

## The Historic Side of Archaeology.

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In recent months there has been a growing interest in the historic resources contained on Fort Hood lands. These resources include historical archaeological sites and standing historic structures, some dating as early as the mid 19th century. The approximately 220,000 acres of land that make up the post was once dotted with small communities. In 1942 the federal government purchased the land that became Fort Hood from farmers and ranchers that lived in the area. Little remains to remind us of these early communities, farms, and ranches except for scattered artifacts, an occasional foundation or building, and the stories told by “old timers” who remember what the area was like before the 1940’s. Also of importance are a number of structures built by the military in the 1940’s, as Fort Hood was being established. Many of these buildings are still in use today.

Historical markers, commemorating important sites, buildings, or people can be found throughout Fort Hood. Of particular note is the Hiram B. Reynolds property, located in Walker Village just off of 8th Street. Reynolds was born in 1858 in Tennessee, and moved to Texas in 1866 with his parents. The family established a farm in Sparta; a community now absorbed into Fort Hood lands. As an adult, Reynolds was a prominent investor and businessman who owned stores in Belton and Nolanville. He was also a successful cotton broker and invested in several farms in the area.

In 1915 he built a fine home for him and his family on one of their farms, where they raised corn, cotton, and livestock. The house was an impressive two-story structure with five bedrooms, living and dining areas, a kitchen, butler’s pantry, and storage space. The home also contained carbide lighting and a bathroom; two features that would have been considered luxuries rather than necessities by many of the Reynolds’ neighbors. Hiram B. Reynolds died in 1929, but members of the Reynolds family continued to live in the house until 1942. The Hiram B. Reynolds home is the only surviving example of the hundreds of farm and ranch houses acquired by the U.S. government when Fort Hood was established. The house was remodeled in 1954, and has served as a residence for numerous commanding officers stationed at Fort Hood.



Who manages and protects the important historical sites contained on Fort Hood? The answer to this question is twofold. One answer would be you. Your appreciation and respect for these sites helps to preserve them for future generations. However, the Cultural Resource Management office (CRM) of the Department of Public Works, Environmental Division, carries out the day to day protection of these sites. The CRM archaeologists work with the Army to ensure that important sites, both historic and prehistoric, are not damaged during training maneuvers and construction projects. A variety of federal laws require that archaeological and historical sites on federal property be identified and protected. Failure to obey these laws can result in fines and imprisonment.

What should you do if you think you see an archaeological site somewhere on post? First and foremost, do not disturb anything! Do not pick up any artifacts from the ground surface. Artifacts can include broken glass and dishes, machine parts, building materials, arrowheads (projectile points), animal bones, and shells. If you are able to mark the location of the site on a map, please do so. Try to be as precise as

possible. Then, contact the Cultural Resource Management office and tell one of the archaeologists what you found. The CRM office number is 287-1092, and is located in Building 4249 on the corner of 78<sup>th</sup> Street and Warehouse Street.

The history and archaeology of the Fort Hood lands is varied and fascinating. If you would like to learn more about archaeology and the Cultural Resource Management Program at Fort Hood please stop by the Earth Day Display in the West Atrium of the III Corps and Fort Hood Headquarters Building (Building 1001) on April 21<sup>st</sup>. The display will be set up from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., and the archaeologists will be available to talk with you and answer your questions. The display will include artifacts collected from different sites on post, and information highlighting historical sites and commemorative markers. If you are interested in the historical context of the Fort Hood lands, the information will soon be available on CD and posted on the web. An oral history project is also being planned to begin in the near future. If you or someone you know have stories about the Fort Hood lands prior to 1942 (when the federal government established the post), please contact the Cultural Resource Management office at 287-1092.