs with a volume of Voltaire....Storm began in the evening.

**January, Saturday 5, 1884:**

We have had a big snowstorm and very cold weather...water pipes

were frozen—snow quite deep and sleighing good. Bessie has spent several hours of each day at the Library reading up for the Eng. Lit. courses. The Gen'l's health is not good. He is much troubled with Eczema, especially on his hands.

**January, Monday 7, 1884:**

The Gen'l feeling quite badly today—had but little sleep last night. After dinner Henry got a sleigh and drove me down town where I attended to errands. Bessie out with Berdi Dunster....I walking with Mrs. Dunster and Mrs. DuPont. After tea, first Bessie and then I went out in sleigh with Berdi, a charming moonlight night—Lew and Rob out to Chi Psi House. Dr. Douglas here to see the General.

**January, Wednesday 23, 1884:**

Snowing hard all day — Boys studying—Bessie at college at 2 p.m. to read her Critique on Mr. Hunchilt's Essay—Subject Pope's "Essay on Man." Bessie and I drove to Opera House, Lewey walked down town saw Rhea in "The School for Scandal"—a very cold coming home. Lewis took his first voice lesson...this morning from 9 to 9:30.

**January, Sunday 27, 1884:**

General seems better and I feel much encouraged. Bessie at the Unitarian Church to hear Miss Hutton preach—was much pleased. Mrs. DuPont called in the afternoon. Lewi and Rob at Chi Psi House to tea....I copied Bessie's art notes for her during the evening.

(Continued on page 3)



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### From the President

The nip in the air is a good reminder that our volunteers are busy planning the seventh annual Christmas at the Fort. This year's living history presentation will be 5 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, December 9. Our vice president, Tom Melberg, has been busy organizing a fine event with what ought to be a stellar roster of reenactors.

Meanwhile, Chris Finnigan and Carol Neufeld are busy planning activities for children. It should be a fun event, and a bargain at \$2 per person or \$5 per family. I hope to see you there.

Another activity has also been taking place behind the scenes. Longtimers already know our Ken Morgan as a Renaissance man of many talents. One of his hidden talents is as a craftsman. Ken has been busy almost single-handedly turning a room on the second floor of Col. Casey's house into a replica of a barracks from 1862.

There are a couple of reasons that Ken chose this project. He points out that while our restored buildings do a good job of presenting the life of both married and single officers, we do not presently show what it was like to be a regular grunt soldier back then. The barracks buildings from the fort were torn down long ago.

Also, our restored buildings represent life in the fort's heyday of

influence, during the late 1850s and the Pig War. But the fort was also open during the Civil War. During that period, the regular army was fighting the Civil War. Fort Steilacoom was held by volunteer regiments from, at various times, Oregon, California and, of course, Washington. So in the room you will see 1862 uniforms, newspapers, and any other artifacts that our generous members may choose to loan or donate (hint, hint).

Thus, with one room, Ken can present the life of a common soldier, and the life of the fort in 1862. There's another, more practical reason he proposed this year—we have an 1862 Springfield rifle that would not fit in any other display!

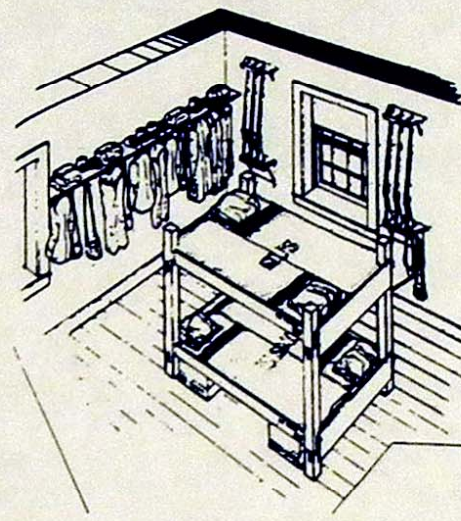
In his search for accuracy, Ken sought measured drawings of how a bunk bed might have appeared in 1862. That's not the kind of thing that you find in the library or on the Internet. Folks from the National Parks Service in Virginia steered him to Fort Scott, Kansas, which has the treasured drawings. But I can tell you, this was not a straightforward process, and Ken devoted considerable detective time to reaching that point.

The bunk beds have a particular design because they were designed to be easily disassembled. Not only did they have to be transportable from fort to fort, but they were also taken apart and disinfected three times a year to get rid of various critters (Ken tells me that the hay in the mattresses was changed every two weeks).

The bunk beds held four men—two on each bunk. A bunkmate slept with his pillow at his bunkmate's feet. I cannot wait until summer, when we can let young people climb into the beds and experience this first-hand. Imagine the look on their faces!

Devoted volunteer Bonnie Jean Roy, who we honored at our annual meeting, sewed all the items in the room, such as mattresses, and Greg Hagge of the Fort Lewis Museum is helping to restore a musket from

the period. Beyond them, this has really been Ken's show, and he deserves our thanks for turning this vision into a great reality. We look forward to being able to show off this new room soon.



### Barracks Room

With the outbreak of the Civil War, Regular Army units were called east to participate. U.S. Volunteer units from several regiments, notably the 1<sup>st</sup> California Infantry, the 1<sup>st</sup> Oregon Infantry, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Washington Territorial Volunteers garrisoned Fort Steilacoom.

These soldiers were housed in large barracks rooms similar to the above. Off duty time was spent preparing for inspections, maintaining personal equipment and weapons, writing and reading letters to and from home, and participating in games such as chess, draughts (checkers), and other games of chance.

