Nestor Armijo: The Capitalist from Las Cruces ♦ page 10
Voices from a Disease Frontier: Kansans and Cholera 1867 ♦ page 18
Hell on Wheels: Railhead Towns on the Santa Fe Trail ♦ page 28
On the Cover: All Trails Lead to Santa Fe
by Ron Kil

I was commissioned by the Santa Fe Trail Association to provide a painting to promote the Three Trails Conference in Santa Fe in 2015. I chose a Spanish hacendado, a wealthy rancher and landowner, because he best represented the type that would have furnished the trade on all the trails leading from Santa Fe, as well as providing for a thriving market for the Three Trails leading into Santa Fe.

The view is that of old Santa Fe, backed by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, with an atajo from the Old Spanish Trail, carretas from the Camino Real, and conestogas from Missouri, all bound for the trade capital of the Spanish Southwest.

“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” This opening sentence in the novel A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens has been never more prophetic than it is in today’s world and the trials we are facing from the coronavirus COVID-19. The members of the Santa Fe Trail Association understand the historic significance of the trials and tribulations faced by our forefathers as they journeyed west to trade or settle in a new land. Today’s citizens struggle with all that is going on in our economy, our public interaction, and just surviving in the environment that we currently face.

We need to remember that generations before us faced many significant crises from cholera, typhoid, chicken pox, and scurvy. We need to remember that each generation has its own dilemmas to overcome, just as the travelers on the trail, the American Indians, and the local merchants and residents on our great Santa Fe National Historic Trail had to overcome.

In time, all will pass and we will be able to once again hold our group meetings. In the meantime, we can utilize modern technology such as the internet and email to continue our goal of protecting, promoting, and preserving our Santa Fe National Historic Trail.

SFTA President Larry Short

---

About the Santa Fe Trail Association
The mission of the Santa Fe Trail Association is to protect and preserve the Santa Fe Trail and to promote awareness of the historical legacy associated with it.

Follow us online at www.santafetrail.org, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube

---

SFTA Board of Directors

President
Larry Short, President@santafetrail.org
Independence, MO
Vice-President
Chris Day, VP@santafetrail.org
Wamego, KS
Secretary
Marcia Fox, info@santafetrail.org
Treasurer
Ruth Olson Peters, info@santafetrail.org

DIRECTORS
contact at info@santafetrail.org
Mark Brooks
Linda Colle
Faye Gaines
Merideth Hmura
LaDonna Hutton
Majorie Kern
Rich Lawson
Kevin Lindahl
Anne Mallinson
Mike Rogers
Richard Salamon
Sandra Slusser
Christine St. Vrain-Fischahs
Pat Trafas

Publicity Chair
Deb Goodrich

PNTS Representative
Marcia Will-Clifton, PNTS@santafetrail.org

Association Manager
Joanne VanCoevern
785-825-8349 (h), 785-643-7515 (c)
manager@santafetrail.org

Headquarters of the Santa Fe Trail Association is located at the Santa Fe Trail Center, 1349 K-156 Hwy, Larned, KS 67550
Office Manager, Linda Revello
620-285-2054, info@santafetrail.org

Wagon Tracks Editor
Ruth Friesen, 505-681-3026
ditor@santafetrail.org

WAGON TRACKS (ISSN 1547-7703) is the official publication of the Santa Fe Trail Association, a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Colorado.

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/wagon_tracks/vol34/iss3/1
The cholera epidemic of 1867 spawned many "remedies."
Read more in Dr. Leiker's article.

Contents

2 On the Cover: All Trails Lead to Santa Fe
   by Ron Kil, Larry Short

4 Insights from your President

5 Joanne's Jottings

6-7 Rendezvous 2020 and 2021 Symposium

7-9, 16, 32 Trail News

8 In Memoriam: Mary Jean Straw Cook,
   Willard "Dub" Couch, Louann Jordan,
   Alma Gregory

17 Lee Kroh Leaves Legacy: USGS Quad Maps

33 Membership Form

33-35 Chapter Reports

36 Recipes from the Trail

10-16 Nestor Armijo: The Capitalist from Las Cruces
   by Dr. Susan Calafate Boyle

18-27 Voices from a Disease Frontier: Kansans and Cholera 1867
   by Dr. James N. Leiker

28-32 Hell on Wheels: Railhead Towns on the Santa Fe Trail
   by Dr. Michael L. Olsen
Insights from your President by Larry D. Short, President of SFTA

Plans for our 200th Commemoration are well underway, led by Deb Goodrich and her team. Many of the chapters have started plans for commemoration activities in their local areas. The key to success for 2021 will be continued support from each of our 12 chapters along the length of our Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Remember that the 200th is a commemoration of the opening of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Please do not use the word “celebration” in any press releases, posters, flyers, or other modes of advertising upcoming events.

I have created a new DAR Task Force led by Pat Traffas, which includes DAR representatives from each of the five states which the Trail crosses. They will work closely with the National DAR 200th Representative, Dee Sadler, to organize events across the length of the Trail and on a national level.

