

The Great Plains and the area along the Missouri River that is now Leavenworth, Kansas, was inhabited for fifteen thousand years by Plains Indians and their ancestors. European explorers and traders appeared in the area by the 16th century. During the 18th century the site was sought after by the imperial powers of Britain, France, and Spain. In 1744 the French established a military outpost in the area that would serve France for the decades that followed. This timeline refers to major figures and events associated with **Fort Leavenworth**, the **US Disciplinary Barracks**, and **Leavenworth Penitentiary**.

1827
Fort Leavenworth is established by Colonel Henry Leavenworth and assumes a vital role in American settlement and trade in the West.

1846
Fort Leavenworth plays a critical part in the **Mexican-American War**. Colonels Stephen Kearny and Alexander Doniphan lead military expeditions from Fort Leavenworth to conquer New Mexico and California.

1861-1865
Fort Leavenworth serves as a depot and transportation center for the Union during the **Civil War**.

1866
The 10th Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army is formed at Fort Leavenworth. Members of this all-black regiment are given the nickname **Buffalo Soldiers** by the tribes they fought against during the American Indian Wars.

1874
US Disciplinary Barracks opens at Fort Leavenworth. This military prison is for service members convicted at court-martial.

1890
Congress passes the **Three Prisons Act**. This marks the genesis of the Federal Prison System. Three United States Penitentiaries (USP) are established at **Leavenworth, KS**, **Atlanta, GA**, and **McNeil Island, WA**.

1917
Now populated with **political prisoners**, Leavenworth Penitentiary and the US Disciplinary Barracks become a flashpoint for radical discourse, and education, earning the nicknames **University of Radicalism** and the **US Revolutionary Training Institute**, respectively.

1918
US declares war on Germany and enters **WWI**, an unpopular decision among the American people. Congress passes the **Espionage Act** and the **Selective Service Act**. Tens of thousands of Americans and foreign nationals are charged as criminals for speaking out against the war. Of those convicted, many were imprisoned in **Leavenworth Penitentiary** and the **US Disciplinary Barracks**.

1923
Sedition Act passed by Congress, more political prisoners are sent to Leavenworth. WWI ends.

1933
George Celino Barnes a.k.a. **Machine Gun Kelly** begins sentence at Leavenworth Penitentiary for bank robbery.

1937
Samuel Caldwell is the first American arrested under the **Marihuana Tax Act** and begins his sentence at Leavenworth Penitentiary.

1941-1945
US enters **WWII**. Generals **Dwight D. Eisenhower** and **Douglas MacArthur**, educated at Fort Leavenworth, lead successful military campaigns. 19,000 officers complete training at Fort Leavenworth. **Nazi spies** Herman Lang and Fritz Duquesne are imprisoned at Leavenworth Penitentiary.

1951
Gus Hall, leader of the **Communist Party USA** is convicted under the Smith Act and begins sentence at Leavenworth Penitentiary

1969 - 1972
Taking cues from the Civil Rights movement and the Third World Left, the **Radical Prison Movement** emerges, based on tenets of **anti-racism**. Widespread strikes and riots occur in men's and women's facilities nationwide, culminating in the historic **Attica Prison Uprising**. At Leavenworth Penitentiary, Puerto Rican **Independentistas** and Chicano inmates organize in solidarity with black and white inmates. The Supreme Court determines that prisons may censor political literature.

1977
American Indian Movement leader **Leonard Peltier** is convicted of killing two FBI agents and begins sentence at Leavenworth Penitentiary.

1988
Puerto Rican nationalist **Oscar López Rivera** is convicted of conspiracy to escape from Leavenworth Penitentiary while serving a fifty-five year sentence for seditious conspiracy to overthrow the US government.

2013
Chelsea Manning is convicted under the Espionage Act and begins her sentence at the US Disciplinary Barracks.

2017
President Obama pardons Oscar López Rivera and Chelsea Manning.