

FORT RENO

1.5 mile north of the intersection of I-40 W / US-66 W with E. 1020

Road

El Reno

Canadian County

Oklahoma

HALS OK-46

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

1849 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20240-0001

# HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

## FORT RENO

HALS NO. OK-46

- Location:** 1.5 mile north of the intersection of I-40 W / US-66 W with E. 1020 Road, El Reno, Canadian County, Oklahoma  
Lat: 35.562256 Long: - 98.034619 (Center of parade ground, Google Earth, Simple Cylindrical Projection, WGS84)
- Significance:** Fort Reno began as a military camp in 1874. It was named by General Phil Sheridan, in honor of his friend Major General Jesse L. Reno who died in the Civil War during the battle of South Mountain in Maryland. Fort Reno was in use through World War II, in which it was used as a Prisoners of War Camp.
- Description:** Fort Reno is situated on a flat expanse of land on the outskirts of the town of El Reno, Oklahoma. The complex of buildings covers about 40 acres. An unnamed road leads north to the retired post about a mile and a half from the intersection of I-40 W / US-66 W with E. 1020 Road.
- The fort contains buildings typical to U.S. military bases of that period with a mixture of Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Folk Victorian architecture styles. The buildings are situated around an open, flat area of land that was used for the troops to practice their formations and drill routines.
- History:** Fort Reno began as a military camp in 1874. It was established on the south bank of the North Canadian River, and was named by General Phil Sheridan, in honor of his friend Major General Jesse L. Reno who died in the Civil War during the battle of South Mountain in Maryland.
- The Fort Reno troops helped locate and made several evictions of the "Boomers" from the Unassigned Lands of Indian Territory for ten years prior to the opening for settlement by the 1889 land run.
- Famous aviatrix Amelia Earhart flew her autogiro (forerunner of the helicopter) at the Fort Reno airstrip in 1920's. Will Rogers visited the fort to watch polo matches and horse races.
- Fort Reno was in use through World War II, during which 94 acres of it was used as a Prisoners of War camp for over 1,300 German prisoners of war. The German POW's were hired as laborers for local farmers and in 1944 built the Chapel located to the north of the Parade Grounds.
- The last Army personnel left the fort in 1949. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) operated an agricultural research station here after that. In 1997, the USDA agreed to the establishment of Historic Fort Reno, Inc. as a

nonprofit entity to provide historical information to the public and coordinate fundraising efforts to preserve and rehabilitate the historic structures at Fort Reno.

Sources: <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/F/FO037.html>. Website accessed May, 2011.

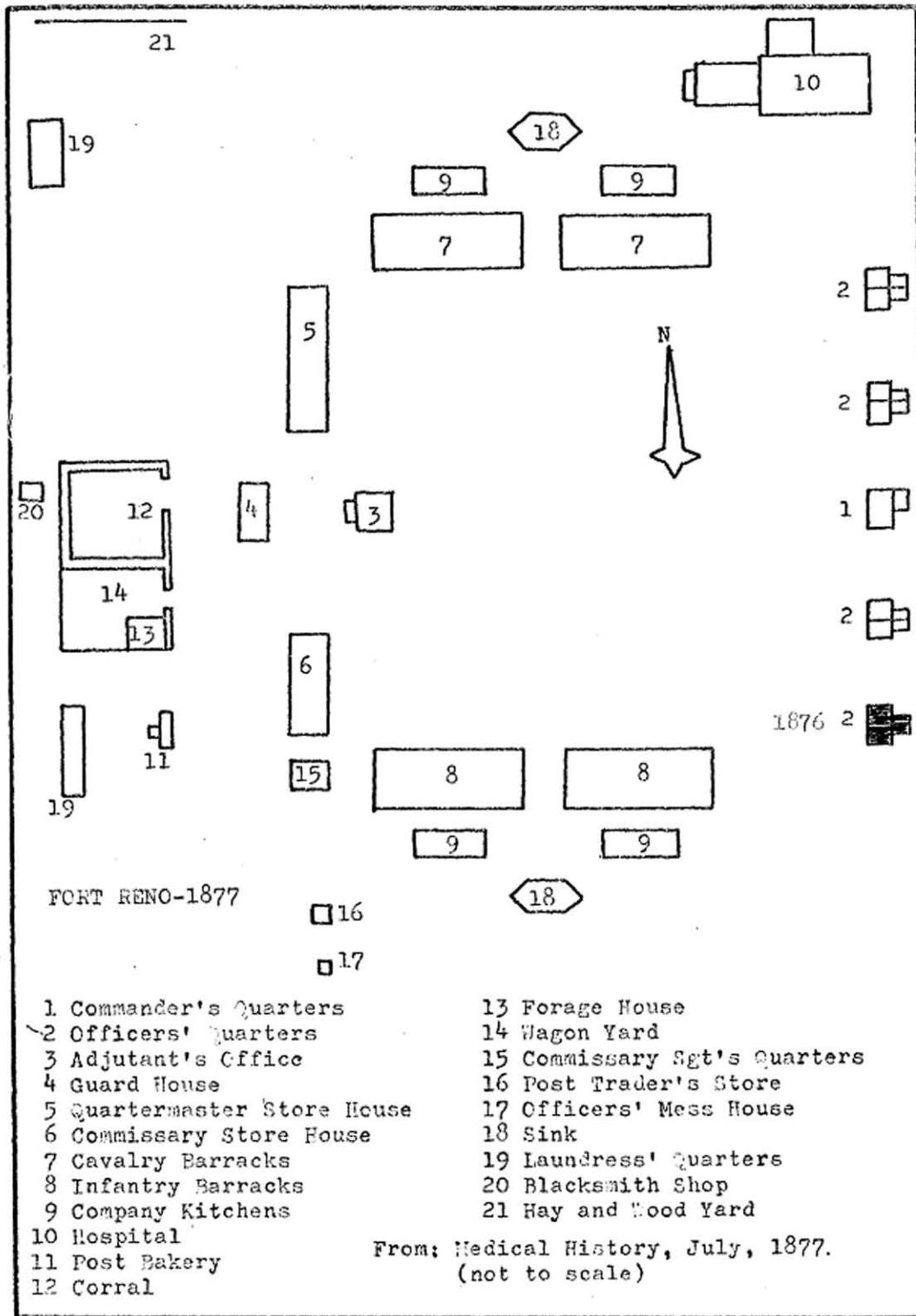
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort\\_Reno\\_\(Oklahoma\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Reno_(Oklahoma)). Website accessed May, 2011.

