

Fort Sedgwick (1864-1871) Originally called Camp Rankin, the post was located opposite the mouth of Lodgepole Creek about five miles from the present-day town of Julesburg. The troops at this fort were ordered to protect communications and the trade routes while on the lookout for hostile Indians. The town of Julesburg, just to the east, was a stage and freight station.

The area was being heavily raided by southern plains Indians in revenge for the Sand Creek Massacre, which had occurred in November 1864. On January 7, 1865, numerous Cheyenne, Arapaho and Sioux warriors attacked the weakly garrisoned post. When the Indians failed to take the fort, they raided the town of Julesburg.

A few weeks later on February 18th, the Indians again attacked Julesburg and it's few citizens fled to Fort Sedgwick and watched as their town was pillaged and burned to the ground by the Indians. The small military force at Fort Sedgwick was unable to prevent the burning of Julesburg and the loss of lives for the eighteen defenders.

No attempt was made to rebuild Julesburg, and it subsequently occupied three different sites nearby, including that of the present location of the town. In the meantime, the military post of Camp Rankin was enlarged to make space for additional buildings and tents and renamed to Fort Sedgwick, in honor of General John Sedgwick, who was killed during the Civil War.

For the next several years the troops protected the Overland Trail, and the meadows surrounding the post became a favorite emigrant campground area. During the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad across western Nebraska in 1867, troops from the post protected the construction workers from the constant threat of Indian attack. In May 1871, the fort was abandoned by the U.S. Army.

Nothing remains of the old fort today. The original flagpole from Fort Sedgwick was moved and is now in front of the Julesburg Public Library.

Plans and efforts are being made to rebuild a replica of Fort Sedgwick. In 2014, the committee overseeing the effort did attain their 501c3 non-profit designation. The committee is in the fundraising stage of this project and would be delighted to have your financial assistance. To make a tax deductible donation to this project, send to Fort Sedgwick Park, 100 West 2nd Street, Julesburg CO 80737.

Fort Sedgwick is one of the five forts remaining in Colorado. The forts include Fort Pueblo near Pueblo, Fort St. Vrain (marker only) near Platteville, Fort Uncompahgre near Delta, and Fort Vasquez on Highway 85 in Platteville.