"The Pleasures of Female Society" at Cantonment Leavenworth

by Daniel D. and Marilyn Irvin Holt

CANTONMENT LEAVENWORTH—in the minds of many the name alone creates images of adventure, glory, and romance. To those who served in the frontier outposts, there was perhaps internal romance and dangerous adventure, but glory only to those who beheld it later. The men no doubt were adventuresome or they could not have survived; but for the women, life there was more than adventure. It was foreign to their nineteenth-century culture; it was a lonely, risky, and subsistence way of living demonstrating that they, too, served.1

How women served on the western frontier—their roles, their attitudes—has been examined, but generally such studies have either focused on the early 1800s and the roles of minority women as determined by white male frontier society or have concentrated on the 1840s and the first major white migration of men, women, and children beyond the Mississippi. The study of women at military outposts, indeed of women in what was at one time the frontier of the Midwest, has been largely ignored. Historian Milo M. Quaife early recognized this loss when he observed in 1919 that this pioneer history was “written by men and from the masculine point of view” and that “the interests, the labors, the ideals, and achievements of the gentler half of society are taken for granted or left to the imagination.” 2

The “gentler half” did, however, leave a record of their lives on the fringes of settlement, and all too often their personal accounts present a dim view, distracting the possibility that they could continue “ac-customed habits of life.” One woman wrote in 1819 that the “habitation will strike terror in some” and observed: “I think I never realized the necessity of a life of preparation more.” 3 Another woman wrote that the frontier in 1822 was a “strange experience,” the retrospect of which was “preferable to the reality.” In 1835 a Quincy, Illinois, newspaper editor, commenting on women on the frontier (but in a remark equally applicable to men) proclaimed: “She is terribly scared . . . and with what interest she inquires about . . . fevers and Indians; Poor lady, she will never become morally acclimated.” 4

One major component of frontier life was the military, which brought order, skilled labor, professionally trained services, and protection to both trader and, purportedly, the Indian. These were the defined purposes of a soldier’s life, but there were also women in

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5 Tillson, A Woman’s Story, 3–4.
6 Illinois Bounty Land Register, Quincy, April 17, 1835, 1.
the frontier military posts, and much too little is known about them in that environment. Presumably, these women provided the vestiges of home life, culture, and social graces as society at that time expected, but life at a military post almost certainly created its own demands and expectations.7

At one such post, Cantonment Leavenworth, there were, on occasion, many women and children. Philip St. George Cooke wrote of his steamboat trip to the cantonment in May of 1829 that it “was remarkable how large the proportion of married men was among those selected to fill our companies. . . . The boat swarmed with their wives and children; the deck was barricaded with beds and bedding; infants squall’d. . . . and in the guise of the founders of a colony, we set forth for our adventures.” Of these women little or nothing is known. Perhaps they went for a season’s posting or for the summer. Where they were quartered is even more a mystery, since a cantonment by definition was at best a more or less temporary structure used to house troops during specific campaigns or time periods or to provide housing while more permanent quarters were located.9

Of one family of women at Leavenworth more is known but little has been mentioned. Louise Barry in The Beginning of the West makes singular entries concerning the Hertzog mother and daughters who married and had children at the cantonment. In his “Romance at Old Cantonment Leavenworth” in the Kansas Historical Quarterly, Hamilton Gardner tells the story of Philip St. George Cooke’s marriage to Rachel Hertzog and William Wickliffe’s marriage to her sister Anna, but the story is primarily that of Cooke. Other sources refer to Cooke’s marriage and his wife’s family at Cantonment Leavenworth, but all relate primarily to the men. Even Cooke’s biographer, Otis Young, says little of his bride and gives only passing information.8

The women did accompany the men, but their story cannot be told without remembering the military records of the men, since these greatly shaped the

7. Studies in women’s history, such as Welcher’s “The Cult of True Womanhood” and Lerner’s “The Lady and the Mill Girl,” have laid the interpretive groundwork from which it is generally agreed that by 1820 a sphere of women’s roles and a separation of women into distinct classes were being created by American culture. This consensus that society molded every woman’s life with the same standards, no matter where she lived, may certainly be valid, but focused studies on how and if these demands altered for women on the frontier, particularly when combined with life on a military post, are still needed. How, for example, did a woman create home as a haven from the world—as her sphere demanded—when life on a military post offered her little shelter from the dangers of the world faced by her husband? And, what class distinctions, if any, existed among women at these outposts when the military demanded its own code of behavior and deference to rank? For the above-mentioned studies, see Barbara Welcher, “The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820–1840,” American Quarterly 18 (Summer 1966): 151–74, and Gerda Lerner, “The Lady and the Mill Girl: Changes in the Status of Women in the Age of Jackson,” American Studies 10 (Spring 1969): 5–15.


women's lives. It was the women who followed and served and who could have easily given the same response as that of the bride who, when asked in 1827, “Sir, what brought you to this rough country?” replied, “I followed my husband.” 11 In the case of the Hertzog women, they followed not only the men but each other, and their story provides the details of Cantonment Leavenworth, their lives, and the men important to military history. Perhaps Cooke himself paid more homage to these female “soldiers” than he realized when he wrote: “Our duties performed, and studious improvement not neglected, the pleasures of female society gave the greater zest to diversions and exercises.” 12

There is one other consideration. It was not uncommon then, or now, for women to be present at military posts. Today it is a normality, but in the present century the wives were, and are, not allowed in harm’s way. But in the farthest outreaches of civilization in the nineteenth century, women were vulnerable to all that faced their men.