<http://fortreno.org/>. Website accessed May, 2011.

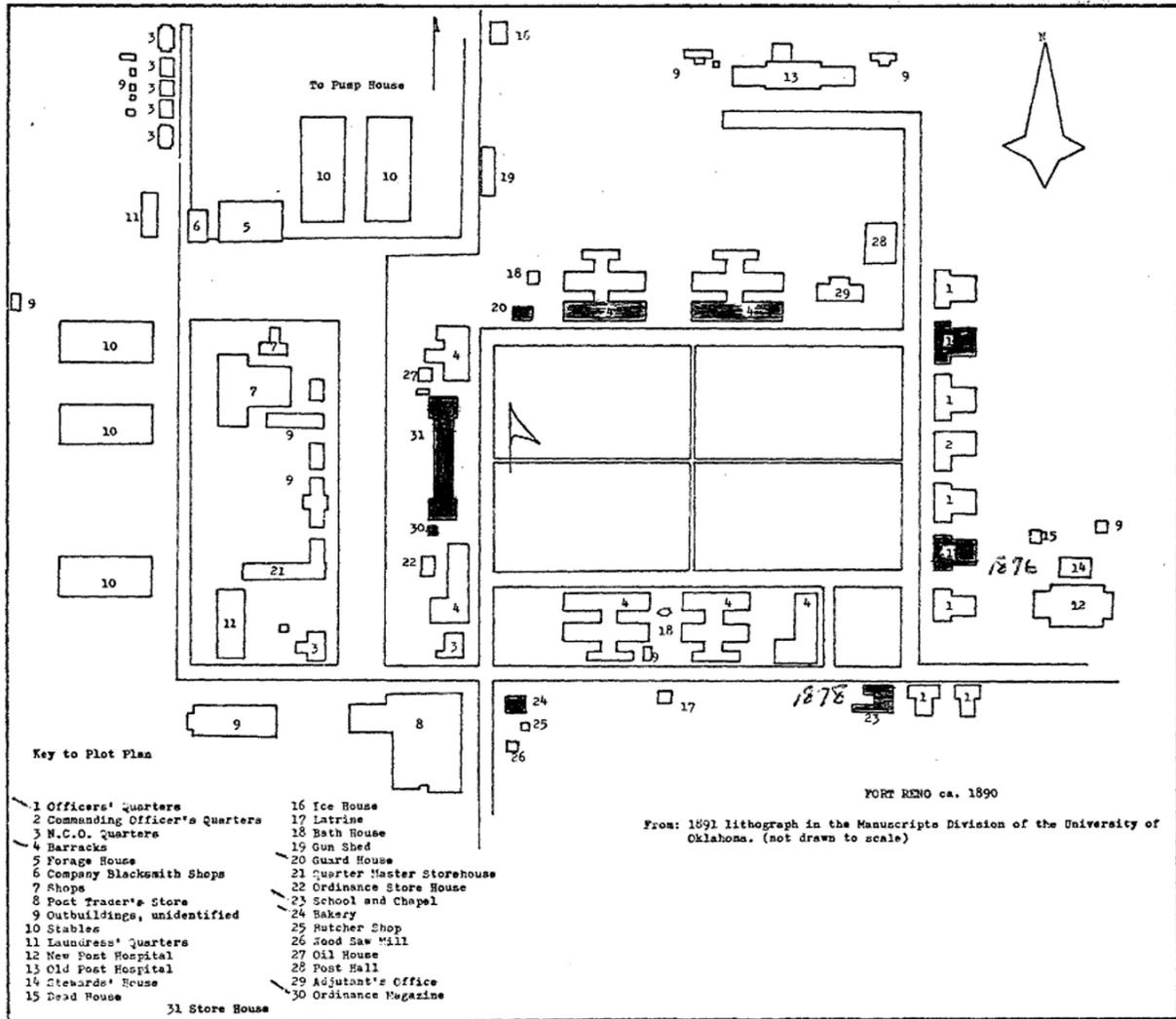
Ruth, Kent. 1970. National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form. 70000529 NRIS. Listed June 22, 1970.

Historian: Dan Mesenbrink, May 5, 2011

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1877 plan - structures still standing are shaded (Ruth, 1970).



1890 plan - structures still standing are shaded (Ruth, 1970).