Fort Davis National Historic Site was authorized as a unit of the National Park System in 1961. A program was immediately launched to save the remaining buildings and interpret the fort. Of more than 50 buildings that constituted Fort Davis when it was abandoned, visitors can view 16 residences on officers' row, two sets of troop barracks, warehouses, and the hospital. Sites of the remaining buildings, marked in most instances by stone foundations, can also be viewed. Recent archaeological investigations have uncovered foundations of many buildings of the first fort.

About Your Visit: Fort Davis is on the northern edge of the town of Fort Davis, Tex. It can be reached from U.S. 290 on the north and 90 on the south by Tex. 17 and 118. Accommodations are available in town and at nearby Davis Mountains State Park. Marfa is 21 miles to the southwest; Alpine, 25 miles to the southeast. Visiting hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Notice: Do not allow your visit to be spoiled by an accident. While every effort has been made to provide for your safety, there are still hazards which require your alertness and vigilance. Exercise common sense and caution.

Administration: Fort Davis National Historic Site is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Fort Davis National Historic Site, Fort Davis, TX 79734, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wise use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The founding of Fort Davis: The Mexican War of 1846-48 added to the United States a vast territory comprising the present States of New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Texas had joined the Union on the eve of the war. Interest in the new lands quickened when word of the discovery of gold in California burst upon the Nation in 1849. Intent upon avoiding the winter snows and rugged mountains of the central routes to the gold fields, thousands of immigrants made their way over the southern transcontinental trail. A vital segment of the southern route was the newly opened San Antonio-El Paso road. Beginning in 1849, hundreds of immigrant and freight...
The men of the 8th Infantry, afoot or mounted on mules, spent most of the next 7 years as commander of Fort Davis. Although the garrison frequently rotated, it was composed until the 1880's, after the Indians had been subdued, of officers who saw their posts as a base for concerted operations against the Indians. New forts—Posed Fort Davis—were built to replace the rotting log huts, and supplies deteriorated in rickety warehouses roofed with canvas or thatched with grass.

The troops at Fort Davis settled into a routine of garrison life broken only by occasional tours of escort duty for railroad builders and bandit-chasing expeditions with the Texas Rangers. The railroads bypassed the fort, and it was used primarily for raising supplies for the forts along the border.