



squirrels and made broth for the baby who refused to nurse. Fern had been named for the wild ferns that grew around the cabin.



This trunk belonged to Beverly Bill's great-grandmother, Ella May Haskell Smith pictured at left.

Travel Trunk Donated

Beverly Gilbert Bills has donated a period travel trunk to Fort Steilacoom. The trunk belonged to her great-grandmother, Ella May Haskell Smith.

Beverly writes that her grandmother was born in Wisconsin where she married Elliott B. Smith, a telegrapher for the railroad. He called his bride "Pansey" because she loved that flower.

Of the Smiths three children, Bessie May was the oldest. She married Warren Charles Johnson at a church in Ritzville, Washington.

Ella came to live with them in the spacious log cabin Warren built on their homestead near Dent, Idaho. She helped care for their tiny child, Fern Elizabeth, who weighed only three pounds at birth. Ella shot

The family moved many times between 1912 and 1920 before finally settling in Long Beach, California, where Fern grew up and married her sweetheart, Burton Roy Gilbert on Christmas Day in 1927.

"Bessie took care of Ella May until she died," writes Beverly. "It was a treat to know her as 'Nanny' for the seventeen years of my young life that she was still alive....When Bessie died, Mother (Fern) shipped the trunk to me. It has been in my possession since then. It has the original leather handles, all brass tack work and even the key! ...I think Ella would be pleased to know it will rest in the Fort Steilacoom historical quarters."

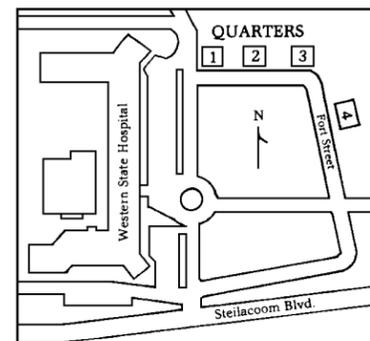


More Donations

Elizabeth Freckleton Julian has continued to make generous donations to the fort from her mother's estate. Beth Julian's most recent gift to the fort museum is the silver plated tea set shown above.

Board member **Nancy Keller-Scholz** has recently given the fort a number of kitchen, dining and household items, including four hurricane candle shades, white Damask tablecloths, ironstone soup bowls, dinner napkins, brass candlesticks, washbasin and pitcher, three pressed glass decanters, a pewter coffee server with cream and sugar service, a tiered dessert tray, and two ironstone teapots. Nancy is the hostess of the popular "Mrs. Casey's Tea" event.

Thank you also to Past President **Gideon Pete** for the many historical items he has loaned and donated to the fort for period exhibits and displays he has created in the historic buildings.



Historic Fort Steilacoom
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Winter, 2008

Edward Wanton (Ned) Casey

by Kenneth A. Morgan

Previous editions of our Fort Steilacoom Newsletter have dealt with the Casey family. Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey's Army career has been the subject of several articles, as has been his son Thomas, wife Abby Pearce Casey, and daughters Elizabeth (Bessie) and Abby Casey. One other member of the Casey household residing at the Fort is the subject of this article, Edward Wanton Casey.



Portrait of Edward Wanton Casey painted by Frederick Remington in October 1890.

Edward Wanton Casey, known as Ned, was a lad of seven when the Caseys arrived at Fort Steilacoom in 1858. Unlike the other Casey children, Ned was a "West Coaster." He was born December 1, 1850 at his father's post in Benicia, California.

The Caseys moved temporarily into the new post quarters at Fort Steilacoom occupied by Lt. August Kautz and Dr. Horace Wirtz located adjacent to the post infirmary. Work on the Commander's Quarters was underway and the new house was soon ready for Casey's family. Colonel and Mrs. Casey were quite particular about how the house should be constructed, which caused Lt. Kautz, the post engineer, a great deal of grief.

Moving to a new home is always difficult, but expected in military families. This was the second time Col. Casey had been posted to Fort Steilacoom; the first was during the 1855-56 Indian War. It was, however, the first time for his family. Col.

