



U.S. ARMY

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COMMEMORATING ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL'S 160TH ANNIVERSARY

SEPTEMBER IN MILITARY HISTORY

A Road Tour of Rock Island Arsenal

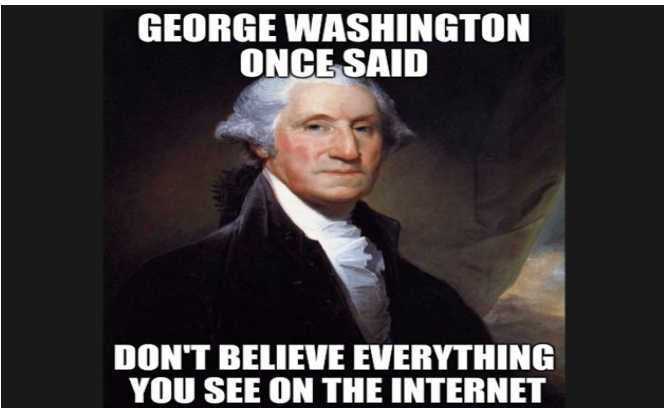
- 1814 31 MAJ Zachary Taylor suffers the only defeat of his career at Credit Island.
- 1863 1 Excavation for the Clock Tower building began at Rock Island Arsenal.
- 1864 23 The 108th Infantry arrived at Rock Island to guard Confederate POWs.
- 1866 9 Excavation for Shop C, modern Building 104 (CHRA-NC), begins.
- 1877 3 The sun dial that is located at the end of Gillespie Avenue is dedicated.
- 1910 5 A chemical laboratory was established at the arsenal.
- 1918 16 Cora De Wilford becomes the first woman motorcycle driver at the arsenal.
- 1945 17 Italian POWs at Rock Island were sent to various ports for relocation.
- 1958 19 Standardization of the M386 Honest John trunk mounted launcher is achieved.
- 1969 30 Rock Island Arsenal is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

MONTHLY TRIVIA

- 1 Besides COL King, who is the other arsenal commander buried at the Rock Island National Cemetery?
- 2 Who was the arsenal commander prior to COL Rodman's arrival at Rock Island?
- 3 Another noteworthy street on the island is Davenport Avenue, who is it named for?

ANSWERS FOR AUGUST 2022 QUESTIONS

- 1 What future President visited RIA and stayed in Q1 on TDY as an Army Officer?
➤ CPT Dwight D. Eisenhower
- 2 What was burned in the basement of Q1 to keep the greenhouse warm in the winter?
➤ M1903 Springfield Stocks
- 3 How many ghosts reside in Quarters One?
➤ Trick Question, Zero :)



History can sometimes be quite a fickle thing that is misrepresented, misquoted, and misused. Far too often we see these things happen on the internet in plenty of social media environments. The old adage "trust, but verify" is a smart way to go about it. Always remember to keep your wits about you in this digital age. But trust us...George Washington didn't actually say that.



Trivia answers, digital newsletters, and more history is available on the ASC History website:

<https://aschq.army.mil/About-Us/History>

As one navigates around Rock Island Arsenal, you may find yourself wondering about the names of the streets around the installation. It's not abnormal for streets on military installations in the United States to be named after commanders, both local to the installation and notorious in history. Rock Island Arsenal is no different. This month, we at the ASC History Office thought it would be interesting to take a different kind of tour around the arsenal – a tour of streets.

The main road that bisects the island from east to west is Rodman Avenue, named for the second commander of the arsenal from 1865 to 1871. Rodman is often referred to as the Father of the Arsenal. Rodman was responsible for completing the Clock Tower, moving the bridge, consolidating and moving the cemeteries, planning the stone shops, and construction of Quarters One thru Four. He died in Quarters One in June of 1871.