We continue to add new Trail crossing and segment signs to our sign plan. Recently completed are the Barton County, Kansas, plan for the Great Bend area, plans for the Larned/Pawnee County sites, and the Union County, New Mexico, crossing plan. The jurisdiction forms have been signed by the City of Larned and the Pawnee County Public Works officials, and the signs will be ordered and shipped. Our next major goal will be to complete the signs located on Kansas Department of Transportation rights-of-way. We hope that these signs will be installed by the end of 2020. We are also currently working with the National Park Service to complete the sign program in Missouri with the directional signs along the Missouri Department of Transportation right-of-way. A highlight of the past couple of months has been securing the signed agreement with the New Mexico Highway Department to replace the directional signs on Highway 56 for the Faye Gaines Point of Rocks historic site in Colfax County, New Mexico. Signs have been shipped to NMDOT and will be installed this spring.

One critical issue is the preservation and protection of our Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Great leadership has been provided by our co-chairs of the preservation committee, Faye Gaines and Steve Schmidt, but we need to provide them with much more support and “eyes and ears on the ground” in each of the five states. I have therefore added new representatives from each of the five states to provide local on-the-ground support. A few volunteers have offered to fill these positions, and I’d like more members to volunteer in this capacity. Please contact me directly if you...
have any questions about the position. The protection of our Trail is essential for its future.

The months and years ahead will be both challenging and exciting. We will continue to work as a team with the National Park Service. Their leadership has been, and will continue to be, exceptional and a critical part of our success together. The decisions we make today will most likely have a long impact on the preservation, protection, and promotion of our Association and the Santa Fe National Historic Trail.

Each chapter should continue to encourage ALL of their members to also become members of the national Santa Fe Trail Association. Each SFTA member should set a goal to bring at least one new member to their chapters AND to SFTA. As one of our respected leaders, Pat Palmer, once told me: “You just have to ask them to join.” I challenge each of you to just go ask someone to join.

The Santa Fe Trail has been a prominent part of our American history for nearly 200 years, and we should be extremely proud that we have the tremendous opportunity to put our stamp on our Trail. A very limited number of people will ever have the chance to become stewards of the Trail. Each of us is a part of ensuring that the Santa Fe National Historic Trail remains a viable part of the American scene for generations to come.

For many, the “stay at home” orders resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic feel like time is standing still, with meeting cancellations, social distancing, and maximum numbers for group gatherings as low as five in some states. I can assure you, the National Historic Trails communities continue to work from home offices to ensure that our goals are moving forward.

Currently, all chapter meetings have been postponed/canceled through April, and all chapters are following their respective state guidelines. The spring workshop and board of directors meeting that was scheduled to meet in Dodge City on April 16-17 was cancelled. Instead, board members and chapter presidents attended an online workshop hosted by the National Park Service (NPS) to cover at least a portion of what had been planned for Dodge City.

On April 16, NPS conducted the virtual training workshop on the new protocol for “High Potential Sites and Segments on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail.” We are happy to report that 100 percent of our board members and chapter presidents signed up for this online workshop, showing the dedication of our volunteers and the passion we all share for the Santa Fe Trail. In addition, committees are continuing to maintain contact and proceed with work on projects through phone calls, e-mails, and teleconferencing. I’m sure that those early Trail travelers could never even imagine the speed at which we are able to communicate along the Santa Fe Trail.

And, what about our SFTA headquarters? As you know, the SFTA headquarters is located at the Santa Fe Trail Center near Larned, Kansas. That facility is currently closed as a result of a statewide order resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff, including SFTA staff, schedule time to go into the building to perform necessary tasks such as processing mail, paying bills, and answering correspondence. No one is currently there full-time to answer the phone, so if you do call, please leave a message and someone will return your call as soon as possible. In addition, Linda Revello and I continue to work on SFTA matters from home, and we can be reached by phone, e-mail, text, or even Facebook Messenger. (Contact information on page 2 of Wagon Tracks.) Re-opening is unknown at this time, and will depend on statewide guidelines.

We are in discussions for the filming of another segment of “A Taste of History” from the Santa Fe Trail, and SFTA is continuing efforts to raise funds needed for that. The first segment was filmed in November 2019 at the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm, Olathe, Kansas, and at Council Grove, Kansas, and was covered in the last issue of Wagon Tracks. That segment will be a part of season 11. As soon as we have an air date, we will pass that along to the membership.

Planning will continue for Rendezvous, and we hope that limited travel, social distancing, and maximum numbers for gatherings will be something of a memory by that time. SFTA
leadership is making plans to hold the NPS/SFTA Workshop in conjunction with Rendezvous, with the most likely date for the workshop on Wednesday, September 23, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. followed by the SFTA Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, September 24, at 9:00 a.m. The dates for Rendezvous are September 24-26, and we are very hopeful that the programs can proceed as scheduled.

Santa Fe Trail Anthology by Genealogy Society Coming This Fall

The New Mexico Genealogy Society is publishing an anthology commemorating 200 years of the Santa Fe Trail. Due to be published this fall, the book contains historical archival material, some family history, place names, nuns, soldiers, burials, Ft. Union, school children, one diary of sorts, and a vast amount of photos. The book will be available on Amazon. Details in the next issue of Wagon Tracks.

BECOME AN SFTA PARTNER

We have a good start on long-term fundraising with “Challenges and Gateways”. If you have already given, thank you! You’ve made a great difference in the work of the SFTA. There is much more to do, and additional partnerships are available and vital to our goals.

Become a partner today and receive one of only a few remaining framed, signed Gary Gore prints and a Gateway T-shirt to show your support as a partner. To learn how, contact Rich Lawson at 660-238-4871 or email richlawson@charter.net.