Casey was known in the Territory. He had friends at the capital in Olympia, amongst the gentlemen of Fort Nisqually, and the townfolk of Steilacoom, as well as the officers of the fort. All were eager to meet his family, particularly the fort's single officers, who were interested in Casey's two teenage daughters, Abby and Bessie. Fort Steilacoom diarists E. P. Alexander and A. V. Kautz report that they, Abby and Bessie, "greatly enlivened the social life at Fort Steilacoom."

Although Fort Steilacoom was a frontier post and most of the soldiers were unmarried, there were, in addition to the Caseys, several officer's and enlisted men's families living at the fort. Among those families were those of Major Haller,

Captains Judah, Maloney, and English, each having several children Ned's age eager to become playmates. Of course there were Ned's sisters Abby and Bessie, and later his cousin Thomas Lincoln, Jr., so Ned did not lack youthful companionship. Furthermore, Colonel Casey kept a small pony, Charlie, for the amusement of his children.

As did all the post children, Ned attended school in Steilacoom. The one-room school served the needs of both Steilacooms, Port and City, as well as the garrison at the Fort. Approximately twenty students attended the school, which was located in the woods between present day Starling

and Rainier streets. Teachers at the school were Frank Balch and later Reverend George Sloan, a Presbyterian. In 1858 the Rev. Sloan's students presented a public program to demonstrate their abilities. Ned participated in the program, giving two recitations entitled "Vacation" and "The Greedy Fox." Unfortunately, more information on these efforts is not available. He also joined his classmates in singing.

Many activities at the Fort interested young Ned. Each day started and ended with a parade and a cannon salute. Soldiers were engaged in drill and rifle practice and were constantly leaving for or returning from patrols. New quarters and other buildings were under construction.

(Continued on page 3)

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President's Message



As 2009 begins I think of all of those who have kept Historic Fort Steilacoom open.

In the beginning were the Board members who organized in 1983 and started restoring the four buildings. Chuck Collier, one of the founders, recalls that they worked every Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for 7 years, rebuilding, painting, gathering artifacts, planning exhibits, and publicizing the Fort of the 1850s and 1860s. Chuck continues to help as a docent. Many community volunteers also assisted in the effort. Their names are listed on plaques in Quarters 2 and 4.

Many other dedicated citizens have served since then. Of the current Board, eight have worked faithfully from 9 to 17 years; six from 2 to 6 years. All have been involved in decision making and planning as well as carrying out the plans. They have chaired events, guided tours, cleaned and repaired the buildings, presented displays and programs, researched and written about the history of the Fort, reenacted as historical people of the Fort and

completed countless other tasks. Orville Stout, who served as a board member from 1986 to 2006, was secretary for 17 of those years and continues as newsletter editor.

A special Thank You to our members who support Fort Steilacoom. We appreciate you and need your continued help. **It is time to send in your membership dues.** Please renew so that you may receive the benefits of a quarterly newsletter with historical articles and notices of our interesting monthly events.

Exciting programs begin this year with **Mrs. Casey's Tea** on February 21 at 2 p.m. in Quarters 2. Ladies are invited to see Mrs. Casey, the wife of the fort Commander Col. Casey, and friends from Steilacoom, Fort Nisqually and the Territory. Tea and cakes will be served. Sewing and styles of the period will be on display, and there will be a "Fancy Fair" silent auction. Reservations with a paid fee of \$15.00 per person may be mailed to Historic Fort Steilacoom, Box 88447, Steilacoom, WA 98388 by February 13.

Other Events scheduled for this year include:

School of the Regulars, February 28 to March 1, 2009. Members of the 4th Infantry Regiment, Company C, and fellow reenactors will engage in an on-site training experience at Fort Steilacoom. Interested visitors may look on as the reenactors practice their drill and field craft on the fort's historic parade ground. The museum will also will be open on Sunday, March 1st from 1 to 4 p.m.

Puget Sound Indian War – What we know and how we know, March 15, 2009, 2 p.m. in Quarters 2. Jerry Eckrom, author of *Remembered Drums*, will be the speaker.

Military Swap Meet and Display, April 4, 2009, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Quarters 2. Original and reproduction military goods from multiple time periods in American history will be on display. The event is open to the public and free of charge. Donations are appreciated.

