

Martha Summerhill continues her narrative:

“We began to really know our Colonel (General August V. Kautz). (He was) a man of strong convictions and abiding honesty, a soldier who knew his profession thoroughly, having not only achieved the distinction in the Civil War, but having served, when little more than a boy, in the Mexican War of 1846. Genial in his manners, brave and kind, he was beloved by all.

“The three Kautz children, Frankie, Austin, and Navarra, were the inseparable companions of our own children, Harry and Katharine. There was a small school for the children on the post, and a soldier by the name of Delany was schoolmaster. He tried hard to make our children learn, but they did not wish to study, and spent all their spare time planning tricks to be played upon poor Delany.... Finally, the two oldest Kautz children were sent East to boarding school....”

Retirement

August Valentine Kautz was appointed Commander of the Department of Columbia in Vancouver, Washington, in July 1891 and retired from the Army there in 1892. He then moved with his wife to Seattle.

Kautz and his wife Fannie purchased Day Island in Tacoma as a long-term investment. He first saw the island when stationed at Fort Steilacoom in 1853. According to Marcia Willoughby Tucker in her book *Day Island, A glimpse of the Past* (Rhodendron Press, 1997):

“Shortly after arriving at Fort Steilacoom, Kautz, Dr. John M. Haden, the Fort’s surgeon, and Edmond Starling, the Indian agent, boarded an open launch and started up the Sound on an expedition. Kautz’s diary for May 23, 1853, mentioned they stopped at Day Island for lunch. Kautz described Day Island as ‘a beautiful piece of land covered by impenetrable forest.’”

But August Kautz died on September 4, 1895, at the age of 69 in Seattle, and Day Island was left to



Courtesy Marcia Tucker

Dixon Kautz, second from left, had this cabin built on his uncle August’s Day Island property, enjoying it while Fannie decided what to do with the island.



Washington State Historical Society

Fannie who didn’t know what to do with it.

Kautz’s nephew Dixon Kautz, son of August’s brother George, heard about the island and came out west from Ohio to Tacoma and had a cabin built on Day Island at a cost of \$42. While he enjoyed it, Fanny was responsible for property taxes, which she didn’t have money to pay. So she mortgaged the island for a large sum hoping to sell it for enough to cover the loan and other expenses. For

that story, read Marcia Tucker’s book cited above.

In 1903 Fannie and her daughters returned to live in Prescott, Arizona, for a time. She again became active in local theater. Afterwards she lived with her son’s family in Washington D.C. and died at the home of one of her daughters in New Jersey on August 11, 1913, at the age of 65. Fannie is buried with her husband at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

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August Valentine Kautz Family Charlotte and Fannie

by Carol Stout

August Valentine Kautz was born in Germany on January 5, 1828. Shortly thereafter the family, including close relatives, emigrated to America and settled on land previously purchased in Ohio.

When he grew up, August Kautz had a long career in the United States Army. He graduated from West Point Military Academy in 1852, serving in many places, including Fort Steilacoom, and later as a General in the Civil War. He retired from active service on January 5, 1892, in Vancouver, Washington.

While at Fort Steilacoom, Kautz had a common law relationship with “Kitty” an Indian woman and daughter of Quiemuth. She gave him two sons, Nugent and Augustus. (See “Indian Family of August V. Kautz” by Carol Neufeld, V14 N4, Winter 1997.) Afterwards he married twice; first to Charlotte Todd in 1865 and next to Fannie Markbreit in 1872. This article will cover the period of these two marriages.

Charlotte Todd

Shortly after Kautz came back to Ohio with the Ohio Calvary in December 1862, he was invited to dinner and a reception at the home of Governor David Todd. Kautz noticed one of his daughters. Charlotte was very pretty and he commented afterward that “I managed to fall in love with her.”

Kautz later proposed marriage to her. However, it was a long engagement, as her mother, Maria Todd,



Charlotte Todd Kautz

had a dislike of Kautz, “this bookish, boring Army officer.” She convinced Charlotte to delay the marriage. Finally, in 1865, after he had served as a member of the Military Commission for the assassins of President Lincoln, Kautz received a letter from Charlotte asking him to visit her at Briar Hill so that they could make arrangements for the wedding, which occurred on September 14, 1865. They lived in Governor Todd’s home until Kautz was transferred to the Military Division of The Gulf at New Orleans in March 1866.

On April 14, 1868, Kautz noted in his journal that Charlotte was disturbed, sick and would not eat. She had vomiting, and had stomach pains off and on. Kautz asked family members to come. Charlotte’s mother and



Fannie Markbreit Kautz

Dr. Woodbridge arrived. Later, with three doctors attending, Charlotte was diagnosed with typhoid.

On June 2, Charlotte called for her husband and made a beautiful prayer about 5 p.m. ending with “Oh Father, Father, come!” She lapsed into a coma and died the next day at 8 p.m. Charlotte was buried at Briar Hill in Columbus, Ohio, on June 9, 1868. Kautz remained with his in-laws for a week before returning to Washington D.C.

Fannie Markbreit

Fannie Markbreit was born in Baden-Baden, Germany in 1849, having the same national origin as August V. Kautz, but 21 years younger than him. They were married at Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1872. Kautz was at the Newport Barracks Depot in Kentucky

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President's Message



Daylight Savings Time! Spring is already upon us, the trees are in bloom, and like any good Army Post, Fort Steilacoom is stirring from its winter lethargy and readying itself for the coming campaign season.

We have a full and exciting schedule this year. Most of you can easily view this schedule online at the HFSA's website. Your HFSA officers know, however, that some of our members do not have access to a computer, or may find searching the web just a bit daunting. If this might be the case, please allow me to take a few lines to detail our coming summer events.

