

(W.T.I). Company E was sent to Fort Steilacoom in September 1862.

Recruiting in the territory increased and finally citizens responded. Company K, 1st W.T.I., was mustered into service at Fort Steilacoom late in 1862. They remained at the fort until mustered out in December 1865. Captain Egbert H. Tucker, the former Pierce County Sheriff, commanded the company.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas C. English, 1st W.T.I., replaced Major George W. Patten, 9th Infantry, as commander of Fort Steilacoom in October 1862.

Lieutenant Colonel English, formerly of the 9th Infantry, graduated from West Point in 1849. He was one of the original officers of the 9th Infantry when it was created in 1855, and was assigned to Fort Steilacoom. Like Lieutenant Colonel Casey, he volunteered to serve in the expanded Army, so was appointed second in command of the 1st W.T.I. and was returned to Fort Steilacoom.

Things had settled down at Fort Steilacoom. The Washington Territory Infantry garrisoned the fort, although from time to time augmented with volunteers from the 2nd California Infantry and 1st Oregon Cavalry.

In many northern states a secret society, called the Knights of the Golden Circle, arose in opposition to the federal government. Territorial Governor William Pickering was concerned that some of the "Knights" might be active in the territory and might even be trying for appointments in the territorial militia. He wrote to General Benjamin Alvord, Commander of the District of Oregon, asking if he had any knowledge of activities by this society. He had none. So far as he knew, Oregon and California, indeed the entire west coast, were overwhelmingly loyal.

Captain Tucker at Fort Steilacoom was not so sure. He expressed to General Alvord that he could be required to use soldiers to aid civil authorities in maintaining order. Additionally, he wanted authority to arrest supposed secessionists. Alvord

refused permission on both requests, stating, "I think he exaggerates the difficulties referred to."

Perhaps not. On December 30, 1863, the quarters occupied by Captain Tucker at Fort Steilacoom were destroyed by fire. Efforts to extinguish the flames were useless. The house and all of Tucker's possessions were consumed. Arson was suspected but never proven.

In September 1864 Major Calvin H. Rumrill, 1st W.T.I. replaced Lieutenant Colonel English as commander of Fort Steilacoom.

Major Rumrill had just settled into his new duties at Fort Steilacoom when he was called to investigate an expected outbreak among the Snohomish Indians over the sale of liquor. A man named Riley, the supposed seller, had killed one of the Indians. Rumrill and his detachment arrested Riley. Fearing an uprising, Major Rumrill requested an increase in the fort's complement, but there were no men to spare. The Major had to make do with what he had.

The question of fortifying Point Defiance once again was raised in 1864. General Alvord wrote to Territorial Delegate George Cole strongly recommending Congress appropriate funds to do so. This time land in Gig Harbor was included. Alvord also wanted two ironclad warships assigned to defend Puget Sound. Nothing came of the request.

Technology had reached Washington Territory. On September 7, 1864, Governor Pickering dispatched the first telegram to President Lincoln. The Territory was now joined instantly with the rest of the country.

Those soldiers who had originally joined the 1st W.T.I. in 1862 were nearing the end of their three-year enlistments. They needed replacing. General Alvord asked Oregon's governor, Addison Gibbs, to recruit a new regiment to replace the departing volunteers. The replacement regiment, 1st Oregon Volunteer Infantry, was organized in November 1864.

In December, Captain Tucker's company at Fort Steilacoom was ordered to the Tulalip Indian Reservation where they would be under the supervision of the Indian agent there. Company F, 1st Oregon Volunteer Infantry, under Captain Clark P. Crandall replaced them at Fort Steilacoom.

By the spring of 1865 the Civil War was closing. General Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was entrenched at Petersburg and other Confederate armies were near defeat. Lee's army surrendered at Appomattox Court House in April; General Johnson's shortly thereafter. The war was over.

Also in 1865, Fort Steilacoom, being necessary to the defense of Puget Sound, was made a permanent U.S. Army installation despite Major General Henry W. Halleck's recommendation that it be abandoned as "useless." General Halleck got his wish. In 1868 Fort Steilacoom was closed.

Fort Steilacoom had served the country well, helped to preserve the peace, to defend settlers, served as a center of culture in the wilderness, and as a training ground for many army officers. It constituted an American presence when the British dominated the Northwest. Even though in the words of Lieutenant August Kautz "...nothing transpired worthy of note..." Fort Steilacoom served the country well. For this it should be remembered.