Puget Sound Indian Wars Board Gaming, April 19, 2009, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Quarters 2. Lawrence Bateman will host his popular board game engaging opposing forces in the Indian War of 1855-56. Under Mr. Bateman's guidance players will take command of Indian, Volunteer militia, and Regular Army combatants as they play out scenarios based on documented incidents. Donations are appreciated.

Historic Fort Steilacoom 160th Anniversary Celebration, May 9-10, 2009, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Fort Steilacoom Park, Lakewood, WA. Reenactors will present Civil War battle demonstrations with blue and gray troops, civilians, infantry, cavalry engineers, surgeons, nurses and sutlers. Admission is a \$5 donation per person; children 7 years and under will be admitted free.

Volunteers are needed to help man the gate. Call (253) 582-5838.

More program information will be available in the next newsletter. Remember, **membership dues are now payable.** We'll see you soon at Fort Steilacoom.

Carol Neufeld Stout

Membership

It's time to renew your membership in Historic Fort Steilacoom Association. Your membership dues help support the museum's maintenance and operation and keep alive an important chapter in the history of the Pacific Northwest through interpretive displays, tours and educational programs.

To renew, fill out the enclosed **Membership Form** and mail your check in the supplied envelope. By renewing now, you will get **Free Admission to the Civil War Reenactment** coming on May 9 and 10. Your mailing label on this newsletter shows your membership number followed by the latest year for which your dues are paid. If you have questions call (253) 582-5838.

he had concealed beneath a blanket, shot Casey in the back of the head, and quickly rode away. Lt. Casey fell to the ground, dead.

After learning of Lt. Casey's death, General Miles demanded the surrender of Plenty Horses, who was taken into custody and indicted for murder. A trial was held at Sioux Falls in April 1891. Plenty Horses, who had been educated at the Indian School at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, maintained that a state of war existed at the time of the shooting and thus his act of killing Casey was justified as an act of war. The case went to a jury that could not agree on a verdict. A second trial was held in May 1891. This time the presiding judge, in a directed verdict, ruled that a state of war did exist at the time of the shooting, that Lt. Casey was on a military mission to determine the location of an enemy camp, and that the shooting was therefore an act of war. Plenty Horses was released. Historians will note the similarities between the trials of Plenty Horses and Chief Leschi. Both men claimed that they had been acting in time of war and that their actions were thereby justified. The defense worked for Plenty Horses and not for Leschi.

In October 1890, Frederic Remington, the noted western artist, illustrator, and correspondent for *Harper's Weekly*, visited Fort Keogh. While there he painted an equestrian portrait of Lt. Casey. The picture was reproduced in the paper eleven days before the Lieutenant died. The original now hangs in the Remington Art Museum in Ogdensburg, New York.

Ned Casey's death shocked and saddened his many friends and admirers. He is remembered as a talented and popular young officer, whom Remington called "...an accomplished man; the best friend the Indians had; a man who did not know fear...he was a soldier from the ground up and for 7 miles on each side."

Edward Wanton Casey is interred along with his parents and siblings



Photo by J. C. H. Grabill

Plenty Horses (Senika-Wakan-Ota) was acquitted of the killing of Lt. Edward Wanton Casey in a second trial by the presiding judge on the grounds that it was justified as an act of war.

on the Casey family farm in Saunderson, Rhode Island. He never married. He was just forty years old when he died.

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Edward Casey *(from page 1)*

Social events, including balls, theatrical programs, and visits from townspeople were common. Time passed quickly for Ned.

1860 brought many changes to Fort Steilacoom. A new President would be elected and rumors of secession flew, testing the loyalties of officers and soldiers alike. Ned's older brother, Thomas, recently assigned to Fort Steilacoom himself, was preparing his engineers for war. Infantry training increased.

But all was not bleak. Ned's sister, Abby, was engaged to Captain Lewis Hunt and a wedding was to take place in the fall. Although ten year old Ned probably feigned disinterest, the family was excited as preparations for the happy occasion got underway. The wedding took place at the Casey home on November 28, 1860.

By 1861 the political situation had worsened. President Lincoln was inaugurated, South Carolina and other southern states seceded, and the Civil War began.

