



# Fort Concho: A History and a Guide (Fred Rider Cotten Popular History Series)

*James T. Matthews*

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In the fall of 1867 the United States Army established a permanent camp on the plateau where the North and Middle Concho rivers join. For centuries, this high open plateau had remained barren except for passing expeditions or Native American hunting parties. The establishment of Fort Concho provided a vital link in the line of frontier defense and led to the development of the town of San Angelo across the North Concho River from the military post.

In more than twenty years of federal service, Fort Concho was home to companies of fifteen regiments in the regular United States Army, including Col. Ranald S. Mackenzie's Fourth Cavalry and Col. Benjamin Grierson's Tenth Cavalry of buffalo soldiers. The post provided a focal point for major campaigns against the Comanches, Kiowas, and Apaches. Patrols from Fort Concho charted vast areas of western Texas and provided a climate for settlement on the Texas frontier. Today Fort Concho stands restored, thanks to numerous preservation efforts, as a memorial to all the peoples who struggled to survive on the plateau where the rivers join.

*Fort Concho: A History and a Guide* by James T. Matthews has been hailed by Fort Concho director Bob Bluthardt as "the first book on the history of the fort in fifty years." *Fort Concho* is another title in the Texas State Historical Association's Fred Rider Cotten Popular History Series, which publishes short books about important historical sites or events in Texas history.

Number Eighteen: Fred Rider Cotten Popular History Series

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