Attend Rendezvous 2020 in Larned September 24-26

You will not want to miss Rendezvous 2020! As always, Rendezvous will be held in Larned, Kansas, with the committee setting September 24-26 for this year’s event. The theme is “Youth on the Santa Fe Trail,” a topic which has often been overlooked. Presentations will examine how the Santa Fe Trail and exposure to the West affected young peoples’ lives and often influenced their future careers. They will address both the positive and negative impact on the Anglo, Hispanic, and American Indian children of the Santa Fe Trail.

Rendezvous will begin on Thursday evening with dinner and an opening event at the Santa Fe Trail Center. Dr. Michael Olsen will speak on “Perceptions of Childhood in 19th-Century America: Eastern Experiences versus Western Expectations.” The attendees will reconvene at the Larned Community Center on Friday morning with John Carson as the first speaker. His topic is “A Better Use for a Saddle: Kit Carson’s First Ventures on the Santa Fe Trail.” He will be followed by Ron Parks who will speak on “The Only Apparent Path Out of the Darkness.” After a break the members of the Larned Elementary School will perform a medley of Santa Fe Trail songs.

Following lunch, Joy Poole will present “Rebecca Mayer’s Santa Fe Trail Honeymoon with 500 Mules and 50 Men.” Cam Kattell will be the next speaker with her talk, “Three Young Lives Shaped by the Santa Fe Trail Experience.” Friday evening activities will convene at the Community Center with dinner and Santa Fe Trail Association Hall of Fame inductees and awards.

Saturday morning will begin with the SFTA’s annual membership meeting. All are welcome to attend. After the meeting there will be a joint program by Dr. Paul Carlson and Dr. Clint Chambers: “Comanche Jack Stilwell: Army Scout and Plainsman.” Susan Metzger, State Regent of the Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) will next present a program on the goals and plans of the DAR for the 200th-year commemoration of the Santa Fe Trail in 2021. Merlene Baird, Regent of the Fort Larned Chapter, DAR, will present a program on the 105th anniversary of the local chapter. Following lunch, Dr. Michael Olsen will speak on “El Niño Loco: Miguel Antonio Otero, Junior.”

For the remainder of the afternoon the Rendezvous seminar will move to Fort Larned NHS. The afternoon speaker will be Sienna Cordoba discussing “The Emergence of Young Hispanics Studying in the US: New Mexican Teens in St. Louis during the Late Nineteenth Century.” After this presentation, attendees can roam the Fort’s grounds to view living history vignettes featuring youth at the Fort. The Fort will present a retreat ceremony prior to the closing dinner and speaker. Dr. Leo Oliva will give the final presentation of Rendezvous 2020: “Children of Military Families on the Santa Fe Trail.”

Principal funding for this program is provided by Humanities Kansas. Assistance for the 2020 Rendezvous is also provided by the National Trails System – Intermountain Region of the National Park Service. We are appreciative of their support. The Rendezvous planning committee is made up of members of the three co-sponsoring organizations: Santa Fe Trail Center, Fort Larned National Historic Site, and the Santa Fe Trail Association.

All SFTA members will receive a registration packet in the mail this summer. In the meantime, mark your calendar now for September 24 – 26, and plan to attend Rendezvous 2020.
The wagons are being loaded, the mules packed, and your 2021 Symposium planning committee is proceeding down the trail in preparation for your unique opportunity to commemorate the 200 years of commerce and the cultural connections which have evolved since William Becknell’s initial trip down the Santa Fé Trail. Reconnect with old acquaintances and make new ones at the Symposium’s receptions, banquets, and various ceremonies at Bent’s Old Fort near La Junta, Colorado.

The committee continues to develop a program which is educational and informative as well as entertaining, as only a bicentennial commemoration deserves. A series of speakers will be selected to enhance your understanding of as many aspects as possible of the trail, its business and its influence on all affected by the route, past, present, and in the future.

Tours are being developed to the east and to the south to introduce attendees to significant sites along the trail on the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fé Trail in Southeastern Colorado. Additionally, on Saturday people can actually get on the Trail with wagons, mules, and horses and have but a small taste of what Trail travel would have been like.

Presently, qualified Living Historians are being sought to demonstrate at Bent’s Old Fort what life would have been like for all of the different types of people who would have been involved in the Trail’s business during its heyday.

For additional information, concerns, or questions and to find the Calls for Papers, Living Historians, and Authors/Artists and Vendors, visit the 2021 Symposium website at www.2021sfts.com or contact bentsfortchaptersftra@gmail.com.

In March, during Women's History Month, Joanne VanCoevern wrote some excellent biographies of women along the Trail that were posted on Facebook. Such topics will translate well to podcast topics. The volumes of Wagon Tracks will be great resources as well. If you have ideas for the website or podcast, please contact me at author.debgoodrich@gmail.com.

In September, I will be attending the Conference of Western Writers in Rapid City. President Candy Moulton has kindly allowed me time to address the conferees about the 200th. This is the ideal crowd to take our message to the masses.

Many of the talks that I had scheduled this spring have been cancelled, but most will be rescheduled and we will soon be back on track.

Our schedules have been turned upside down, but we can reschedule and change plans. Staying healthy is far more important. Here’s hoping we will be safe and congregating in the weeks and months to come.