Col. Casey was on leave and en-route back east with his family when he learned of the Battle of Bull Run. He immediately changed course from New York to Washington City, where he terminated his leave. He was appointed Brigadier General of volunteers and ordered to relieve General Butler, who was in charge of organizing and training newly recruited soldiers. The Casey family took up residence in Washington.

Wartime Washington was a place of disorder and confusion. Soldiers were arriving and departing, preparations for defending the city were in progress, war supplies were arriving, and Confederate soldiers were just a few miles away in Virginia.

While all this was going on, Ned had more personal concerns. His father had been ordered to the front as a division commander in 1862. His older brothers, Thomas and Silas, were also in active service. Thomas, an engineer, was engaged in designing and constructing fortifications;



Courtesy U.S. Military Academy Archives

West Point commencement photo of Edward Wanton Casey, 1873.

Silas, a Navy officer, was patrolling the coast and performing blockade duties. Ned's brother-in-law, Lewis Hunt, was also serving as an Army officer.

After a defeat at the battle of Fair Oaks (one of the many engagements in the Peninsula Campaign), on May 31, 1862, Ned's father was relieved of his command and returned to his old duties of training new soldiers and officers appointed to command the newly established United States Colored Troops.

Prior to General Casey's departure on the Peninsula Campaign, young Ned's life changed forever. While attending a concert at Willard's Concert Hall, Ned's mother Abby suffered a stroke and died the next day.

Shortly after Abby Casey's death, her daughter Elizabeth, known as Bessie, was married to Gen. Casey's aide de camp, Lt. Robert Scott. The young couple had met at Fort Steilacoom and married shortly after Bessie's eighteenth birthday. Ned was almost 12 years old at the time. A year and a half later, Ned experienced yet another major change. His father fell in love with Florida Gordon, the daughter of Charles Gordon, a prominent Washington businessman. The two were married

on July 12, 1854, giving Ned a new step-mother, and soon a new baby sister as well. Her name was Julia.

The Civil War ended in 1865. Gen. Casey was nearing the end of his military career. Ned was growing into a fine young man and contemplating his future. Having grown up in a military family, and with a father and an older brother having graduated from the United States Military Academy, it was natural for Ned to consider a military career for himself. He applied and was granted admission to the West Point Class of 1873.

The West Point that Ned entered in July 1869 was far different from the West Point his father and even his brother attended. Post-Civil War, the Academy re-evaluated the curriculum, placing more emphasis on mathematics and the humanities. Military instruction was revised based on the lessons learned from the War. Most changes, however, were social. Cadets from the former Confederate states were welcomed and the first black cadet, James W. Smith, was appointed from South Carolina in 1870, one class behind Ned. Another cadet tradition, that of hazing, which was designed to build character, was expanded. The cadets themselves became more responsible for administering cadet life.

Ned's record at the Academy was "middle of the road," more like his father's than his brother Thomas'. Thomas had graduated first in his class. Ned graduated on July 1, 1873. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant of Infantry, assigned to the 22nd Infantry, and posted to Fort Sully (near present day Pierre) in the Dakotas. The 22nd Infantry had been reconstituted in 1866 and tasked with constructing several posts in the west. Fort Sully was located close to the Cheyenne River reservation and was responsible for maintaining peaceful relations between the Indians and local settlers.

When Casey arrived at his new post, his soldiers were recovering from several expeditions in pursuit

of the Sioux and Cheyenne in the Dakotas and along the Yellowstone River. Their life was about to change when Lt. Casey and his company were sent to Fort Gratiot in Michigan. Fort Gratiot had sad memories for the Casey family. Lt. Casey's parents had lost an infant son there.

No sooner had Lt. Casey's company arrived at Fort Gratiot when they received telegraphic orders to depart without delay for New Orleans. There was considerable unrest in that city caused by several organizations, the foremost among them known as the White League, a paramilitary group dedicated to removing "carpetbaggers" and black Republicans. An initial ten day deployment turned into an eight-month-long stay.