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Fort Steilacoom

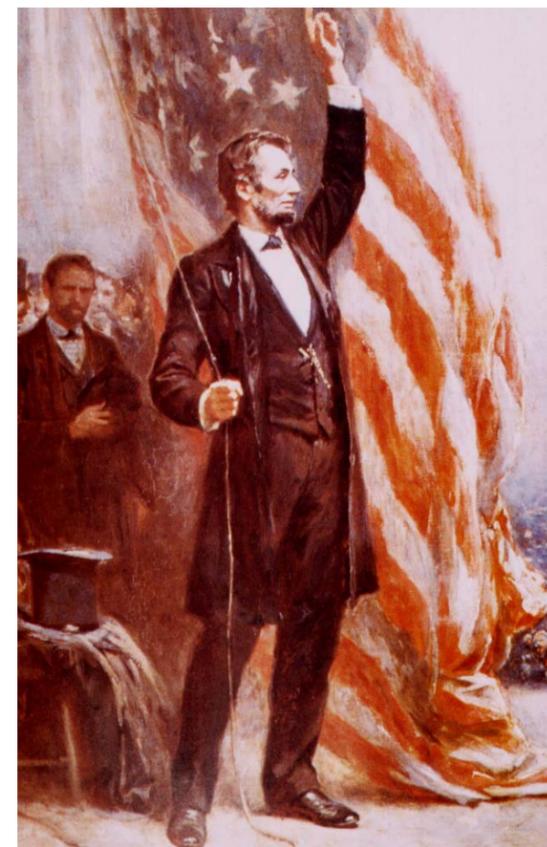
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Fort Steilacoom, Washington

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Civil War Brings Changes to Fort Steilacoom

by Kenneth A. Morgan



Painting by Ferris

Abraham Lincoln takes office as president of a troubled nation.

By the summer of 1860 most people in the country knew the political situation was in turmoil. John Brown had been hung the previous December for his attempted take over of the Federal Arsenal in Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Brown wanted to steal arms to support a slave rebellion, but he was captured by a detachment of Marines commanded by Colonel Robert E.

Party was a national one and did not just represent northern interests, and that if the party could not stop slavery where it exists, it must fight to prevent its expansion. Lincoln was nominated.

The Democrats were split. They fielded three candidates, John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky, John Bell of Tennessee, and Stephen Douglas also of Illinois.

Lee. Ironically, Secretary of War John Floyd, a Virginian, was discreetly transferring the very arms that Brown was after to several armories in the south. They might be needed there in the future.

The country was preparing for an election, perhaps the most important one in its history. The outcome could determine the solution to an insoluble problem that existed since colonial days. The problem, of course, was slavery. Both major political parties, Republicans and Democrats, were seeking candidates and developing their positions on the question.

The Republican forerunner, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, had delivered a speech at Cooper Union in New York the previous February. His speech asserted three points: the federal government could regulate slavery in the territories, the Republican

Lincoln did not even appear on the ballot in southern states, except for Virginia, and was elected with 40% of the popular vote and 180 electoral votes. The south was furious. Voices of secession were heard.

All of this did not go unnoticed at Fort Steilacoom. Many of the officers and soldiers subscribed to *Harper's Weekly* and to *Leslie's Illustrated News*. Local papers such as the *Pioneer and Democrat* also kept them informed. One can imagine the discussions taking place in the parlors and barracks rooms. Changes were coming to Fort Steilacoom.

Soldiers at the fort were still concerned with Indian problems. In January 1861 Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey advised General Albert Sidney Johnson, commander of the Pacific, that settlers were being killed along the Muckleshoot River and that his two infantry companies should be augmented in anticipation of operations against the hostiles. The garrison was not reinforced.

Action against the Indians was not the only action anticipated. Captain Thomas Casey of the engineers turned his attention away from surveying and road construction to skills needed should the engineers be called east. In April they were. Casey was ordered to report to West Point, while his detachment was called to Alcatraz Island to await further orders. Casey's second in command, E. Porter Alexander, was allowed to resign his U.S. Army commission.

In April 1861 President Lincoln, in response to the secession of several southern states, requested that the

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President's Message



My Fellow Historians, just wanted to let you know about a couple of past events that Fort Steilacoom has held since my last report.

April 17th we held our Swap Meet and Display. This is something that our past president Gideon Pete had started a few years ago, and John McPherson and I have taken over. We rented tables to our sellers for \$10 per table (\$5 for sellers in some sort of historical military or civilian attire). We also had some good displays set up to represent different periods in our military history. We made \$60 in table rentals, and we had a total of 17 Living Historians in period attire. Some sellers made money on sales, and others broke even, but a great time was had by all.

On April 30th Fort Steilacoom hosted a School Day. There were American Civil War and American Revolutionary War (2nd Conn. Militia) reenactors to talk with the children. There were also tours of the fort buildings and a magic lantern show set up. The event was attended by about 90 children and adults.

May 1st and 2nd Fort Steilacoom was open to the public for our open



Soldier demonstrates camp life of the 1860s at Fort Steilacoom's Living History Day on May 1 and 2. Many visitors attended the event.

house. The buildings were staffed by our volunteers, who talked with our guests as they came to visit. We also had volunteers staffing our gift shop and giving tours. Many visitors had never been at the fort before, and others were return visitors. Many said that we were doing a great job of presenting the history of the fort.

I would like to say in closing, Thank You! to all of our volunteers—both the Living Historians and the fine folk who ran the gift shop at these events.

Lawrence Bateman

New at the Fort

Thank you to those who have donated gifts of time and historical items to the fort. Recent donors are:

Lou Dunkin who gave a three volume set of W. P. Bonney's *Pierce County Washington*, some photos and a scrapbook of 1800s furniture.

John Roten developed a large display of carpenter's hand tools that may be seen in Quarters 3.

