

About the Ledger Templates

Original documents can be an exciting addition to any school curriculum. Journals, diaries, ledgers, deeds, census records, and photographs can be reproduced and brought into the classroom.

These sample ledger templates have been reproduced from the original commissary journal used at Fort Keogh, which is now housed in the Montana Historical Society Archives. The scanned pages can be used by students as a canvas for their own ledger art project. Below, you will find background information relating to Fort Keogh.

Fort Keogh Background

Fort Keogh was established in August 1876, as a direct result of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. It was located in the Yellowstone River Valley near the mouth of the Tongue River. Originally just a rough camp known as the Tongue River cantonment, the post was established by Colonel (later Brigadier General) Nelson A. Miles, for whom the nearby town of Miles City was named. As soon as river navigation opened in the spring of 1877, work began on the construction of a permanent fort. Materials and men were brought in by steamboat from Bismark, Dakota Territory, and by mid-October more than half the fort was completed. Part of a broader plan to establish military strongholds across Montana Territory, the Tongue River Cantonment was officially rechristened Fort Keogh in honor of Captain Myles W. Keogh, an officer of the 7th Cavalry, who died in the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Fort Keogh served as one of the military's most important bases of operations during the Great Sioux War and the Nez Perce War. While stationed at Fort Keogh, Colonel Miles successfully led his troops in combat against renowned Sioux leaders Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse and Northern Cheyenne chief Lame Deer. When Chief Joseph and his band of Nez Perce fled Idaho after refusing to relocate to a reservation, Miles led a large command from Fort Keogh to intercept them. He succeeded in ending the Nez Perce's remarkable trek at the Bears Paw Mountains in north-central Montana, heartbreakingly close to the Canadian border.

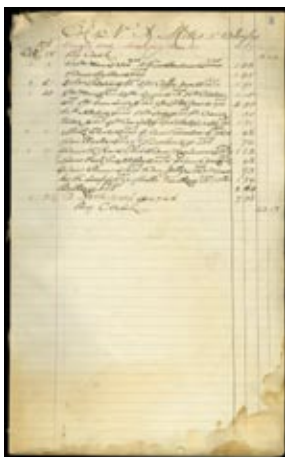
In addition to serving as a base of operations, Fort Keogh also housed many notable Indian leaders held by the military. Detainees included Nez Perce leader Chief Joseph; Sioux leaders American Horse, Rain-in-the-Face, Hump, and Spotted Elk; Northern Cheyenne chiefs Two Moons, Little Wolf, High Walking, and Fire Crow; Gros Ventre leader Wolf Voice; and Bannock chief Many Horses.

The Art of Storytelling: Plains Indian Perspectives

Sample Ledgers (on disc) (continued)



Archives Collection — MC 15 Box 2 Folder 5
Voucher #4.
Abstract Issued to Indians [1891, Fort Keogh, Montana]
Credit: Montana Historical Society Archives, Helena



Archives Collection — MC 15 Box 2 Folder 10 Page 3
Fort Keogh Commissary records
Entry for Col. N.A. Miles 5th Infantry, 1878
Credit: Montana Historical Society Archives, Helena



Archives Collection — MC 15 Box 2 Folder 4
Fort Keogh Commissary records
Payroll sheet January 1880
Credit: Montana Historical Society Archives, Helena



Archives Collection — MC 15 Box 2 Folder 2 Page 160
Letter to Post Adjutant at Fort Keogh, Montana, October 22, 1888
Credit: Montana Historical Society Archives, Helena