July 10 is the submission deadline for the August issue of Wagon Tracks.
Awards and Hall of Fame
Nominations Needed

Please consider nominating a deserving person for one of our Santa Fe Trail awards. Only a few nominations have been received to date.

This year is a Rendezvous year and we have the following awards available to present:

• Award of Merit
• David Clapsaddle Memorial Chapter Award
• Paul Bentrup Ambassador Award
• Marc Simmons Writing Award
• Educator Award
• Scholarship Award
• Ralph Hathaway Memorial Heritage Preservation Award
• Gregory Franzwa Memorial for Lifetime Achievement Award
• Louise Barry Writing Award

The criteria for each award are listed at https://www.santafetrail.org/about-us/awards/

The Santa Fe Trail Association Hall of Fame recognizes those individuals who were associated with the Santa Fe Trail during its historic period, or in modern times have made a significant contribution to, an impact on, or preservation of the Santa Fe Trail. Hall of Fame nominations must be made posthumously. There are two categories for nominations to the Hall of Fame:

• Historic Hall of Fame - Individuals who lived prior to 1900 and traveled the Santa Fe Trail and/or made a significant contribution to or had an impact on history of the Santa Fe Trail.

• Individuals who lived after 1900 who have been significant in the study of the Santa Fe Trail, or have made a significant contribution to preservation, historic information, artifacts, or remnants related to the Trail.

Any SFTA member may nominate someone for consideration for the Hall of Fame in either category and should include a 100+ word justification.

Please use the website www.santafetrail.org to submit nominations. If you have photos to submit, email them to trailasmn@gbta.net and indicate for which nomination they are submitted. Remember that we now require a photo release in order to publish a photo supplied as part of a nomination. Include the photo release in your email.

A list of people already in the Hall of Fame is on the SFTA website.

In Memoriam

Mary Jean Straw Cook, a founding member of both the End of the Trail chapter and the Santa Fe Trail Association, died on November 7, 2019, in Albuquerque. Mary Jean's many achievements significantly advanced the knowledge of the southwest and the Santa Fe Trail. Perhaps being a descendent of Josiah Gregg is what motivated Mary Jean to pursue her historical career.

She was the author of Doña Tules: Santa Fé's Courtesan and Gambler. She also wrote Loretto Chapel: The Sisters and Their Santa Fe Chapel, and Of Immortal Summer, A Victorian Women's Travels in the Southwest, which chronicled the 1897 letters and photographs of sisters Josephine and Amelia Hollenbeck. She received the SFTA Marc Simmons Writing Award, along with Alma Gregory, in 2003. Ten of her articles appear in Wagon Tracks.

She researched the death of James S. Calhoun, New Mexico's first territorial Governor, who died on the Santa Fe Trail, and spearheaded an effort to fund and erect a gravestone at his still to-this-day-unknown gravesite in Union Cemetery, Kansas City, Missouri.

Willard “Dub” Couch died January 20, 2020. Dub was a member of the SFTA Board of Directors from 2000-2007, and a big supporter of the Bent’s Fort Chapter and the Santa Fe Trail. Many will remember his lively personality and his providing rides at events with his golf carts. Dub was instrumental in efforts to open the lines of communication between the chapters and the national organization and was very helpful in setting up meeting arrangements for SFTA.

Louann Jordan died January 22, 2020. She earned a degree in graphic design at Ohio State University, which she put to good use as a cartographer, geological and archeological illustrator, graphic designer, and museum curator in places such as Denver, Missoula, Chicago, and Santa Fe. Louann drew almost all of the Coats of Arms displayed on the Santa Fe Plaza during Fiestas celebrations.

Louann was a long-term member of the End of Trail Chapter and several civic and professional organizations, and was the former chairperson of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation. In 2008, she retired after 35 years of working at El Rancho de las Golondrinas.

Alma Gregory died on March 19, 2020, in Santa Fe, of complications from a fall. Her wish was to be cremated and her ashes scattered at her mountain home northwest of Sapello. She was a longtime member of SFTA and wrote the Corazon Chapter newsletter for many years. She was awarded the Marc Simmons Writing Award in 2003.
SFTA Membership News

By Marcia Fox
Membership Chair

The Santa Fe Trail Association would like to welcome our new members:

- **From Missouri:** D. J. Champagne, Independence; Terry & Dee Saddler, Sharon; Ethel Evans, Ulysses; Jason Green, Lenexa; Steve Hitchcock, Baldwin City; Marti Mishaly, Lawrence; Jone Roth, Green; City of Council Grove, Council Grove; and Doug Sharp, Wichita.

- **From Kansas:** T. & Dee Saddler, Sharon; Ethel Evans, Ulysses; Jason Green, Lenexa; Steve Hitchcock, Baldwin City; Marti Mishaly, Lawrence; Jone Roth, Green; City of Council Grove, Council Grove; and Doug Sharp, Wichita.

- **From Oklahoma:** Gavin & Vanessa Lock, Bixby; and Lynne Harris, Ramona. From Colorado: Colleen Messersmith, Lamar; Lance Barron, Weston; Rebecca Bener, Broomfield; James Freeman, Wheat Ridge; Dallas Powell, Longmont; Brad Semmens, Wiley; Stuart West, La Junta; and Elizabeth Lindquist, Colorado Springs.

- **From New Mexico:** Kathleen Matta and Peggy Poling, Santa Fe; Will Steinsiek, Lakin; Mary Jean Cook, Santa Fe; Henry Trauer, Lincoln, NE; and Dale Wedel, Laramie, WY.