These women and their husbands were on the edge of the western frontier—the last outpost. Cantonment Leavenworth was established in 1827 as one of a series of forts designed to protect the western frontier and traders and trappers, to aid in settlement, and to keep the Indians at bay. As the frontier moved farther and farther west it was logical also to move the forts. The original line of forts established under this policy comprised Fort Dearborn, near Chicago (reopened after the War of 1812); Fort Howard, Wisconsin; Fort Armstrong, Rock Island, Illinois; Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin; Fort Atkinson, Council Bluffs, Iowa; and Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Leavenworth replaced Fort Atkinson, and Fort Crawford was also closed. At the urging of Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, Cantonment Leavenworth gained more importance as the primary western outpost for protection of the Santa Fe Trail and as a jumping-off point for the fur trade. Leavenworth was the farthest from any settlement. 13

The cantonment site was located by Col. Henry Leavenworth on May 8, 1827, and the War Department designated the site as a cantonment on November 8. Under a new policy in 1832 all cantonments were either changed to forts or abandoned; “Cantonment” was changed to “Fort” Leavenworth on February 8, 1832. Located at a scenic point on the west bank of the Missouri River, the cantonment and fort itself was described often as consisting of “miserable huts,” and nearly unlivable. Even as late as 1836, Inspector Gen-

12. Cooke, Scenes and Adventures, 94.
eral George Croghan's report described it as a fort in name only and of "defences it has none."

Although some letters from the men who served at Cantonment Leavenworth survive, none that were written by women have previously been located. But there were women, and the touches of civilization they brought, at Leavenworth. That the women served in harm's way is best shown by an 1829 incident recorded by Catharine Hertzog. While the major contingent of the post had been removed to Jefferson Barracks because of disease, the replacement troops had been ordered to stay on the Santa Fe Trail to avoid the unhealthiness, those left at Cantonment Leavenworth huddled in the hospital building. Word of an impending Indian attack had forced the small group, which included Indian Agent John Dougherty and his family, to expect the worst. This is one of the many experiences preserved in Catharine Hertzog's letters. Her writings from and about Cantonment Leavenworth present a unique story about herself, her daughters, and the post.15

Many of Catharine Hertzog's writings were about family events and personal problems, but since life centered around the post, she could not avoid observations on various military situations. Her stream of thought caught images of camp life. Other letters, not written from Cantonment Leavenworth but important to understanding her concerns and interests, provide an intimate look at the lives of her daughters, their circumstances, and the men they married: John Dougherty, Philip St. George Cooke, and William N. Wickliffe, all prominent in western and Kansas history.

Catharine's presence at Leavenworth was a happenstance. Had it not been for a series of disastrous events and circumstances she would never have found herself in that forward post. Catharine's letters sometimes carry a fatalistic tone, and for good reason. Her life had been upended after years of a comfortable middle-class existence in Philadelphia. The wife of a prosperous wholesaler, Joseph Hertzog, she had probably never given thought to life beyond her immediate eastern environment. In 1822, however, Hertzog's career demanded that Catharine and their four daughters move to the less-than-genteel West.

Hertzog had based his business on the fortunes of the expanding western country. He had no desire to travel or live in that developing area but gladly hired agents, including his nephews Andrew and Christian Wilt, to do so. These agents bought western products—sometimes traveling as far north as Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, for furs—and shipped them east via interior river routes or through the port of New Orleans. In exchange, Hertzog calculated what would sell on the developing frontier and shipped those goods to St. Louis, where his agents ran a retail business.

Despite Hertzog's impatience—he waved aside his agents' fears during the War of 1812 and threatened to leave them stranded if they did not produce more profits—the business did well. Taking advantage of his success and the rampant speculation in the St. Louis area, Hertzog directed his agents to buy farms and mines and to set up an iron-producing factory. Writing to one agent, Joseph enthused that his head was

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15. Lt. Otis Wheeler's letter, written from Cantonment Leavenworth in April 1829, commented on the disease at the cantonment and related a military view that easily accepted the fact that civilization existed elsewhere. Hunt, History of Fort Leavenworth, 28–31; Prucha, Sword of the Republic, 163–65; Catharine Hertzog to Michael Baker, August 1, 1829, Morris Collection, Illinois State Historical Library.
"swimming" with so many projects "laid up one after the other I forget the half of them." Unfortunately, while others made fortunes, Hertzog's indiscriminate speculation and misunderstanding of what was in demand on the frontier brought him to the brink of financial ruin.

Hoping to salvage something, Hertzog moved with Catharine and their daughters to St. Louis in 1822. The situation they encountered was worse than expected; disputed land titles, accumulated mortgages, failed businesses, and the deaths of Joseph's nephews created an unbelievable financial tangle. Hertzog reacted by removing himself and his family from St. Louis in 1824, settling across the Mississippi at a millsite in Illinois. Three years later, the financial dilemma still largely unresolved, Joseph Hertzog died of "the fever."17

Considering these economic reverses, it is understandable that Catharine's letters were filled with references to money. She had become a woman grasping for any amount due her. She was in a place where she had few people on whom to rely, and she had her daughters to protect. Two daughters, Elizabeth and Mary, had, in Catharine's mind, been provided for before Joseph's death. Just one year before he died, Elizabeth had married. Her husband, William Burrage Collins, was a member of the fairly well-to-do Connecticut family who had settled Collinsville, Illinois. As a bride Elizabeth went to the Collins homestead, and although widowed within ten years of her marriage, she continued to live in that house for almost half a century.18 At times Catharine resided with Elizabeth, and of the Collins family, who had been members of the Connecticut church served by Lyman Beecher and whose forefathers had been kindly referred to by Cotton Mather,19 Catharine wrote: "I never until now knew the reality of religion. This family appears to me to make it their chief study. They live up to the scriptures as much as lies in their power; and they certainly meet their reward, they seek and find."20

