

Frontier Army Museum

Black cavalryman caring for colonel's horse



Frontier Army Museum

Black cavalryman training a horse at Fort Leavenworth

Sergeant Robinson: That was a month, wasn't it?

Mr. Brown: Yes, fifteen dollars a month. I'm rich now, you see. I kept doing that for a while. I got along just fine with all the people. They switched me to different places—went around to different places. While I was going there, [I found] that the officers really didn't run the Army. Their wives did. Any time I got in trouble, it was always one of their wives that got me out of trouble. So, I found that out.

In the meantime, I had worked for majors before I ever came in the Army, and I stayed with them. The one that swore me in, I worked for him. He lived down in Leavenworth, downtown. He kept telling me how nice it was in the Army. I could get in the Army and go up, you know, and it would be nice. Well, I thought it would be nice too.

But I got there, and it seemed like I was just standing still too long. I kept asking the sergeant, "Why can't I get a rating or something?" He said, "Well, the ratings are froze in the 10th Cavalry."

Captain Knapp: That is, promotions in the 10th Cavalry were frozen.

Mr. Brown: Yes, they were stopped right there. I said, "Well, don't look like I'm going to do any good here, so I'm going to have to hunt some place else to go." As far as the men in the service, I got along fine with them. We had a nice time. I boxed. I had a lot of fun boxing. I had a lot of fun training some of the other guys, you know. But that wasn't making me any money. At that time, it might sound different, I was kind of money hungry. I was greedy. I wanted more all the time.

Captain Knapp: More than twenty-one dollars a month.

Mr. Brown: Yes, I got up to thirty dollars. When I got my fifteen regular pay, cause they took out so much, then I got the fifteen dollars for striking. That gave me thirty dollars. I went on thirty dollars there for a while, you know, like that. I thought that was pretty good. But I said, "I'd like to be a PFC, a private first class, then go on up to a corporal," just like the major and them told me you could do. I couldn't do that. So, I said, "Well, I'm just going to get out." Someone asked me, "Why do you want to get out of the Army? The Army's the best place for you. You get fed. You know that when you came in here you were hungry."

I said, "No. When I came in here, I wasn't hungry because I was working for officers and they were eating good. I wasn't hungry." I got out. Well, before I ever came in the Army, I could cook. I cooked for private families. I ran cattle. I did a lot of things before I ever came in the Army. I thought, well, I'd get out and go back to some of those old deals, which I did. I went back to cooking in Kansas City and got other jobs that paid a little bit more than I was getting in the Army. Of course, I had to buy my own clothes and food and everything like that. As far as the Army, the Army is all right. I liked the Army—if they would advance me a little bit, just give me a little something to satisfy me for a while.

Captain Knapp: Let's ask Mr. Hollowell. Mr. Hollowell, you were a troop clerk and a recruiting sergeant. Mr. Brown is talking about the promotions being frozen. What caused that?

Mr. Hollowell: I think the Department of the Army allocated certain amounts of money for the administration, for the administrators to take care of paying the troops and running the operation on the post. Of course, if they only allocated a certain amount of spaces and a certain amount of monies, then the regimental commander can't authorize any more money for the various grades or any more promotions than what his allocation has been from the Department of the Army.

Captain Knapp: I know that one of your interests is in keeping track of and knowing about some men who served in the 10th Cavalry and went on to do other things later in life. Some of them made really significant contributions to this country. Why don't you tell us about some of those.

Mr. Hollowell: Some of the more famous personalities that were associated with the 10th Cavalry, I would list, perhaps, General B. O. Davis and his son—that is, B. O. Davis Jr. and B. O. Davis Sr. B. O. Davis Sr. was the 4th Brigade commander, which included both the 9th and 10th Cavalry when the regiment reassembled at Fort Riley in 1940. General Davis' son eventually became a lieutenant general in the Air Force. I think he still lives at this time.

Another officer who became famous, at least from what he was when he was in the 10th Cavalry, was Leander L. Doan. Doan was my squadron commander as a major. I met him in Okinawa, and he had the rank of major general.



National Archives

Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis Sr.



10th Cavalry Yearbook, 1941

Major Leander L. Doan

I also met Peter C. Haynes, who was Mr. Brown's troop commander in the later thirties. He was a captain. I met him in Okinawa when he was the Army IG [inspector general] with the rank of major general.

General John P. Willey was my troop commander, I think, in approximately 1939 as a captain. Overseas, he had Chinese and American troops taking them up the Ledo Road to build a road so as to get the Allied troops into Burma. His rank was brigadier general.

Captain Charles Reed was my troop commander. I learned that he became a major general.