The soldiers slept in "cribs" like the one shown here, with four soldiers per crib. They slept head-to-foot on straw filled mattresses. The straw was changed periodically, and often came with its own inhabitants. From time to time the cribs were taken apart, cleaned and whitewashed.

Soldiers' meals were prepared in kitchens and eaten in mess rooms attached to each barracks.

## Life of a Military Family

(continued from page 1)

### January, Monday 28, 1884:

General still improving. Had a good night and dressed and went down stairs about 10 o'clock. Still has some pain in the legs when he first begins to walk. Rob studying, the others at school. Several callers in the afternoon. I at home all day—took pills last night and am not feeling very well.

### January, Tuesday 29, 1884:

General had very poor night. Slept very little. Not so well this morning—Rob to be examined in French...this morning. Mrs. Vosmus here sewing—Weather very mild. Rob was examined at 5:30 p.m. and passed his examination in French—Choral Union in the evening.

### February, Tuesday 12, 1884:

Gen'l out sleigh riding after dinner—Louise Huggins went to Mrs. Lockwood's to spend Sunday—I went out sleigh riding...and at 3 o'clock went to Mrs. Potter's birthday....In the evening Mr. Sherhan led a hop for his pupils and the mothers were thru and furnished refreshment and the music. Henry had a fine time. Rob received his paper admitting him to the University.

### February, Wednesday 20, 1884:

At home all day—till afternoon—then walked to the campus to see the skaters. Gen'l feeling quite well and walked to the post office—Bessie out to the meeting at Birdi Dunsters in the evening. Rob matriculated in the college today....

### February, Sunday 24, 1884:

Gen'l received letter this afternoon from Washington refusing an extension of leave—it fairly took my breath away—and troubles me very much—The General wrote a letter to the Adj-Gen'l this evening.

### February, Monday 25, 1884:

The Gen'l had a poor night—felt worried and wondered what was best to do—After breakfast he told me he thought it best to go to Chicago and see Gen'l Schofield and if possible get his leave extended till March or April—I packed his 2 trunks—Gen'l walked

to the bank and left bonds and borrowed \$200.00 on it. It troubles me to have him leave home sick. It is too bad—

### February, Tuesday 26, 1884:

The Gen'l slept hardly any last night but seems brighter, I think—He left for Chicago on the 11 a.m. train—Lewis went to the depot with him—it makes my heart ache to have him go from home when he was sick—I trust he can come back soon.

### February, Thursday 28, 1884:

Went down town again today—did more errands—Letter from the General in the evening—He cannot get any extension from Gen'l Schofield and has decided to push right on to Omaha and Sidney and join his regiment—Thinks the change may benefit him—I am greatly disappointed and worried about him—Mr. Richards and Emily Huggins called in evening.

### March, Sunday 2, 1884:

At home all day—Wrote the General a long letter—After dinner Mrs. Dunster and Bessie—Prof. Johns and Prof. Davis called—In evening Lewis went out to church with Mr. Richards—Henry and I popped some corn.

### March, Monday 3, 1884:

Louise down to have her picture taken—brought 2 letters from the Gen'l—one encouraging and the other discouraging....

### March, Tuesday 11, 1884:

Sick in bed all day—in great pain—a kind of bilious attack....

### March, Wednesday 12, 1884:

Up and dressed but not well—wrote the Gen'l.—am much worried about him.

### March, Saturday 15, 1884:

Emily left for Mrs. Wilson's this morning—Boys at the Court House—much interested in a trial—Bessie not feeling well but was obliged to go and have her picture taken—went down in a hack—Letter received from the Gen'l and he seems better and writes more cheerfully.

### March, Monday 17, 1884:

Mrs. Vosmus here this morning....Bessie and I went down town after dinner—no letter from the Gen'l and was disappointed. Henry out calling in the evening—the boys studying. Bessie got negatives of her picture—not very good.

### March, Monday 24, 1884:

Mrs. Vosmus here today—finished Bessie's travelling dress—I walked to post office after dinner. I in Mrs. Morris' in the evening to Whist Club—quite a nice time....

### March, Sunday 30, 1884:

A letter from the General enclosing one from Henry [their son who was with his father for a visit]....

### April, Friday 12, 1884:

Good Friday! I was not able to go to church because of the diarrhea which was worse or rather the pains are more severe — Mrs. Vosmus came today—sent for Dr. Dunster this afternoon—as I feel quite horrid about myself—Letter from the General also one from Sister Bessie with Easter cards for self and Bessie....

### April, Sunday 20, 1884:

Not feeling well today. Troubled again with Diarrhea—Wrote the Gen'l after dinner—Bessie at work on her German and Shakespeare work—Called on Mrs. DuPont and Mrs. Morris in the evening.

### April, Monday 21, 1884:

Down town after dinner and saw Dr. Dunster again—got more pills—

### April, Tuesday 22, 1884:

At 4:30 Bessie and I took the train with the rest of the Choral Union for Ypsilanti—Went to Mrs. McCorkle's house where we had a very pleasant time and nice tea—then to the Opera House—Concert at 8—good house and all passed off well. Reached home about 12:30—very tired. Letter from the General and he sleeps well and is improving.

### September 24, 1884:

Had a letter from Ned [Abby's brother] and he spoke of Bessie's illness [her sister Bessie]—had not heard of it before—feel very anxious—have written and telegraphed.

(Continued on page 4)