Catharine's eldest daughter, Mary, had married

17. William H. Collins, The Collins Family (Quincy, Ill.: Volk, Jones and McMan, 1897), 160, 166, 175.
18. Ibid., 58. After her husband's death, Elizabeth, in a display of independence, petitioned for and received special state legislation which named her guardian of her children. See Illinois General Assembly, Private Laws, 1837, 57–58, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.
19. Cotton Mather referred to a "good old man called [Edward] Collins" in his Magnalia. The Collins family in Illinois were direct descendants of Edward Collins' brother. The Mather reference is also cited in the Amon Morris Family Papers, Connecticut State Library, Hartford. For reference to Lyman Beecher (whose father's second wife was part of the Collins family), see Collins, Collins Family, 98, and Clarence Lyman Collins, Collins Memorial (N.p.: By the author, 1929), 60.
20. Catharine Hertzog to Michael Baker, November 12, 1828, Morris Collection. Baker, to whom all letters were addressed, was Catharine's brother-in-law, married to her sister Elizabeth. See Collins, Collins Family, 173.
four years prior to her father's death, and it was her marriage to John Dougherty which would take not only her, but her family, to Cantonment Leavenworth and involve them in early western history that ranged from St. Louis to Santa Fe to Wyoming and covered over forty years. Dougherty, a native of Kentucky, had arrived in St. Louis in 1808 at the age of seventeen. A trapper for the Missouri Fur Company, he traveled in 1809 with Manuel Lisa up the Missouri River, crossed the Continental Divide with Andrew Henry in 1811, and through his trapping operations between St. Louis and Fort Manuel Lisa in South Dakota, met other notable men of that era. In 1819 Dougherty left the fur trapper's life to work for Maj. Benjamin O'Fallon as a subagent and interpreter among the Indians, and it was with Major O'Fallon that Dougherty joined the Long Expedition of 1819.

When Dougherty married Catharine's daughter Mary in 1823 he was in the employ of O'Fallon, and not so coincidentally it was O'Fallon who helped relieve the financial burden of Catharine Hertzog. In 1828 Catharine assured her Philadelphia relatives, to whom she owed money, that her husband's estate was being settled by the sale of properties:

The property in St. Louis was sold at public sale; Colonel O. Fallon [who] was the highest bidder of course got and paid for it. He has since, I suppose expended as much more on it as he paid for it. The property was bought in Christians name [Christian Wilt, nephew and agent for Joseph Hertzog in St. Louis] and should have been conveyed to Joseph as surviving partner. It was not done, and as there are such intricacies in the law, Mr. O. Fallon thought himself unsafe, he has now taken steps to make himself secure, which you know we would all do were we in the same situation. I however should never have given him any trouble."

Eight years later Catharine still bemoaned the loss of the property that could have been hers:

You speak of speculation, you can hardly have any idea how they are going on in this state [Missouri]; but fortune still continues to frown on us. The property which we once held and were compelled to sell and was sold for $7050 dolls. Col. O. Fallon who now owns it has been offered two hundred thousand and will not take it.

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22. Ibid.
Mr Dougherty left here on the 12th of January and arrived at the Bluff on the first of February very quick indeed. The weather was intensely cold at the time. Mr D has the office and I believe will fill it with credit. 37

Sometimes the only governmental authority in Indian territories, the Indian agent worked to maintain the delicate balance between fur traders and Indians. From O’Fallon, Dougherty inherited the duties of protecting traders and their routes and enforcing the laws that dictated trading sites. 38 He later assumed the responsibility of safeguarding the Indians from whiskey-selling traders. 39 Agents also were expected to mediate between Indian tribes or bands when hostilities developed. This was not necessarily to prevent bloodshed among the Indians but to maintain a safe environment for the traders. When Dougherty assumed O’Fallon’s position in 1827, he reported hostilities among the Osage, Otoe, Kanza, and several Pawnee groups. 40 Tribal feuds and bloodshed were never entirely squelched, but Dougherty was expected to report such incidents to his superiors and contain the situation as best he could. As Dougherty’s duties indicate, it was an unsettled and sometimes volatile environment into which the Hertzog women would venture.

Except for one letter by Catharine Hertzog, there is no indication of how she or her daughters regarded the Indians, but Dougherty’s attitude was essentially paternalistic. Indeed, he referred to the various tribes as “children,” 41 and Catharine’s letter from Cantonment Leavenworth in 1829 cited the fact that the Indians there regarded him as a “father.” This attitude was not uncommon for the time, and the very nature of Dougherty’s responsibilities encouraged such a view. Additionally, the encroachment of traders and newly emigrated tribal groups plus natural disasters forced some Indian groups into a childlike position, looking to the agent for relief. Such was the case in 1827 when Dougherty recommended additional rations and

28. Ibid.
31. This particular stand made Dougherty unpopular with the fur companies and later created enough antagonism to deny him the post of United States superintendent of Indian affairs. Matthes, “John Dougherty,” 130–31, 133.
32. Ibid., 124.
33. John Dougherty to Gen. William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, October 29, 1831. roll 6, frame 922. Isaac McCoy Collection, Kansas State Historical Society. Dougherty wrote that the “Great Father” had provided prairie land for Delawar, Otoe, and Omaha “children” and that “Pawnee children” hoped for the same treatment.
“presents” for Indian charges on the brink of starvation.”