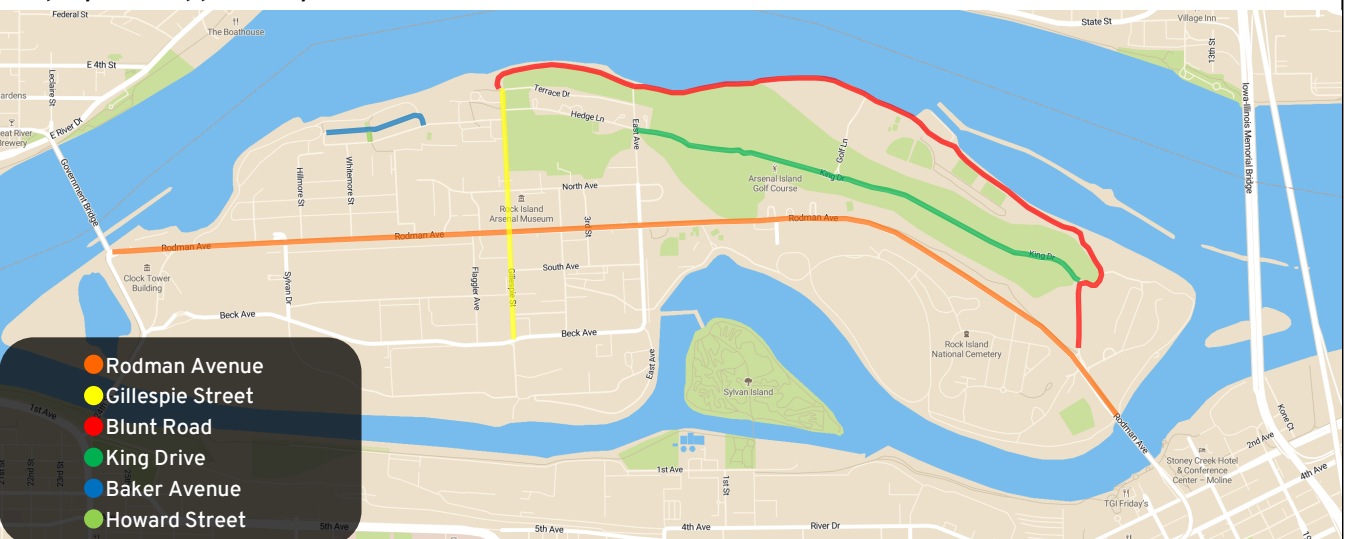
Running along the arsenal's north shore is Blunt Road, named for the commander of Rock Island Arsenal during the Spanish-American War. The Span-Am War was the first war where the arsenal's capabilities were fully tested. Under COL Stanhope E. Blunt's command, the arsenal produced and shipped out numerous saddles, ammo pouches, canteens, carriages, and silverware. It also saw its first influx in manpower increasing to over 2,000 employees before the war ended. Blunt assumed command in 1897 and oversaw the arsenal through 1907, including the establishment of the 1903 Springfield rifle program.

King drive cuts through the middle of the former golf course and is named in honor of COL David Matson King. In 1921, COL King took command from COL Harry Jordan. King had previously been stationed at Rock Island Arsenal from 1907 thru 1917. During his tenure, he was tasked with continued drawdown of the arsenal workforce from World War I to peacetime readiness levels. King was pressed to leverage ensuring the readiness of the arsenal against compromising budget cuts which made his task even more difficult. Nevertheless, King continued to maintain positive public relations while reducing the workforce towards its new post-war low. He remained in command until his death in 1932. King is one of only two arsenal commanders that is buried at Rock Island Arsenal's National Cemetery.

The main street that bisects the arsenal running north and south is Gillespie Street, named for BG Alexander G. Gillespie. In 1934, BG Gillespie assumed command of Rock Island Arsenal from COL Herman Walter Schull. Gillespie was a decorated officer following World War I, having received an AEF Citation awarded by GEN Pershing, the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Army Commendation Ribbon, and a Purple Heart. Gillespie served as commander of the arsenal until 1937 when he turned command over to COL Norman F. Ramsey. While Ramsey would lead the arsenal into World War II, Gillespie's groundwork paved the way to allow Ramsey to do so.

Not all streets on the arsenal are named for arsenal commanders, some are named for famed commanders, others are simple names that you might find in a typical city or town. However, some are named for heroes that served their Nation. Baker Avenue in the Eagle Point Housing area is named for MSG John F. Baker, Jr. Baker served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and was awarded a Medal of Honor after retrieving fellow Soldiers from enemy attack and silencing multiple Viet Cong positions single handedly.

Bridging Durnin and Baker Avenues, Howard Street is named for Mr. Milton Howard who served in the U.S. Army during the Civil War and afterward came back to Rock Island Arsenal. The Howard family then served at Rock Island Arsenal and throughout the U.S. Army for many years following Milton's service. Milestones that the Howard family set at the arsenal include the first African American foreman and the first Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer.



History is being made every day at this command.

Presented to you by your friendly ASC History Office. Feel free to call or stop by our office for any of your history needs.

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