On Memorial Day, which is Sunday, May 27th, the Museum will begin it's summer schedule and be open every Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m.

On Saturday, June 16th, we will perform our annual public service, in conjunction with the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, of properly disposing of any American flag that has become too weather worn to display. We encourage anyone who



Dr. Russell D. Hicks, in his Civil War surgeon's uniform, presented the March 18 program on "Veterans of the Civil War and PTSD."

has a flag that they might want to dispose of, to bring it to the Fort that day for a dignified retirement through burning. Flags may also be brought to the museum any time throughout the year.

The Fourth of July will find us set up with a trade booth in front of the Town Hall in Steilacoom. If you have never been to the Town of Steilacoom for their 4th of July bash, you have really been missing out. Their parade and craft fair are something right out of a Norman Rockwell painting, a real bit of true Americana.

Later that month, on Saturday, the 14th, the museum is hosting an open house, with living historians onsite to lead tours and answer any questions you might have concerning life at a nineteenth century Army frontier fort.

No events are presently scheduled for August, but come September 22nd we host the Smithsonian's national, Museum Day Live, event. That day, participating museums nationwide will waive admission, and everybody gets in free! From 10 to 4 p.m., Living Historians will have several displays set up to demonstrate various aspects of the frontier army life shared by the men and women of old Fort Steilacoom. This would be a perfect time for all students, scouts,

and homeschoolers to come out to the Fort! You just can't beat – FREE!

Other plans in the works call for a revamped and revitalized website, the possibility of being able to utilize credit cards for membership and purchases in the Gift Shop, and at least two new interpretive displays.

Come on out to YOUR fort, and see what's happening! You will be glad you did.

Gideon

Next Event:



BOOK SALE & Open House Fort Steilacoom
 Saturday April 14, 2018
 Qtrs. 2 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Kautz Family (con. from page 1) from May 28, 1872, until November of 1873, where their son Austin was born, then to Fort Garland, Colorado, in 1874. In August of that year Kautz was transferred to Fort Whipple, Prescott, Arizona Territory. They lived in General Crook's home. Their daughter, Francesca (aka Frances and Frankie) Kautz, was born in April, 1875.

According to a biographical sketch by Sylvia Neely, Fannie was quite a socialite with gifts in dramatics, singing and painting. She eagerly took part in the social events at the fort, attending "night hops, suppers, card parties and musical soirees and flirted harmlessly with the young men in attendance, expecting to be the center of attraction." She gathered together officers and their wives and put on plays in a make-shift theatre in General Cook's club room.

(<http://www.sharlot.org>)

"In January 1877 they built a new theater in the Headquarters Building with 200 seats and a 32-foot wide stage. For the first time a \$1.00 fee was charged to cover the cost of the improvements. Townspeople attended faithfully. Most of the plays were light comedies. Everyone who wanted to, talented or not (even the General) got to participate, to the delight of audiences. A Tucson newspaper took a swipe at General Kautz, saying that he didn't kill many Indians, but he murdered every role he ever played."

(<https://dcourier.com/news/2016/apr/24/> ...)

Fannie also had a soft heart for charities, organizing a musical benefit for the widows and orphans of Custer's "last stand" and benefit performances for the hospital established by the Sisters of Charity and the new Prescott Library.

When General Kautz and his family were transferred to Angel Island, California, in 1878, the people of Prescott expressed their admiration of Fannie: "Mrs. Kautz, by her genial and kind disposition, ladylike deportment, magnificent hospitality and open heartedness in assisting in



Fannie gathered together officers and their wives and put on plays in General Cook's club house (above). Later a new theater with a big stage and 200 seats was built and attracted a faithful audience of townspeople.

every good work of charity as well as amusement, has won for herself the hearty good will and esteem of this community."

At Angel Island they were in the company of Martha and Major John Summerhayes. Martha writes of her experiences there:

"...The flowers ran riot in our garden, fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh fish, and all the luxuries of that marvelous climate were brought to our door.

"...On the Island, we had music and dancing, as it was the headquarters of the regiment. Mrs. Kautz, so brilliant and gay, held grand court here—receptions, military functions, lawn tennis, bright uniforms, were the order of the day.

"...General and Mrs. Kautz entertained so hospitably, and were so beloved by all. Together Mrs. Kautz and I read the German classics, and went to the German theatre.... Friedrich Haase, from the Royal Theatre of Berlin came to San Francisco. We never missed a performance, and when the tour was over, Mrs. Kautz gave a lawn party at Angel Island for him.... I well remember how the sun shown that day."

(Martha Summerhayes, *Vanished Arizona*) (Also see "Glittering Misery, the Army life of the Kautz and Summerhayes Families," by Carol Neufeld, Vol. 17 N1 Spring 2000.)

Navarra Kautz, the youngest daughter, was born in 1880 while the family was still at Angel Island.

In 1883 Kautz took a leave of absence. After spending some time with family in Ohio, he agreed to Fannie's pleas to take a long delayed trip to Europe. He had previously visited there in 1859-1860 after leaving Fort Steilacoom and just prior to the Civil War.

The Kautz and Summerhayes families teamed up again at Fort Lowell in Arizona—a forbidding place in the desert. Favorite pastimes were driving to Tucson where they made a few acquaintances, riding on horseback, and singing to the accompaniment of Mrs. Kautz's guitar with their Tucson friends on the Kautz piazza. Thankfully, their stay there in 1886 was short.

But both families were then sent to Fort Niobrara a "freezing place away up north in Nebraska...where the snow lay already on the brown and barren hills...."

(Continued next page)