Later, requesting aid, Dougherty provided a

harrowing, graphic description of the “evil and frightful” disease that had swept through four Pawnee villages in 1831:

... their misery defies all description ... they were dying so fast, and taken down at once in such large numbers, that they had ceased to bury their dead, whose bodies were to be seen in every direction ....

Others again were dragged off by the hungry dogs into the prairie whence they were torn to pieces by the more hungry wolves and buzzards.35

When Dougherty was named Indian agent of the upper Missouri, he had expected to continue his duties at Council Bluffs. As he was being given the position, Cantonment Leavenworth was being established, and Dougherty moved the agency to the new post. Conflicting versions exist as to why Dougherty established the Indian agency at Leavenworth. One, partially based on Joshua Pilcher’s charges to Dougherty of incompetence and absence from office, claims that the move was made without approval. The second version maintains that the commander of Cantonment Leavenworth wanted the agency moved there.36 Colonel Leavenworth did want Dougherty at the post, but by Dougherty’s own account, it was he who requested the change. In a letter written in 1832 to Secretary of War Lewis Cass, Dougherty described the series of events which placed him, his family, and the Indian agency at Leavenworth. Dougherty explained that he was to continue the agency at Council Bluffs, but after an interview with the superintendent of Indian affairs the location was changed “to the new Military Post, near the little river Platte (Cant: Leavenworth) until the end of the year 1828.” At that time, Dougherty was again assigned to Council Bluffs, but after an appeal to the secretary of war, which evidently took most of 1829, it was agreed that the agency would remain at Leavenworth. Dougherty concluded that “From that period [October 1829] to this time [1832], no order has reached me altering or in any wise changing the location of my agency from Cant: Leavenworth.”37

Thus, Dougherty went to Leavenworth, moving Mary and their family with him “about the middle of September [1827].”38 The garrison list of September 1827 noted two women at Cantonment Leavenworth—Ann Belknap, wife of the senior captain, and Mary Dougherty, wife of the new Indian agent.39

The number of Dougherty children traveling with their parents to Leavenworth is uncertain, for although nine were born, only four survived infancy. Just prior to the move, Catharine wrote that the Doughertys’ son Henry was giving Mary much “trouble.”40 Henry did not survive infancy, and since there is no mention of his death at Leavenworth, it can be assumed he died while the family was still in St. Louis. Most likely only one child, Annie Elizabeth, was taken to Leavenworth. Born in St. Louis, she later married Charles Ruff, the first commander at Fort Kearny, Nebraska; Annie was the first woman to live at that post, arriving with infant in arms before post

construction was completed. Of the other surviving Dougherty children, Lewis Bissell Dougherty acted as a manager for his father's sutlery and freight business at Forts Kearny and Laramie, Wyoming, between 1848 and 1853 and fought with the Confederacy as a captain in the Third Missouri Infantry; John Kerr Dougherty was killed at Franklin, Tennessee, fighting for the Confederacy with Cockrell's brigade; and O'Fallon Dougherty became a banker and stockbroker.41

Another woman arrived at Cantonment Leavenworth in the spring of 1828—Mary's sister Rachel. Dougherty was required to travel on Indian business, and Rachel's presence was undoubtedly welcomed by her sister. Mary was pregnant and had at least one small child already in tow. Presumably Rachel spent most of that year at the cantonment as helper and companion to Mary, and to her mother's inquiries from Collinsville, Rachel replied that she was "well satisfied" and did not care to return to Illinois.42 The child born to Mary Dougherty on December 7, 1828, at Cantonment Leavenworth was Lewis Bissell Dougherty, the third white child and second white male born in present-day Kansas.43

By 1829 the future of Cantonment Leavenworth was in doubt. Disease, presumably malaria, had prevailed the previous year—Dougherty had reported being "attacked by a fever."44 And although George Croghan, in his 1829 spring and summer inspection tour report, noted that there was nothing apparently wrong with the cantonment's location to "render it unhealthy,"45 the year saw no relief. Deaths occurred in the Leavenworth companies, and the War Department considered the health conditions so serious that the garrison was ordered back to Jefferson Barracks.46

But the trade routes had to be protected. For this reason a battalion from the Sixth Infantry at Jefferson Barracks was dispatched to replace the depleted garrison at Cantonment Leavenworth with orders, however, to spend their duty on the Plains, returning to the post only when the summer and the season of fever had passed.47 William N. Wickliffe and Philip St. George Cooke, future husbands to Catharine's daughters Anna and Rachel Hertzog, were part of this contingent and the first of this military group to ride escort for traders on the Santa Fe Trail. In that escort, Wickliffe captured a portion of the Sixth Infantry troops and Cooke, then a second lieutenant, was among the junior officers.48

Remembering his arrival at Leavenworth in 1829, Cooke would later write that "it was in reality but a straggling cantonment, but on an admirable site . . . where grandeur is softened by beauty."49 Cooke was seeing the post almost two years after its founding. He may have found it "straggling," but the place had made real progress. When first occupied, tents had served as quarters until small huts of logs and "roughly hewn slabs of bark" were completed.50 By 1828 the plans for Cantonment Leavenworth showed a completed sol-