- **From other states:** Ralph Bruce, Roxana, IL; Jane Allen, Basking Ridge, NJ; James Lindstrom, Memphis, TN; and Donald Owen, Round Hill, VA.

Our loyal Charter members of the Association, who joined in 1987, the year the SFTA was formed are: From Missouri: Gary Cundiff, St. Louis; Arrow Rock St. Historical Site, Arrow Rock; and Anne Mallinson, Center View. From Kansas: Britt and Linda Colle, McPherson; Marcia and Ron Fox, Wamego; Betsy Crawford and Michael Gore, Larned; Linda and Bruce Peters, Lakin; Ruth and Reed Peters, Larned; John Statler, Topeka; Clinton and Delaine Stalker, Satanta; Alice Clapsaddle, Larned; Christine Day, Wamego; William Drews, Hutchinson; Dorothy Kroh, Larned; Martha Scranton, Larned; John Stratton, Lawrence; Malcolm Strom, Dwight; Dave Webb, Protection; Santa Fe Trail Center, Larned; Bill and Susan Bunyan, Dodge City; Barbara Clark, Liberal; Mary Conrad, Kansas City; Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Hall, Shawnee Mission; Leo and Bonita Oliva, Woodston; Kearney County Historical Society, Lakin; and Mary Cottom, Manhattan. From Colorado: Phil and Carolyn Virden, Lake City; and Larry Black, Woodland Park. From Oklahoma: Tim and Ann Zwink, Piedmont; Harold Kachel, Beaver; Ron and Karla French, Tipton; and Pamela Parsons, Tulsa. From Colorado: Gerald & Marcia Faust, Pueblo West; John Russell, Parker; and David Sandovall, Pueblo. From New Mexico: Charles Hawk, Taos; Star Jones, Santa Fe; Susan Richardson, Clayton; Gerald Schulz, Tyrone; Dennis and Glady Schneider, Cimarron; and Marc Simmons, Albuquerque. From other states: Jeff Bransford, Arlington, MA; Susan Doyle, Pendleton, OR; Arthur Siverling, Youngstown, OH; Les Vilda, Wilber, NE; and Dale Wedel, Laramie, WY. Thank you to such loyal members!

Sadly, seven members passed away throughout the 2019 membership year:

- Gary Hylton, Las Animas, CO; Louann Jordan, Santa Fe, NM; Gerald Moore, Evergreen, CO; Robert Van Dyke, Marshall, MO; Mary Jean Cook, Santa Fe, NM; Henry Trauer, Lincoln, NE; and Vernon Lohrentz, North Newton, KS.

Notes from the Junior Wagon Master Program

By Janet Armstead, Program Director

We are gearing up for a (hopefully) busy summer. We are out of Freighter booklets, but the funds have been raised and the project submitted to a printer. We will soon have to print the Bullwhacker booklets, and I believe we have the funds for them as well. Restocking of our 21 sites will begin as soon as moving around in public is allowed again.

I have applied for a grant. If that should happen to work out, we will have all four booklets in good quantity for our 200th Commemoration year.

Pictured is the Muller family from Colorado who traveled the trail and all earned patches.
Nestor Armijo: The Capitalist from Las Cruces

By Susan Calafate Boyle

[Nestor Armijo personified the second generation of wealthy New Mexican merchants associated with the Santa Fe Trade. From his Las Cruces headquarters, he operated south into Mexico and west to California, and bought goods in Missouri and New York City.

At the time of his death (May 7, 1911), Las Cruces newspapers described him as a millionaire and the richest man in New Mexico; it was not much of an exaggeration. Born to wealth and privilege, Nestor Armijo managed to maintain his family fortune through much effort and hard work. His family’s commercial operations entailed a lot of risk, and diversifying economic activities helped them to minimize the hazards inherent in a system where uncertainty was the norm. Nestor was also instrumental in the development of newly-established communities like Las Cruces and Tularosa. A thoughtful man of action, he embodied the merchant class that was essential to the development of pioneer societies.

Nestor Armijo was born on February 28, 1831, in Los Padillas, south of Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was the eldest son of Juan Cristóbal Armijo and Juana M. Chávez, both members of the wealthiest and most influential families in the territory. Nestor had seven siblings, but only three, Manuela, Nicolás, and Justo, reached adulthood.

What was Nestor Armijo like? Surviving images convey an impression of seriousness (see Figure 1), but Nestor was not a physically imposing man. A description from December 1874 survives: at 41 years of age he was described as white, 5 feet 8 inches tall with gray eyes, Roman nose, no beard, and greying hair. In the Twelfth Census of the United States (1900) Nestor identified himself as a “capitalist” (see Figure 2). However, at 68 years of age, he had lost some of his fortune, partially as a result of the economic upheaval in nineteenth-century Northern Mexico where he lived and worked for a number of years.

Nestor Armijo acquired the reputation of being a kind and generous man, characteristics emphasized in obituaries and eulogies after his death. His contemporaries thought very highly of him. Some of the Las Cruces -Tularosa settlers remembered him with fondness:

If any man ranked with the top charitable persons of the age it was Don Nestor. It seemed God had blessed Don Nestor so abundantly in wealth and family life. Whenever the people of the valley were in need, the cry was, “Vaya con Don Nestor!” Don Nestor’s charity did not begin or stop with these persons in need. The Armijo household had standing instructions: every Saturday there will be prepared a feast and all ancianos, viejitos – old people – men, women and children are invited to eat!

