

FORT CLARK, TEX. (1852-61 and 1866-1944)

Two companies, C and E, of the 1st Infantry, under command of Capt. Joseph H. La Motte, occupied the lands about the Las Moras Spring for a camp on June 29, 1852, under orders from Headquarters, Department of Texas, as a guard for the San Antonio and Eagle Pass wagon road and for the protection of the Rio Grande Border against depredations by Mexicans and Indians. The new post was first designated Fort Riley, in compliment to Col. Riley of the 1st Infantry, but at that officer's suggestion the name was changed to Fort Clark, by orders dated July 15, 1852, in honor of Maj. John B. Clark, 1st Infantry, who died during the Mexican War.

Occupation of the post was continuous until March 19, 1861, when the garrison left the fort in obedience to Special Orders No. 44, Headquarters, Department of Texas, March 8, 1861. Three companies of Texas troops occupied the buildings for a time, but as the post was remote from the scene of Civil War hostilities it was soon abandoned.

After the return of peace reoccupation of the post was decided upon, in view of the demands of the cattle interests of the surrounding district for protection against the Lipan, Kickapoo, and other Mexican Indians, who frequently crossed the border and raided the isolated settlements. Its second occupation by United States forces dates from December 12, 1866, to May 22, 1944, when it was abandoned.

Records. 1870-1943. 4 ft.

Although there are fragments of the document file for 1896, the bulk of the records pertain to the post hospital, including registers of patients and consolidated returns of the medical department, 1884-93; morning reports of the sick and wounded, 1871-74; sanitary reports, including morning reports of sick and wounded, 1910-13; post surgeon's registers of letters received and endorsements, 1896-1907; post surgeon's letters sent, 1871-81 (includes endorsements) and 1896-1906; and surgeon's endorsements, 1894-96. In addition there are copies of certificates of disability for discharge, 1889-1905, and hospital corps registers of noncommissioned officers and records of enlisted men, 1881-1906. Other records include a record of interments in the post cemetery, 1870-1943; a historical record of the post grounds and buildings, ca. 1920-41 (includes buildings of United States Army Airport, Dryden, Tex.); orders and memoranda, 1913-18; sick reports, 1918-19; and copies of letters sent by the subsistence officer, 1893-95.