

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

FORT RILEY POST CEMETERY

The Fort Riley Post Cemetery has a very prominent historical background and is governed by military regulations.

The cemetery was established in the 1800's and holds war veterans from the Battle of Wounded Knee, the Spanish American War, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, and the Korean, Vietnam and South West Asia conflicts. The cemetery is also the final resting place for several nationalities of prisoners of war. The German and Italian prisoners of war remain buried at Fort Riley, but several years ago, the Japanese government had all their prisoners of war disinterred-and moved to Japan.

The two oldest areas of the cemetery seem to be sparsely inhabited. We are not sure how many burials actually exist in those areas and do not actively bury in them. The reason for this is that the Indians burned the grave markers on two separate occasions, believing they would stop the cholera epidemic and by doing so, destroyed any chance of recorded burials.

The placement of grave markers in a military cemetery is also unique. The grave marker is at the head of the grave with actual burial behind the marker. As you stand facing the inscription on the grave marker, your loved one is buried behind the marker. There are several theories as to why this is different from a civilian cemetery. The explanation given by Fort Leavenworth and Arlington National Cemetery personnel is that the soldiers are buried facing the rising sun, which is considered an honorable position.

Artificial flowers and arrangements are not permitted to adorn the gravesites from April to October. Fresh flowers placed during this time frame will be removed at the discretion of the cemetery sexton when they become unsightly. If you place a fresh plant, it is recommended that you retrieve it in two or three days. The summer heat wilts plants and flowers rapidly. Permanent vases are available for purchase from a funeral home and can be permanently mounted by, the cemetery sexton upon request.

The cemetery is open 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. If you need further assistance or more information on the cemetery operation, please call (785) 239-2646 or (785) 240-3096.