Documentation on his early years is scant, yet we know that at the age of 12 Nestor attended the Christian Brother’s School in St. Louis. After completing his education he returned to Albuquerque and, like others of his generation, worked for the family business running stores, freighting, and overseeing cattle and large herds of sheep.

In 1853 Nestor made his first trip to California, following the Gila and the Colorado Rivers and eventually crossing the Mojave Desert. He was part of a team driving 55,000 sheep owned by three leading New Mexico families, Armijo, Otero, and Chávez, to gold mining communities and the San Francisco market. John B. Colligan, Nestor’s great-grandson who had ac-
cess to documents no longer available, asserts that the trip took almost two years and that Nestor went back to California the following year.9

In 1855 Nestor married Josefa Yrisarri, the daughter of Mariano Yrisarri and his first wife, Juanita Otero, also members of the New Mexican mercantile elite. Josefa (see Figure 3) was educated and refined. Nestor’s obituary described her as “a woman who had much culture acquired by association with the best people of the east where she was well known and spent much time, also in wide circles of travel in Europe and in the United States.” She was described as “the noble wife of Nestor Armijo was constantly by his side. She too was of the heroic mold. She shared with him the many hardships and dangers of those days and many a time it devolved upon her to have sole charge of expeditions and to guard and watch the great caravans by day and by night.”10 Nestor and Josefa had only one son, Charles H. Armijo.

The first generation of wealthy New Mexico merchants appears to have successfully groomed their children to follow their trajectory. They sent them away to boarding school to receive an adequate education. Nicolás Tolentino Armijo, Nestor’s brother, went to school in Chihuahua and learned German and French; Felipe Chávez, their cousin, went to the Guadalajara Seminario. They all became fluent in English, and their travels, sometimes accompanying their fathers, would help them to establish connections and learn how the trade business operated.

Who were the Armijos? Nestor’s family was among the wealthiest and most influential in the province. Together with the Oteros, Yrisarris, Perais, and Chávez, they constituted the New Mexican mercantile elite.11 The first generation of New Mexico merchants who participated in the Santa Fe Trade was born early in the nineteenth century. They began traveling east to the United States in the late 1830s and 1840s. They intermarried and developed business connections both in the Midwest and the Eastern United States as well as in Mexico, particularly the provinces of Chihuahua, Durango, and Sonora. One of the most successful was Nestor’s father, Juan Cristóbal Armijo, a colonel in the Mexican army. Nestor wrote a one-page summary of the life of his father, in which he stressed that his father started going to the United States in 1840 to buy merchandise, “being one of the first New Mexicans to do so.”12

Both the first and second generation of New Mexico’s mercantile elite made their fortunes raising sheep and, to lesser extent, cattle. Freight ing, supplying U.S. Army posts, and operating mercantile stores were other activities that contributed to their success. However, minimizing risk was always one of their goals, and very seldom did families rely completely on one way of increasing or sheltering their wealth. Indian depredations, robberies, droughts, epidemics, price fluctuations, debtors’ inability to pay, and other factors were frequent and impacted the value of their holdings. As wise entrepreneurs, they knew that they had to diversify their operations and could not rely completely on any one business activity to make a successful living.13

Nestor’s surviving personal correspondence from the 1850s through the 1870s is limited. Testimony from men hired by Nestor and his father indicate that in the 1850s and 1860s Nestor worked as merchant, freighter, and manager of the large herds of sheep and cattle the Armijo family owned. Depredation claims submitted in December 1887 as a result of losses Nestor and his father experienced from Indian attacks in 1860, 1862, and 1865 include sworn testimony from men in charge of the Armijo herds. The details in the report are quite valuable as they describe some of Nestor’s activities during this period.14 Francisco Lucero, one of the men who witnessed the 1865 attack, stated that:

“Don Nestor Armijo has always been a man of means… in the 1850 and 1860s engaged in stock raising, merchandising, and freighting. His freighting was entirely overland by means of mule trains. In the year A.D. 1865 I was in his employ as majordomo of his mule train. In September of that year he was moving a quantity of merchandise from one of his houses at Albuquerque to a store he had at Las Cruces in Doña Ana County… I had charge of that mule train, which consisted of some 10 mule freighting wagons…”15

Lucero was again interrogated in 1893 regarding the claim and added that “…They had been en route from Albuquerque in the later part of September 1865, and had been on the road for about twelve days when the attack occurred. The train consisted of ten wagons with ten mules per wagon,
plus the fourteen teamsters. The train was hauling groceries and some freight from the states.”

Another witness, David Sisneros y Ruiz, concurred with the previous testimony and added that Nestor’s family (his wife and child) were along in an ambulance that he was driving. He remembered the exact number of mules the Apache had stolen in 1865 – 55 freighting mules, which were valued at $125.00 per head. Another witness, Rufino Zamora, testified that in 1857 or 1858 Nestor had brought 300 head of cattle from the state of Sonora, Mexico.  

