

Fort Kearny

Fort Kearny was first built as a military post to provide protection for overland trail travelers established in the spring of 1848.



It was built "near the head of the Grand Island" along the Platte River. It was first called Fort Childs, but in 1848 the post was renamed Fort Kearny in honor of General Stephen Watts Kearny.

Many pioneers purchased food at the fort, and nearly everyone took advantage of the fort's reliable mail service. In late May as many as 2,000 emigrants and 10,000 oxen might pass through in a single day.

Ft. Kearny was not the walled fortification that many pioneers expected. It was instead a collection of ramshackle buildings, most made of sod. The construction was so crude that snakes often slithered through the walls and into the beds of the soldiers stationed there. But the enlisted men were not overly refined anyway.



By the 1860s the fort had become a significant state and freighting station and home station of the Pony Express.