



Office of the Quartermaster, Depot of Fort Union (about 1870). Courtesy, Signal Corps, U. S. Army.

Finally, however, hunger caused by the extinction of the southern buffalo herd in 1876 ended the warring of the Plains tribes. Starved away from the warpath, the proud Comanches, Kiowas, and others who had harassed the Santa Fe Trail for 50 years settled down on reservations to await the coming of the railroad and civilization.

Fort Union next saw several years of way-station duty on the stagecoach route, but its military usefulness was greatly reduced by the arrival of the railhead at Las Vegas in 1879. The huge fort was demoted to caretaker status in the 1880's, then abandoned in 1891.

The Roster

Among our Nation's foremost soldiers and frontiersmen who served at Fort Union or stopped there briefly en route elsewhere

were Generals Grant, Sherman, Bragg, Burnside, Longstreet, Pope, Sibley, Cooke, Carleton; Colonels Kit Carson and E. R. Canby; and Ceran St. Vrain and Lucien Maxwell.

Fort Union Today

The buildings of the fort remained in good repair until after the turn of the century. However, because the roofs were neglected and because the building materials were scavenged by local residents, the rains seeped in and the adobe walls melted away. Many brick chimneys long survived the collapse of the walls around them, but most of these too had fallen by 1956. Good stone foundations exist under all the buildings, however, so that the ground plan of the entire fort will be traceable for years to come.

The design of the fort's buildings was both massive and distinctive. The flat roofs rimmed by heavy copings of red brick set the

pattern for the architecture known today as "Territorial," which is seen in modern construction throughout New Mexico.

The Monument

Fort Union National Monument includes both the original site (later known as the arsenal) on the west side of Coyote Creek and the more recent large fort on the east bank; the two areas total 720 acres. Fort Union was established as a National Monument on April 5, 1956, as authorized by an act of Congress of June 28, 1954. The National Park Service has undertaken protection and preservation of the remaining ruins.

How To Reach the Monument

Seven miles of surfaced road connects Fort Union with U. S. 85 at a point one-half mile north of Watrous, N. Mex. The nearest large community is Las Vegas, N. Mex., 26 miles to the south. Wagon Mound, N. Mex., is 27 miles to the northeast. No public transportation to the area is available.

About Your Visit

The monument is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. the year around. You may walk through the principal building ruins and to the fortification.

Administration

Fort Union National Monument is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is % Post-



Detail of fort ruin showing how adobe and regular brick, wood, and stone were used in construction.

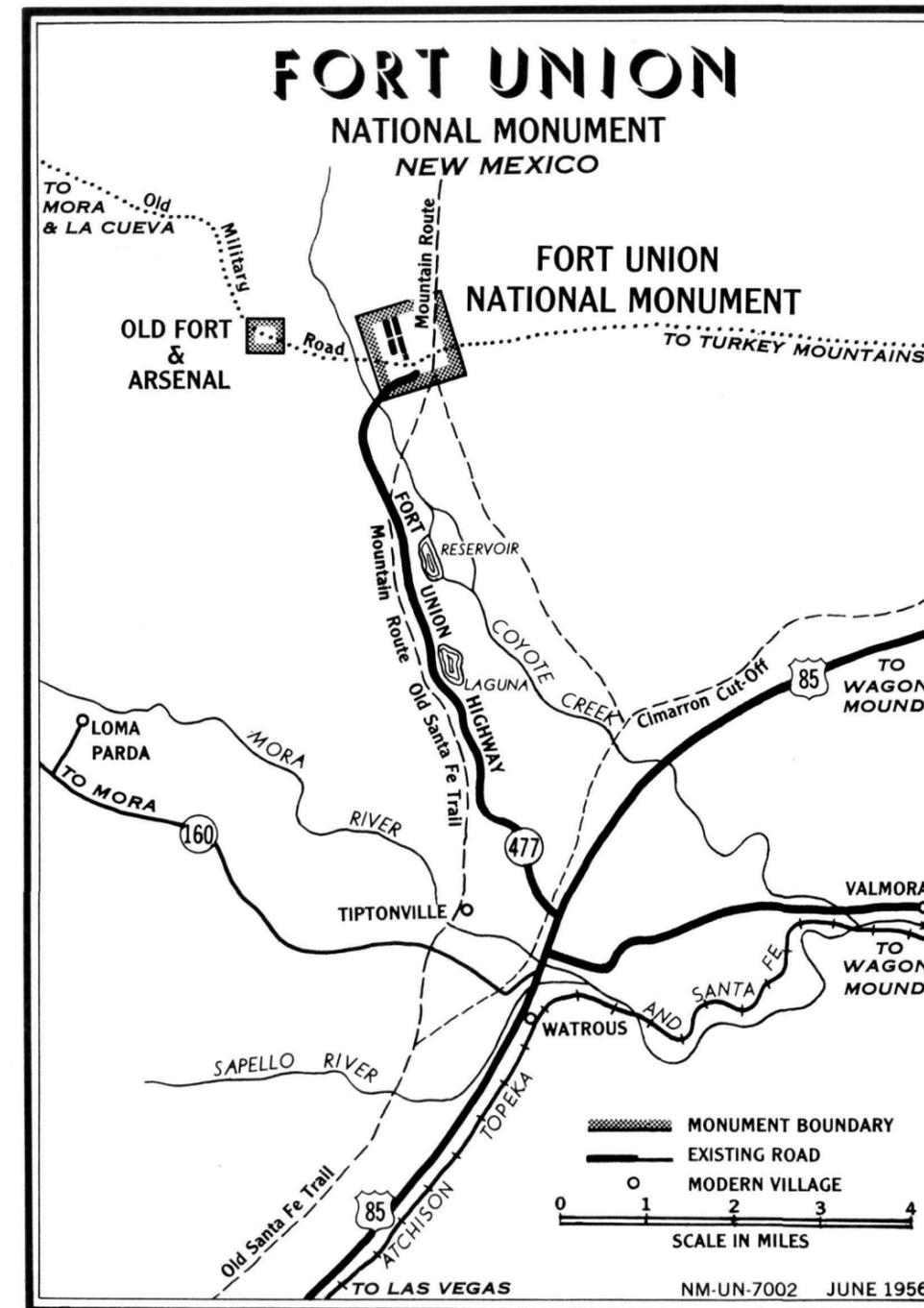
master, Watrous, N. Mex., is in immediate charge.

Mission 66

Mission 66 is a program designed to be completed by 1966 which will assure the maximum protection of the scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources of the National Park System in such ways and by such means as will make them available for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



NATIONAL MONUMENT
NEW MEXICO