Family, 161; for the reference to Henry Dougherty, see Catharine Hertzog to Michael Baker, July 1827, Morris Collection.
41. For the reference to Annie E. Dougherty at Fort Kearny, see Merrill J. Mattes, The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Mammine to Fort Kearney to Fort Laramie (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1959), 171; Dougherty children also cited in Collins, Collins Family, 161; Mattes, "John Dougherty," 124.
42. Catharine Hertzog to Michael Baker, May 2, 1828, Morris Collection.
43. Barry, Beginning of the West, 155.
44. John Dougherty to Lewis Giss, March 9, 1832, Dougherty Collection.
47. Ibid., 27–29.
49. Cooke, Scenes and Adventures, 95.
50. Hunt, History of Fort Leavenworth, 22.
iders' quarters and a finished two-story hospital building which housed four rooms, each 20 x 18 feet; cellar kitchens; and a 12-foot hall at either end. The hospital was easily the most commodious on the post. Permanent officers' quarters had yet to be completed, but a one-story log building served that purpose. It measured 124 x 31 feet with rooms 16 x 15 1/2 feet and 12 x 15 1/2 feet.\(^{31}\)

Given the limited living space, the dimensions of these buildings are less impersonal statistics when it is remembered that in one, at the most two, rooms of the temporary officers' quarters lived John and Mary Dougherty, at least one child, and on alternating occasions Mary's sister or mother. In his report Croghan stated that the garrison had undertaken too much at one time to properly complete the original building plans for the post, but considering the cramped living space it is little wonder that so much was attempted. The hospital, however, was considered a substantial building.\(^{29}\)

Post construction came to a halt in 1829, and it may be assumed that the fever and the War Department's orders to return the troops to Jefferson Barracks had reduced the cantonment to an abandoned post. However, after the garrison had been removed and the replacement Sixth Infantry was on the trail, a few persons remained at Leavenworth. These included Catharine Hertzog, Mary and John Dougherty, their children, and others who were not specified in Catharine's letter from that post in August of 1829. Catharine made no mention of the disease; surprisingly, she wrote that she had gone to the post to see if it would improve her health. Her concern was not the fever but a threatened Indian attack.

Reports of the 1829 Indian troubles noted in her letter can be found in several sources. The secretary of war's annual report referred to the "hostile proceedings" in Randolph County, Missouri, between the "Ioway tribe" and whites.\(^{32}\) Dougherty also reported the situation, explaining that he chose to stay at his post to monitor the events when "considerable excitement prevailed among the border settlers of Missouri for some time... and dreads were entertained that the difficulty would spread into a rupture with some of the neighboring tribes."\(^{33}\)

Catharine's letter from Cantonment Leavenworth records the reactions of those still living at the post during those troubles, but unflappable as ever, Catharine did not dwell on the situation, moving on to the subjects dearer to her heart—money and supplies from the East.

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**CANTONMENT LEAVENWORTH**

August 1, 1829

Dear Brother,

I would have answered yours in this, having seen Ann\(^{34}\) but three days before we parted again. I had not time. I was ready to start for Phila. had an opportunity offered. As none did, Mr Dougherty thought I had best try if travelling to this place would benefit my health any. I have been here six weeks but no better. I almost despaired of ever seeing you again in this world of trouble. It gave me some pleasure to see your improvement in manners and appearance, and I hope they will meet their reward. I sometimes feel low spirited for my two unprotected children, but still, we are not sufficiently provided for. I shall now communicate to you our present situation alto not at all a pleasant one. An express arrived last week that the Sac and Foxes had made an attack on the whites in Randolph County about two hundred miles above St. Louis.\(^{35}\) It is said the five killed and some wounded. The Indians, nine or twelve, not exactly known yet. They thought their next attack would be on this place as the troops are gone from here to protect the traders on the Santa Fe road. The gentlemen and what few men were left went to work and removed all the powder and guns from the Commissary store. The cannon are placed all around the hospital to protect it; where we all retired at night. For safety centrals [sic] are kept in every direction in the garrison. The first night was really awful. Mr D though lame [the result of injury received when a horse fell on him in December 1828]\(^{36}\) was placed on a chair at the door with a gun. His two black men and an old Attic Indian, each with loaded guns in the entry. Five squaws [squaws] with their Children lying under their Fathers roof, as they call Mr D, for protection. I fear the express who have gone to Major Riley on the Santa Fe road will never return. The Pawnees are committing outrages

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52. Ibid., 355.
54. John Dougherty to Lewis Cass, March 9, 1832, Dougherty Collection. Fear and tension accompanying Indian outbreaks were probably not new to Catharine or Mary. Having been in the St. Louis area and in Illinois, they had been well apprised of continual outbreaks in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa that had developed into the Winnebago War of 1827. Although a small war, it was ferocious in intensity, and many settlers were killed and their homes burned. See Horatio Newhall to Isaac Newhall, August 20, 1827, Newhall Papers, Illinois State Historical Library; Vandalia Intelligence, Vandalia, Illinois, July 21, 1827; Sangamon Spectator, Springfield, Illinois, July 25, 1827; Document 780, May 17, 1826, and Document 782, July 8, 1827, Governor's Letter Book, vol. 2, Illinois State Archives. Additionally, Illinois newspapers were filled with accounts of Indian outbreaks in 1827–28.
55. Catharine's youngest daughter Ann was sent for a time back to Philadelphia.
56. Randolph County, Missouri.
57. Dougherty reported the accident as answer to charges he had ignored responsibilities. See John Dougherty to Lewis Cass, March 9, 1832, Dougherty Collection.
there. I can say I have felt much alarmed. An express
left this yesterday for one of the villages and is expan-
tected to return this evening when we shall hear
more. Forty volunteers have arrived from Liberty
(Missouri). The Commanding officer has sent to Je-
fferson Barracks for troops. Sincerely hope they will be
here soon. There is no trusting Indians what they say
today they unsay tomorrow—Dear brother, I would
ask you if you ever heard of a house in sixth street left
by Grandfather Wilt to Peter Paris's heirs, and should
they die without heirs it would revert again to Betsy,
Abram, Nancy and myself. I recollect hearing my fa-
ther frequently speak of it. Should it be the case now
Paris Spohn is dead, would it not be ours?
Mr D told me he got fifty dollars from you and
twenty dollars and some cents I have never reecipted
[sic] for. Shall receipt for on the opposi[te] page —
Tell my two nieces [sic] E and M their Aunt would be
much gratified if they would send her a specimen of
their hand workmanship. No matter how small would
[be] acceptable, that she could say was her nieces [sic]
work. I would ask my dear Sister, who I can only speak
to by letter, to get me two necklaces for Mary's
children, like Elizabeths. Perhaps an opportunity may
offer to send them, marked A. E. D. and L. B. D. Nothing
more has been done with the business here
since I last wrote you. I hope you have received the
draft for two thousand sent by Mr Collins. There is
still a little more due you. If my life is spared to return
to Illinois, shall send it if the property is sold. I cannot
tell how much I wish to see you and your happy fam-
ily. I fear that time will never come —
Mary, Rachel and Mr D unite in love with me to you
and yours—May God bless and prosper you all is the
wish of your friend and sister: CATHARINE HERTZOG (If
you send money please direct to Wm B Collins, post-
master; Collinsville, Illinois. Perhaps I may not be at
this place.) Received of Mr Michael Baker one of the
Executors of the estate of Abraham Wilt, deceased,
seventy dollars and some cents, being a part of my in-
come of said estate.

