

2014

## Seen on the SFTA Facebook Page

Wagon Tracks Staff

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### Recommended Citation

Wagon Tracks Staff. "Seen on the SFTA Facebook Page." *Wagon Tracks* 28, 4 (2014). [https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/wagon\\_tracks/vol28/iss4/5](https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/wagon_tracks/vol28/iss4/5)

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## Cover Story, *continued from page 2*

- while the remainder of this enclosure furnished stabling capacity for forty heads of mules.
- The walls were two feet thick, so that every part of the building was not only secure against fire and weather, but also proof against bullets.
- With a supply of water which we kept in barrels, we could have withstood a siege.

At full force (in 1866) there were 12 well-armed men at Cimarron (Crossing) stage station.

This image shows the plethora of activity that took place at a lonely place way out on the prairie. There was much more going on than a few wagons passing back and forth. The original drawing was commissioned for the wayside exhibit at Cimarron Crossing Park and will be on display at Rendezvous 2014 in Larned, Kansas.

About the Artist: **Craig Ridenour**, AIA, grew up in Council Grove and still has family connections there and in Cimarron, Kansas. Craig has always had an interest in the Santa Fe Trail. As an artist who works in watercolor, oil, pen, pencil, and pen and ink, he has done several artworks of stone barns and other buildings and is well-known for his rendering talent in the architectural world. Graduating from KSU with a BA in art, he moved to Oklahoma where he received a Masters Degree in Architecture from the University of Oklahoma and a Juris Doctorate degree in Law from Oklahoma City University. He currently practices architecture and law but devotes most of his time to architectural rendering. Craig and his wife Patty live in Oklahoma City. ♦

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### Map lovers are going to love this news!

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) has launched a Historical Topographic Map Explorer, allowing cartography lovers to easily pore through the agency's expansive collection. This new site gives users free access to more than 178,000 of the USGS's maps dating back to 1884, also making them easily searchable by city. Launch the Historical Topographic Map Explorer at [http://chrismahlke.github.io/explorer\\_dev/](http://chrismahlke.github.io/explorer_dev/)

**For an interesting look at the Santa Fe Trail view this video**, made by Mike Nelson at <http://youtu.be/8J467FJ5M6U>

The ruts of the Santa Fe Trail can be seen crossing the remnants of the Eureka Irrigation Canal, also known as "Soule Canal." In the fall of 1882, a vast irrigation system to divert the Arkansas River water was proposed. The venture was financed by millionaire Asa T. Soule of Rochester, New York. Known as the Eureka Irrigation Canal Company, it took two years to dig the 96-mile canal that wound its way up the north side of the Arkansas River through Gray and Ford Counties. Soule paid farmers working during their off seasons \$1.50 a day, or \$2.50 if they brought their own team. However, problems began for the huge irrigation ditch shortly after it was completed. The diversion dam flooded out, canal water seeped through the porous, sandy soil and the erratic flow of the Arkansas River often left the ditch dry. Within five years the grand dream became known as "Soule's Folly." Today, outlines of the canal zigzag along the Arkansas River and serve as a lasting reminder of the dream of making southwest Kansas "bloom like a rose."

## Joanne's Jottings, *continued from page 5*

**Award-winning Photojournalist Travels the Trail:** Recently, freelance author Joe Link spent almost two weeks traveling the Santa Fe Trail and visiting with landowners along the historic route. Joe Link is an award-winning photojournalist and writer, who spent most of his career as executive editor of *Progressive Farmer* magazine. Mr. Link was a bit "overwhelmed" with the huge story of the Santa Fe Trail and all that it encompasses, but after meeting with a few landowners, he was very impressed with the lengths they went to in preserving their portion of the Trail and with their willingness to allow others onto their property to share in that experience. Joe will be doing a six-page story for the magazine, *The Furrow*, an agricultural journal published in fourteen languages by John Deere.

A few of the interviews he did along the Trail include: Rich Lawson, Steve Schmidt, Steve and Jodene Fischer (Fry's Ruts), Joe Swanson, Carolyn Kern (Ralphs Ruts), Jeff Trotman for information on landowners in his area, including Charlie's Ruts, Dan Sharp (Autograph Rock), McNee's Crossing landowner, Faye Gaines (Point of Rocks Ranch), Brad Semmens (Bent's New Fort), as well as others along the Trail such as Ross Marshall and chapter presidents who could give him insight into the positive relationship between landowners and the public interested in Trail history. For more information about the Furrow magazine, see [www.deere.com/furrow](http://www.deere.com/furrow) ♦

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