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Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today issued the following statement on the restoration of Fort McDowell in Arizona:

"In visiting Fort McDowell Indian Reservation, Ariz., recently I noted the initial attempts being made to stabilize remnants of two of the structures built and utilized by the Army when the post was an active military establishment. Tribal leaders and officials of the Salt River Indian Agency have indicated their willingness to initiate a restoration and preservation project on these dilapidated buildings and environs. This is a worthwhile endeavor, and I commend the Council on Abandoned Military Posts for encouraging its undertaking.

"Of particular interest is the significance of Fort McDowell to the present-day metropolitan area of Phoenix. Fort McDowell was established in 1865 as a base of operations against the aborigines ranging the Mazatzal Mountains and the Tonto Basin. Jack Swilling, who had commanded the Confederate troops in the engagement in 1862 at Picacho Pass, undertook in 1867 to supply hay from the Salt River plain to Fort McDowell. From this activity he organized a party to build the first irrigation canal, and the settlement which later became Phoenix was begun.

''Whatever can be done to retain those relics of the old post which first attracted settlement to what developed into Arizona's most populous community should be encouraged."