

Bennett C. Riley

This photograph shows a portrait of Bennett Riley that was probably commissioned by his family in the 1880s. Riley died June 9, 1853. The portrait has resided at the U.S. Cavalry Museum at Fort Riley, Kansas, since about 1903. Bennett Riley, after whom Fort Riley was named, had a long and prestigious career in the U. S. military. Born in Virginia in 1787, he entered the army in 1813. In 1829 he commanded the first military escort on the Santa Fe Trail. In that same year, he succeeded Colonel Henry Leavenworth as commander of Fort Leavenworth. In 1847 he became a brigadier general. He also served during the Mexican War and, in 1848, he served as the last territorial governor of California, where he helped create their state constitution.

Date: 1880s

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