Bernie Bateman is repainting the wooden floors in Quarters 2.

Beverly Bills gifted four of her drawings of the fort quarters as they appeared in the 1980s.

Beth Julian donated funds to repair the melodian she gave. **Greg Bonson** spent many hours refurbishing the instrument.

Emmy Lou Lyle donated the rare book *Captain John Mullan: His Life, Building the Mullan Road*.



Wild thorn roses planted by Arnold Stern in the 1980s. These roses would have been similar to what might have been at the fort over a hundred years earlier.

Civil War Changes (from p. 1)

loyal states furnish 75,000 militia to defend the union.

Fort Sumter was fired upon. The war no one wanted, but everyone knew would happen sooner or later, began. Lincoln called upon the states for an additional 300,000 volunteers.

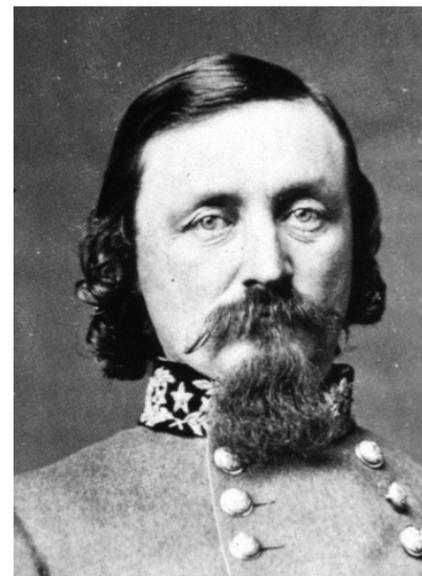
Organizing a country for war takes time. This was especially true during the Civil War. The U.S. Army of 16,000 pre-war soldiers was greatly expanded in response to President Lincoln's proclamation. Supplies and equipment were needed. The new soldiers needed training.

Lieutenant Colonel Casey had taken a leave of absence and was enroute east when news of the war reached him. He canceled his leave, reported to Washington City, and was appointed Brigadier General of Volunteers, charged with training new soldiers. He never returned to Fort Steilacoom. The fort was placed under the command of Captain Dickinson Woodruff, Company D, 9th U.S. Infantry.

At Fort Steilacoom and other west coast forts and camps, soldiers were on the move. The 4th U.S. Infantry was ordered consolidated in San Francisco, there to await transportation to New York. Several companies of the 9th U.S. Infantry were relocated to different posts.

Captain Hunt's Company C of the 4th was relieved from Camp Pickett. Camp Chehalis was abandoned. Military stores were ordered transported to Fort Steilacoom aboard the *USS Massachusetts*. Captain Thomas C. English's Company H, 9th Infantry, was to replace the garrison on the San Juan Islands. When English arrived, Captain Pickett was allowed to resign his U.S. Army commission.

In response to President Lincoln's call for volunteers, young men on the west coast, eager to "see the elephant" in the east, were ready to join up. Many did; many were disappointed. With the exception of a small group of Californians, known as the California 100, part of the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry, all served in



George Pickett resigned his commission and went to the South.

the various western posts vacated by the U.S. Army. Fort Steilacoom was among those posts.

The first of the volunteers to serve at Fort Steilacoom was Company E, 4th California Infantry. The company was organized in Placer County and entered federal service in October 1861. It was sent to Washington Territory, first to Fort Vancouver, then to Fort Steilacoom. It remained until October 1862. Captain John C. Crowninshield was in command.

In June 1861 Colonel George Wright, commander of the 9th Infantry, requested that the Department of the Pacific establish a battery of artillery at Point Defiance. Thomas Casey had recommended the site the previous year. Wright suggested that the guns from the *Massachusetts* be used. No action was taken on the recommendation.

In April 1862 Captain Woodruff was relieved of command at Fort Steilacoom and replaced by Major George W. Patten. Major Patten was also charged with general supervision of all the posts in the Puget Sound region, including those abandoned by the Army.

Major Patten was to investigate alleged improprieties at Port Townsend. Washington Territorial gover-

nor William Pickering received reports that the captain, a Lieutenant Wilson, of the Revenue Cutter *Shubrick* had loaded his cannon with exploding shell and threatened to fire on the town, destroying every house there. Also alleged was that all the records from the U.S. Customs house had been conveyed to the *Shubrick* by the customs officer, Victor Smithy. A warrant was issued for the arrest of both gentlemen. The *Shubrick* sailed to Olympia where a civil investigation was conducted. Soldiers at Fort Steilacoom prepared to respond, but military action was not required.

Many citizens of Washington Territory were appalled at being protected by soldiers from California. Something must be done. It soon was.



William H. Wallace

At the request of the former governor and current territorial delegate to Congress, William H. Wallace, the War Department authorized the raising of a regiment from the territory. Colonel Justice Steinberger was appointed mustering officer. Unfortunately, his effort bore little fruit.

Colonel Steinberger went where he knew he could get volunteers—California! Several companies were raised at Alcatraz Island and sent to the territory. Perhaps the citizens wouldn't respond, but they were being defended at least in name by the 1st Washington Territorial Infantry