

## **Kivett Family Marker at Fort Bragg**

Shortly after the United States entered World War I, in April, 1917, a US Army Major General selected a rural area near Fayetteville, North Carolina for the development of a temporary field artillery training camp - the genesis of modern-day Fort Bragg. Named for US Army Captain Braxton Bragg, a North Carolina native and artillery officer, the new Field Artillery Cantonment and Training Center would grow to include some 90,000-acres encompassing substantial sections of two NC counties.

About 7,500 construction and administrative workers were engaged in camp construction in 1918. War Department contractors responsible for the construction employed men and women from across the United States. Around 2,000 Puerto Rican men were also recruited as construction laborers. As was the situation for military personnel in that era, Puerto Ricans were directed to segregated quarters, separate from both white and black workers. Some farmhouses and dependency buildings, abandoned by local owners who leased or sold property to the War Department in 1918-1919, were occupied by the workers. One Puerto Rican group took up residence in the barns and outbuildings of the former "Mont View Vineyard" farm originally owned by the Henry Jackson Kivett family. The Kivett household continued to live in the main farm dwelling until 1919.

Before camp construction workers arrived in North Carolina, some were already suffering from influenza. The disease spread to other civilian and military personnel engaged at Camp Bragg. The first to die from complications associated with influenza were several of the Puerto Rican men. In 1918-1919 the camp design had included no provision for a military cemetery. When the first unfortunate victims died in early October, 1918, the bodies were hastily interred by their companions in the old Mont View Vineyard peach orchard. The impromptu burial ground was a kind of "potter's field" which formed the nucleus of what became the official Fort Bragg Post Cemetery by the early 1920s.

For several years PKFA member and former Property and Assets Manager Dolores Harvell has been working with various US Army personnel at Fort Bragg to obtain artifact preservation and formal recognition of the Kivett family role in the history of this major US military facility. During 2009 the enduring efforts of this granddaughter of the Mont View site owners, Henry Jackson and Mary Kate Gardner Kivett, seem to have been rewarded as the following quoted letter shows:

*Hello Dolores:*

*We have received permission to incorporate a historical marker within the Battle Command Training Center (BCTC) complex. The sign will be located in a landscaped area near the main entrance road/main parking lot for the facility. Although the BCTC buildings will be located inside a fenced compound, the historical marker will be readily visible and accessible to the general public. The sign shape, size and color scheme (white text on brown background) have to meet Fort Bragg Design Guidelines standards, hence the amount of text allowed is limited, so we cannot go into great detail regarding the site's history. In addition, we have to emphasize the site's history in relation to the history of Fort Bragg and the US Army. This emphasis will satisfy Fort Bragg Monuments Board requirements. As such, I suggest the following text, which we can tweak a bit if you have suggestions:*

### **Mont View Vineyard**

**A circa 1884-1918 farmstead, vineyard, fruit orchard and winery operation owned by the Henry J. Kivett family once stood on this site. In 1918, Puerto Rican laborers responsible for the construction of Camp Bragg found temporary quarters in Mont View's barns and outbuildings. The farmstead later served as the 5th Field Artillery Regiment's regimental mess produce farm in the 1920s and 1930s. During World War II, this area was part of the Field Artillery Replacement Training Center (FARTC) complex.**

*Let me know what you think.*

*Charles Heath, Archaeologist  
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