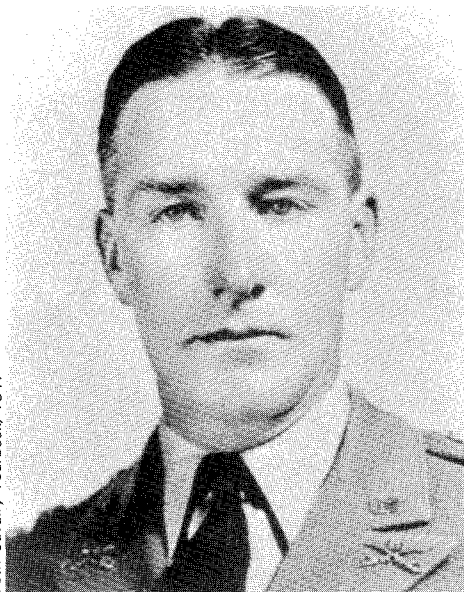
Major General Peter C. Haynes and Mr. Hollowell at Fort Leavenworth in the early 1960s



Harry H. Hollowell collection



Brigadier General John P. Willey



10th Cavalry Yearbook, 1941

Major Charles H. Reed

The regimental commander at the time I was here at Fort Leavenworth was Colonel P. R. Davison. His son became a major general and the commandant of Fort Leavenworth between the period of the 1960s and 1970s.



10th Cavalry Yearbook, 1941

Colonel Paul R. Davison

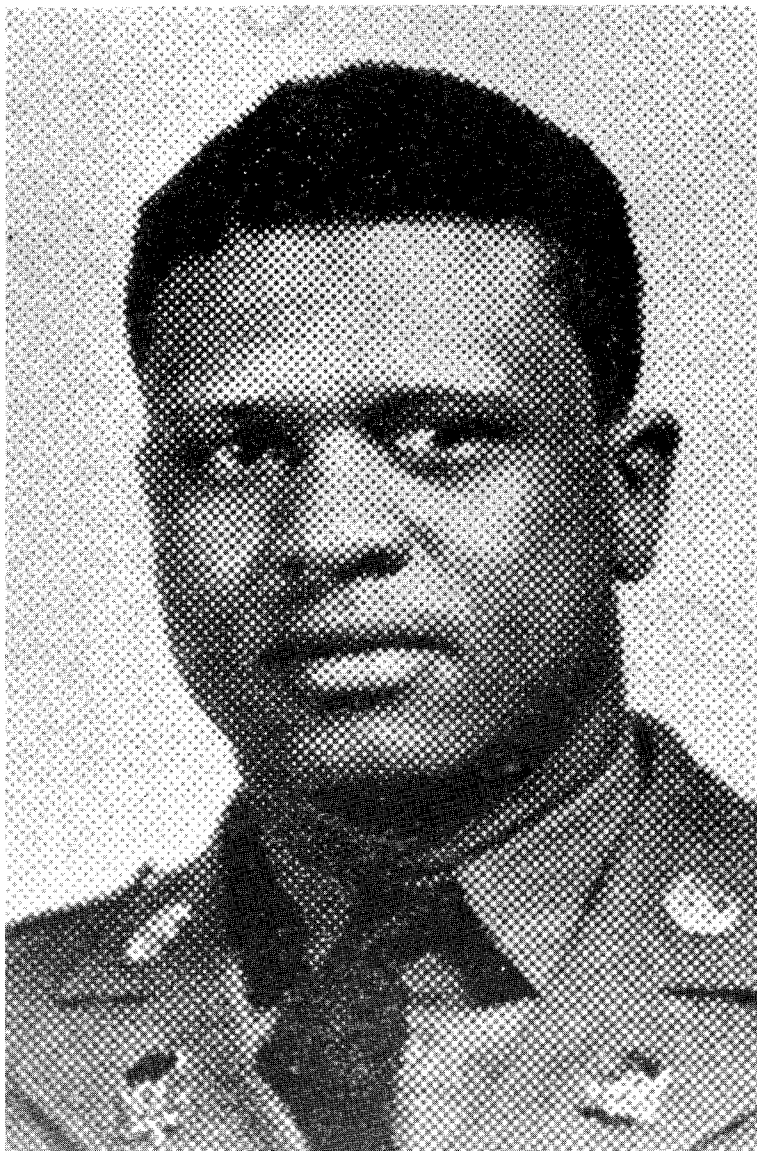
The 10th Cavalry, during the Second World War, members that is, members of the 10th Cavalry, who enlisted as private soldiers . . . a number of them became commissioned officers. Alfred Johnson became a lieutenant colonel.



10th Cavalry Yearbook, 1941

Corporal Alfred Johnson

Irvin McHenry was a private soldier about the time that I came in. He retired a lieutenant colonel.



10th Cavalry Yearbook, 1941

Staff Sergeant Irvin McHenry

Randall Royston was a private soldier along with me, retired as a major.



10th Cavalry Yearbook 1941

Staff Sergeant William R. Royston