By 1862 Nestor moved to Las Cruces where he operated a supply store on North Main Street, part of a chain of similar enterprises that Nestor and his brother Nicolás Tolentino would run in Albuquerque, El Paso, and Chihuahua. Surviving ledgers illustrate some of Nestor’s activities at this time. An October 1, 1863 entry (probably from one of the Armijo stores in Albuquerque) identifies the sums received “since Nestor left for Las Cruces.” Other entries reveal that during the 1860s Nestor supplied grains and arranged disbursements on behalf of officers stationed at U.S. Army posts, such as Fort Craig and Fort Selden. At Las Cruces in 1864 he facilitated payment to soldiers at Fort Craig. In 1865 he handled libranzas (orders of payment) to be remitted to Glasgow Brothers, mostly involving U.S. Army personnel. Through 1866 he continued to act as a conduit for payments and credits to Fort Craig. In June 22, 1866, he arranged for covering expenditures through the Paymaster of the United States Army, Assistant Treasurer of the United States at New York. On Jan 21, 1867, he fulfilled a contract with the U.S. Army Chief Quartermaster of the District of New Mexico for 28,000 pounds of corn for a total of $550 to be delivered to Fort Selden on October 20, 1867.

Nestor traveled regularly from Albuquerque south to Las Cruces, to El Paso, Tucson, Arizona, California, and Chihuahua, Mexico. He also journeyed east to Missouri and beyond to Philadelphia and New York where he made major purchases of merchandise. In 1864 Nestor took wool to Westport Landing with other sheep owners.

That same year he traveled to New York from where he wrote to his uncle Ambrosio. The letter dated October 21, 1864, acknowledged receipt of a communication from August 23 in which Ambrosio informed Nestor that the family’s merchandise train had been attacked by Indians, who stole 40,000 pesos in mules. Nestor countered that Ambrosio had been fortunate because he was able to keep all the carts and the merchandise. The letter included information about another libranza to be paid in St. Louis. A month later Nestor wrote to Ambrosio again about arrangements for the payment of the libranzas that were sent to St. Louis and reported on the fluctuations of the price of gold and cotton.

Trips to the eastern United States would continue even after he moved to Chihuahua. The picture of his wife, Josefa (figure 3), taken in Philadelphia in 1870, documents one such trip. In 1868 he went to Chihuahua to sell American goods wholesale and eventually resettled and purchased property there. Two years later, still in Chihuahua, he collected various drafts payable to the account of James F. Hickman of San Antonio for $17,150.32. However, soon after, conditions began to deteriorate. In a June 1872 letter to Hickman, Nestor described the situation in Chihuahua. One of the armies was near Parral and was expected to attack the city soon. The governor was raising men to defend the city and another military force was nearby. He concluded by saying, “God knows what will become of us. Business is dull; the Aduanas full duty. If I should run away from here I will deposit your money…” Four month later a letter from his brother Nicolás who was still in Berlin, Germany, gave Nestor the author-
ity to liquidate a lot of their merchandise and possibly some property, since they estimated that unrest would produce a devaluation of about 90 percent.\textsuperscript{25} Nestor was still in Chihuahua in December 1876 when he paid his monthly contribution for the state security forces known as “Guardia de Iturbide.”\textsuperscript{26} Later he would insure his Chihuahua store, located in the center of the city in the main Cathedral Square, with the British firm Northern Assurance Company (1888-1889) and the London Assurance (1889-90). In April 1892 he purchased land in Chihuahua from Nestor and Helena Ascárate and in June of that year additional property and cattle from Hugo Stephenson and his wife. He also acquired shares in the Banco Minero de Chihuahua. He continued to travel frequently to Chihuahua to manage his holdings and made investments in that province mostly via Don Luis Terrazas, who controlled much of Chihuahua’s land and financial resources. Although nothing survives to document when he moved back to the United States, by 1877 Nestor had purchased a house in Las Cruces. Although he was forced to leave valuable real estate in Mexico and lost funds that he had invested, he continued to conduct businesses in Mexico until his death in 1911.

His commitment to Las Cruces development became evident in 1879. At that time the Santa Fe Railroad Co. planned to build a spur to Mesilla, the Doña Ana County seat. However, Mesilla leaders could not agree on a price for a 100-acre parcel the railroad needed as a right-of-way. Nestor Armijo and Martín Amador, another important Las Cruces merchant, jumped at the opportunity as they could see the economic benefits that would result and donated the 100 acres for the land. Both Nestor and Martin were influential community merchants who understood the important role that merchants played in the development of pioneer communities like Las Cruces.\textsuperscript{27} As were other second-generation New Mexican merchants, he was an excellent record keeper. The ledgers from his stores were meticulously kept and he appears to have systematically recorded most commercial transactions – what he sold, to whom, how much of it was paid back. His attention to detail is evident after 1882 when he began to record all his business and some personal correspondence in letterpress notebooks. Two of these volumes, covering the period from 1882 to 1892, survive. They include letters to many prominent and influential New Mexicans and Mexicans, including Archbishop of Santa Fe Jean Baptiste Lamy, New Mexico Governor L. Bradford Prince, Chihuahua banker and entrepreneur Guadalupe Azcárate, industrialist and Governor Enrique Creel, Chihuahua entrepreneur and Governor Luis Terrazas, Gaspar Horcasitas, Felipe Maceyra, shipping and consignment firms, like Chick and Armijo, Brown and Manzanares, the Glasgow Brothers, and others.