Following a short leave of absence, Ned Casey returned to Fort Gratiot, and later Fort Wayne, Michigan. News of the Custer massacre on the Little Big Horn, June 25, 1876, had reached the 22nd. Lt. Casey was ordered to the field to join in the pursuit of the Sioux. The expedition, commanded by General Terry, was guided by scout W.F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody. Indian trails were followed along the Rosebud, Tongue, and Powder rivers. These efforts were for naught and the campaign ended. Camp was established on the Tongue, near present day Miles City, Montana. It would later be called Fort Keogh.

In the spring of 1877, another expedition left the camp on the Tongue. Commanded by General Miles, the soldiers were in pursuit of Indians again, this time the Minneconjous led by Lame Deer. Guiding the expedition was Lt. Casey and his detachment of scouts. Lame Deer's camp was found, then overrun and surrounded by Casey's men, who captured a herd of 450 Indian ponies. Attempts by the Indians to take back the ponies failed. The infantry soldiers returned to their camp on the Tongue mounted instead of on foot.

The United States, and indeed most of the rest of the world, entered a period of economic depression in

1873. The causes were many, but for most people the causes did not matter. Perhaps the industry hardest hit was the railroads. Almost 25% of the nation's railroads failed. Those that survived did so by reducing workers' hours and cutting their wages, twice. This set off a general rail workers strike. Particularly hard hit by the strike were the Middle Atlantic states, especially Pennsylvania. Nothing moved. Fights broke out. State militias were activated. Many workers were killed or injured in conflicts with the militias. In 1877, President Hayes sent federal troops in to restore order. Lt. Casey was one of the soldiers sent to Pennsylvania. Moving from city to city, the Army suppressed the strikes and established peace in 45 days.

Casey was sent back to garrison duty at Fort Brady, Michigan, and then to Fort Gibson in the Indian Territory (Oklahoma). He participated in the Ute Expedition in Colorado, which resulted in the Utes moving onto reservations. He was then sent to Fort Clark, Texas. He was promoted to First Lieutenant in 1880.

In 1880, Lt. Casey was posted to West Point as an Assistant Instructor of Infantry Tactics. His father had published the Infantry Tactics manual that was used throughout the Civil War and for some years thereafter. But by 1880 technology had changed and the elder Casey's manual was out of date and no longer in use. Standard infantry rifles were now breach loaders and repeaters so the methods of rifle use in battle also changed. Lt. Casey was teaching the new methods.

Upon leaving West Point in 1884, Lt. Casey returned to duty on the frontier. He served at Fort Lewis, Colorado, and Fort Keogh, Montana. While at Fort Keogh, he requested and was given permission by the War Department to recruit a small company of Cheyenne scouts. They were designated Troop L, 8th cavalry, "Casey's Scouts." The recruits respected Lt. Casey and gave him the name of "Big Nose."

No one knows how it got started, but in the summer of 1890 there arose among many of the Sioux tribes a spiritual movement some call the "Messiah Craze." Its followers believed that a spirit would come to them, remove the white men from their lands, right the wrongs caused them by the whites, and restore the old ways. The people would live as they had before the white men came. Followers organized strange unnatural dances known as "ghost dances." One of the ghost dancers' beliefs was that they could not be hurt by the white men's bullets.

By fall, the Army and civil authorities were concerned that things were getting out of hand. The Indian agent at the Pine Ridge Reservation asked for assistance. Soldiers were deployed to the several Sioux reservations in response. It was the largest troop deployment since the Civil War. Under the command of generals Nelson Miles and John Brooke, the Army attacked a band of Sioux led by Big Foot, who were gathered on the Wounded Knee Creek not far from the Pine Ridge Reservation. The Indians' fire power was no match for the Army artillery and repeating rifles. One hundred and fifty Indians were killed, but some managed to escape. One of those was a young warrior named Plenty Horses (Senika-Wakan-Ota). This action became known as the massacre at Wounded Knee.

The Army pursued the scattered Indians to White Clay Creek. Lt. Casey set out January 7, 1891, with two of his scouts in an attempt to determine the Indians' location. They were met by a party of Sioux and a messenger from a chief named Red Cloud warning Casey not to proceed any further toward the camp. Plenty Horses was part of the Sioux party. Casey, through interpreters, exchanged friendly greetings, even shaking hands with the Indians. While the negotiations were taking place, Plenty Horses stealthily positioned himself behind Casey. He pulled out his Winchester rifle, which