CATHARINE HERTZOG.

DEAR BROTHER
I would be glad you could send me two hundred dol-
ars. I would write Betsy but am not able. Tell her not
to forget me—Had I but a home for myself and
Children.

58. A. E. D. are the initials for Annie Elizabeth Dougherty and
L. B. D. the initials for Lewis Bissell Dougherty, children of John
and Mary Dougherty.

59. Catharine was attempting to sell the few remaining properti-
es in her husband's estate, including a milisite in Illinois.

60. Probably Catharine's son-in-law William Barrage Collins; but
since the Collins family shared in all business profits, William's fa-
ther or one of his brothers could have signed the draft.

61. Catharine's father.

Despite the conditions at Leavenworth, Rachel
Hertzog again visited the Doughertys in the spring of
1830. During that stay Rachel was courted by a second
lieutenant—Philip St. George Cooke. There is some
conjecture that Rachel had met Cooke prior to that
Leavenworth visit, possibly while he was still assigned
to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. Whatever the circum-
stances of their meeting, a relationship blossomed
during the spring and summer of 1830.62

Rachel's presence at Leavenworth was no doubt
welcomed by Mary, for Dougherty was absorbed in or-
chestraing a major Indian council at Prairie du
Chien. Responsible for "collecting" and accompanying
"deputations from the Ottos, Omahas, Ioways, Mis-
sourians and Sacs of Missouri," Dougherty was away
from home during most of 1830 as he attended to the
details of gifts, rations, transportation, and inter-
preters for the meeting.63

Meanwhile, Anna Barbara, referred to as Ann and
Catharine's youngest daughter, had been sent back to

62. Collins, Collins Family, 160. Gardner, "Romance at Old Can-
tonment: Leavenworth," 98.
Philadelphia in 1827 to visit family and polish her social graces. Ann later returned to the West where she, like her sisters, was destined to marry a military man. She met her husband, Capt. William N. Wickliffe, Sixth Infantry, before his assignment to Cantonment Leavenworth. Wickliffe, like Cooke, had been posted at Jefferson Barracks, and Ann most likely met him during that tour of duty.

Wedding plans were made between Wickliffe and Ann, and in 1831 Ann found herself traveling to Leavenworth. Meanwhile, Rachel had remained at the post, Cooke's "pleasure of female society," and on October 28, 1830, she married Philip St. George Cooke. The ceremony took place in the Dougherty quarters and was the first recorded marriage between two white persons in present Kansas.

There are no surviving letters to suggest that Catharine was present for Rachel's wedding, but Catharine was at Leavenworth when Ann married Wickliffe on November 14, 1831. Her letter describing the wedding would be important if only for that, but it is also an extraordinary reminder of the everyday life shared by mother and daughters at Cantonment Leavenworth. The women were part of two worlds—the post life, where soldiers got by on half rations and Catharine dreamed of good winter shoes, and the remembered world of fashionable clothes and refined culture. Catharine's letter with its list of hoped-for articles suggests the small way in which the women attempted to reconcile both.

CANTONMENT LEAVENWORTH Dec. 21, 1831

Mr Michael Baker
No.166 Arch St.
Philadelphia

My Dear Brother and Sister:

I received yours of Sept 26th by via of Collinsville.

Was really sorry to hear you had so much trouble in forwarding the articles sent; for Mr Kerr left St. Louis for the East at the same hour I did for this place which induced one to think he would have goods for St. Louis. I shall however in future try and make it more convenient for you. Mr Kerr I presume goes to the east this winter. Should he do so I shall trouble my sister to purchase a few articles again, and as Mr Ritter is well acquainted with Mr Kerr I will request him [Kerr] to see him should he visit Phila. I know it must be inconvenient for you having so much other business to attend too [sic]. The last goods are not yet to hand. Mr Dougherty has not returned from St. Louis yet though hourly expected when. I have no doubt, we shall hear something of them.

I shall now say to you the great event is over. Ann was married on the 14th. Nov. 13th being a Sunday, they thought best to postpone it so as to have a little jollification as Capt Wickliffe calls it. The Nuptials were solemnized in the presence of God and a large assembly of ladies and gentlemen now residing at the post. Mr Dougherty gave the wedding party, a very handsome one indeed. Ann went home to Capt W's quarters the same night; which had been very neatly and previously fitted up for her reception. I flatter myself she is happily married. You see my dear Brother one prop after the other is taken from me. I can hardly realize it. Look where I will, I see a vacancy to fill; but I do not complain. I am thankful my children are now all settled and I believe all to good men, though none wealthy. Should the command be ordered from this to Jefferson Barracks or the Arkansas I shall probably follow them. 'Tis the wish of Rachel I should do so; as it matters not much where I am now.

The weather has been extremely cold for some time. The Missouri closed in November, and from appearances will continue so for some time. My health has been better since I have been here than for a long time. Excitement seems to answer me best. I generally visit Rachel and Ann from two to three times a week. Shall when Mr D returns spend the remaining part of the winter with Ann. Capt W has a room neatly fitted for me. Mary is rather crowded owing to the Majors not building quarters before the cold weather commenced.

The soldiers have been on half rations for some time owing to the contractor not filling the contract for flour in time. The commissary has now succeeded [sic] in getting it up in wagons, which will give them their former allowance.

The family are well here and wish to be affectionately remembered to you and family. Mine to sister E, the Nephews and nieces.

Yours with Affection
C. HERTZOG

Tell the girls not to be surprised if in the spring two gentlemen give an introduction from me to them. I promised them I would do so. One [gentleman] from

64. Barty, Beginning of the West, 178; Collins, Collins Family, 160, 165.
65. John Kerr, with "A Kerr," sold goods out of St. Louis; he was probably the same John Kerr for whom one of Dougherty's sons was named. Ritter was presumably John Ritter, husband of Catharine's stepsister Nancy. For Ritter reference see Collins, Collins Family, 173. This family history states that Catharine's stepsister Rachel married Charles Hempstead, whose sister became the wife of Manuel Lisa, and that Lisa's daughter Rosalie, by an Indian wife, lived for several years with Elizabeth Hertzog Collins at Collinsville. See Collins, Collins Family, 173.
Sacketts Harbour, the other from Pennsylvania. The following is a list of articles I would like, could you send without inconvenience to you.

3 pr. good tweeters from Michagh[?]
6 tolerable fine pocket hks
3 pr. lasting shoes such as winter wear
3 do york tan gloves
5 cap borders boinet, 6 fancy hks
6 pr. side combs
1 long like Mary wore when I was there
1 pr. shoe binding like last

6 cap ribbons such as before, I was unfortunate in losing mine travelling to this place. Tis 25 ct the yd here. Also some for my bonnet, such as you think will do.

Gingham for two dresses for me—do do do (such as you think will do)

3 Gingham for Rachel do do do
1 Black dress for R, fashionable
Original poems and another amusing book for a child learning to read.

1 pr scarlet lasting shoes for Ann Dougherty

Received of Mr. Michael Baker one of Executor of the Estate of Abram Wilk deceased the sum of eighty four dollars, seventy five cents being a part of my income of said Estate.

Catharine Hertzog

Should you send the articles please direct to Major John Dougherty, Cantonment Leavenworth, care of J and A Kerr St. Louis. Mr D gets his Indian goods from them so that they will forward them to this place by the first boat.

The marriage of Ann placed three of Catharine’s daughters at Cantonment Leavenworth. During her stays there, Catharine alternated among the living quarters of Mary, Rachel, and Ann. The women no doubt relied on this companionship during the numerous absences of their husbands, and Catharine had no home other than that offered by her daughters.

The three sisters were still living at Cantonment Leavenworth when the War Department Order of February 8, 1832, directed all cantonments to be designated forts. This directive represented a new policy for western forts and defenses, and the sisters would soon be separated by new directions in their husbands’ careers. Rachel was the first to leave. In 1833 Cooke joined the newly formed First Dragoons, today known as the oldest permanent cavalry regiment in the army. Among the other new lieutenants in the Dragoons were Stephen Watts Kearny and Jefferson Davis. A favorite Collins family story concerned Davis’s trip to Jefferson Barracks and his encounter with a brother-in-law of Elizabeth Hertzog Collins. Stopping at the Collins mill, Davis asked directions of a large, flour-covered man. To his inquiry, Davis received the monosyllabic answer, “West.” Cooke was transferred to the Dragoon headquarters at Jefferson Barracks, where he and Rachel lived for most of the next two years.

The Cookes did return to Leavenworth, but only after many other postings. The birthplaces of the Cooke children testify to the many military assignments, some in potentially dangerous situations. John Rogers Cooke and Flora Cooke, future wife of the Confederate general J. E. B. Stuart, were born at Jefferson Barracks: John in 1833 and Flora in 1836. Maria Pendleton Cooke was born in Indian territory at Fort Wayne, present-day Oklahoma, in 1840, and Julia Turner Cooke was born at Fort Leavenworth in 1842. Cooke himself would again return to Leavenworth as commanding officer in 1855. The coincidences of the Civil War would later pit father-in-law Cooke against son-in-law Stuart many times and not without controversy.

The moves were not made with the intention that any would be permanent assignments. Rachel often traveled with the children for a season’s tour at a post. Such was the circumstance in 1835 when Catharine wrote:

Rachel I believe [is] in Carlisle [Pennsylvania] though I fear that will not be her residence long as Mr Cooke’s station will be Fort Gibson [east-central Oklahoma], for which I am really sorry should they go there. I never expect to see her again but so it is and I must give her up.

Certainly there was real concern for any women or children who made their way into the Indian territory.

69. Collins, Collins Family, 109, 162. The man was Michael Collins who later moved to Naples, Illinois, where he ran a dry goods store and operated a farm near Liberty until his death in 1862.
where Cooke had been assigned, but Catharine's constant cries of doom over so many years had probably conditioned the Philadelphia relatives to overlook dangers, real or imagined. In this case Catharine's gloomy forecast of her daughter's fate was unnecessary. Rachel was returned safely to Jefferson Barracks the next year, 1836.

Meanwhile, Mary and Ann had continued to live at Leavenworth. Dougherty maintained the Indian agency, and Wickliffe continued to captain troops along the Santa Fe Trail. This duty was routine in its requirements but not in the circumstances which presented themselves. The possibility of Indian depredations was a constant, while any number of problems provided the unknowns.

Residence at Leavenworth, however, soon came to an end for both Mary and Ann. Dougherty had purchased a farm near Liberty, Missouri, and by 1835 Mary spent more time there than at Leavenworth. Dougherty divided his time between the two, but by 1838 almost all of his correspondence was dated from Liberty.73

In 1835 Ann left Leavenworth, taking up residence at Jefferson Barracks. She may have left because she had lost the companionship of her sisters, but it is more likely, as Catharine suggested in a letter written a year later, that Wickliffe had been reassigned. Evidently his new duty, added to the hardships of previous years, had taken their toll, for Wickliffe decided to leave the army.

I am now with Ann who will remain at this place [Jefferson Barracks] the present month, but will on Capt Wickliffe's return from Kentucky remove to the country to try what can be done on a farm. Capt W is now on furlough and thinks he can get the farm into operation before his furlough expires. He is not yet able to resign and says he must try and do something for his family. The south he can never think of taking them too [sic]. He himself had been on so much extra duty the past summer and exposed to the burning sun that he lay for eight or ten days very ill in New Orleans in Sept last. Thank god he now appears to gather his strength again.74

Evidently this farm was a reality, but in a family history written by Wickliffe's nephew, William Hertzig Collins, the only mention of Wickliffe's occupation after army service was that of a dry-goods store owner in Collinsville, Illinois. Collins, who painted vivid personality portraits of his aunts and uncles, was strangely silent about the Wickliffes, barely giving them notice. Other references to the family in Illinois are almost nil except for another family history which noted that one son, Joseph Hertzig Wickliffe, was a lieutenant in an Illinois regiment during the Civil War.75

Eventually Dougherty, too, left government service and Fort Leavenworth. When the position of superintendent of Indian affairs was opened, Dougherty

71. Flora Cooke married Stuart on November 14, 1855, after meeting him during the summer of 1855 at Fort Leavenworth. See Burke Davis, Jeb Stuart: The Lost Cavalier (New York: Knopf and Co., 1937), 36-37. Of the marriage, Philip St. George Cooke wrote: "Flora was married, rather suddenly — to Mr. Stuart of Virginia... He is a remarkably fine, promising, young man." Cooke to John Esten Cooke, quoted in Davis, Jeb Stuart, 38. For discussion of Cooke's and Stuart's service against each other in the Civil War, see Davis, Jeb Stuart. For references to the other Cooke children, see Collins, Collins Family, 162; Barry, Beginning of the West, 449.
72. Catharine Hertzig to Michael Baker, August 24, 1855, Morris Collection.
74. Catharine Hertzig to Michael Baker, November 6, 1856, Morris Collection.
hoped and expected to be named to the post. His years of experience certainly warranted the appointment, but amid much political infighting and maneuvering by the fur companies and his personal enemies, Dougherty did not gain the position. Rather than work under Joshua Pilcher, the man who had undermined his prospects for the post, Dougherty resigned in 1839. When his bid for the position again failed in 1841, he removed himself from those interests.  

Dougherty went on to engage in real estate and the slave trade. The Liberty, Missouri, farm became a plantation-style estate named Multnomah and boasted an estimated workforce of five hundred slaves by 1856. Additionally, Dougherty's resignation coincided with the War Department Order of 1839, which declared that all military posts as well as troops in campaign or on “distant service” have a sutler assigned to them, and he was awarded sutler contracts for Forts Kearny and Laramie. It was during this period that Dougherty also held hauling contracts and redesigned the army's transport wagons, creating a vehicle that afterwards bore his name—the Dougherty Wagon. Little is known, however, about Mary Dougherty's life in Missouri except that she had survived the life of Cantonment Leavenworth and achieved one of the fondest hopes of her mother: she was financially secure, the mistress of a landed estate which included a stately antebellum home. As for the matriarch of the family, Catharine Wilt Hertzog spent the remainder of her life moving from one daughter to another. A season might be spent at Leavenworth, a few months at Jefferson Barracks, or a year at daughter Elizabeth's in Collinsville, Illinois. As Catharine wrote her family in Philadelphia, “it matters not much where I am now.” Catharine died November 11, 1861, at the age of eighty-six, a remarkable woman in a remarkable time. Her letters and thoughts not only provide a record of her family but also offer glimpses of events at Cantonment Leavenworth, the figures whose careers were shaped there, and the women they met and married. Significantly, the letters also afford insights into the women and children who did in fact also serve. Contemporarily, in 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that he “had spoken of so many important things done by the Americans” and declared that if he should be asked to what the “singular prosperity and growing strength of that people ought mainly to be attributed, I should reply—to the strength of their women.”

77. Ibid., 118, 140–41. According to Mattes, the name Multnomah was taken from Multnomah Falls near Portland, Oregon, which had greatly impressed Dougherty on his travels between 1809 and 1815. See also George T. Crook, “Multnomah, Decaying Relic of Anti-Bellum Grandeur in Clay County,” Kansas City Star, April 12, 1947.