Close to 1,000 letters survive, some in Spanish, others in English; however, many of these documents have bled and are very difficult to read. These notebooks are important because Nestor’s letters highlight what long-distance trade merchants did to reduce risk: 1) obtain the best information available about market conditions and the competence and reliability of other merchants; 2) rely on agents to act on their behalf and to obtain information; and 3) rely on family networks to avoid issues with trust.\textsuperscript{28}

Nestor carefully documented loans, payments, expenses, and made a special effort to avoid future claims against his estate. A number of such documents survive. In one of them he clarified the background for a claim concerning 300 head of sheep and stated that:

“This paper proves that they have no right to claim as they were satisfied the sheep were turned over to Rafael Aguilar of Tularosa. If any lawsuit it is out of limitations. According to their own letters they became satisfied of having delivered them to Aguilar. They have no right to the claim. They have to go after Aguilar and not me.”\textsuperscript{29} Second-generation merchants were intent in diversifying their commercial operations to minimize risk inherent in the Santa Fe trade. Nestor’s main focus was real estate.\textsuperscript{30} At various time he owned more than 100 different pieces of property around

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure6.jpg}
\caption{Restored Nestor Armijo house, Las Cruces, New Mexico, January 2019. Image courtesy of the author}
\end{figure}
Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Tularosa, Sabinal, El Paso, and in several locations in Mexico. In 1869 he acquired a house on the main street in Las Cruces from his uncle Ambrosio Armijo, for which he paid $1,000, but it seems that he moved to Chihuahua shortly after this purchase. In the 1880s he acquired substantial holdings in Albuquerque during the boom associated with the coming of the railroad. He also rented several properties in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and even in Chihuahua, Mexico.31

In 1877 he purchased the Las Cruces home of Maricita Daily (Mrs. D. B. Rey) for $4,050. He soon enlarged it and added a second floor.32 The finely restored house, listed in the National Register of Historic Places (December 12, 1976), has been described as the finest nineteenth-century house in southern New Mexico. (Figures 4-6)

Another important property was in Sabinal, Socorro County. It is not clear when Nestor purchased this property, but in November 1882 he filed a claim with the Second Judicial District of the Territory of New Mexico against the New Mexico and Southern Pacific Railroad Company. According to Nestor the property had been a source of great profit because he was able to raise large crops of corn, wheat, barley, rye, oats, peas, beans, potatoes, and other vegetables and cereals. He also grew a variety of fruits, such as grapes, apples, plums, pears, peaches, and other fruits. Nestor had made major improvement to the property erecting dwelling houses, outhouses, barns, stables, corrals, fences, and enclosures. His claim asserted that the railroad had constructed the bed and track through the property's premises and had closed up and obstructed the waterway and acequia (ditch), so that the land flooded and became totally unfit for cultivation, depriving the owner of the possibility of sowing, reaping, and/or using the land in any profitable way. The structures on the land were badly damaged as were “personal property, provisions, stores, wares, and merchandise.”33

He also acquired two major ranches at Tres Ritos (Three Rivers) near Tularosa, and at Janos, Chihuahua. The Tres Ritos Ranch land was substantial and purchased incrementally in the 1880s. It would finally include close to 15,000 acres. Nestor’s son, Charles H. Armijo, managed the property, but was not a very successful administrator. Correspondence indicates that he was in almost constant need of financial assistance from his father.34 The ranch was eventually purchased by Secretary of the Interior Albert F. Fall of Teapot Dome fame. Nestor bought “La Patotada,” the ranch near Janos, Mexico, jointly with one of his Mexican partners, Guadalupe Azcárate, in the mid-1880s, but problems in getting confirmation of the transaction from the Mexican government continued at least through 1900.

Armijo also served the banking needs of the community. He functioned as an investor, lender, and speculator. He made it possible for small businessmen to put money in his huge safe, a common practice in communities where banks were not yet established. Although the major focus of his activities later in life was the purchase and administration of real estate as well as the sale of merchandise, he continued to lend money and financially support family members and acquaintances. For example, on April 17, 1867, he loaned $7,000 to Henry Warren of Concordia, in El Paso County, and took as security a mule train consisting of six wagons, harnesses, and 60 mules. Armijo was to hold the mule train for 30 days and then Warren could reclaim the train by paying back the $7,000 plus the feed for the mules and the actual expense of the men who cared for the train and the animals. Armijo was not to be held responsible for any risks or deaths concerning the mules, and when reclaimed he was to receive payment plus interest at 12 percent for the period the money was outstanding. Armijo’s personal papers confirm that lending continued over the years. Various notes from a number of individuals survive that indicate that Nestor charged from 8-12 percent interest on his loans.

Unlike his father who was elected several times to the New Mexico Territorial Legislature, Nestor never overtly participated in politics at the local or state levels. He could have had plenty of political influence in Doña Ana politics because of his economic standing and sterling reputation. J. Francisco Chávez, acting as President of the Constitutional Convention, appointed Nestor Armijo on November 7, 1889, to be one of the 25 representatives of the Territory, but no evidence survives to suggest that Nestor participated.35

Nestor cared greatly about education and made sure that his son and his grandchildren received proper schooling. Charles attended school at Germantown, Pennsylvania, and Heidelberg, Germany. An 1896 receipt from St. Mary’s College in Oakland, California, shows that he paid for his grandson’s tuition as well as for his violin lessons and incidental expenses.36 That same year tuition receipts from Loretto Academy in Denver, Colorado, show that his granddaughters Gertrude and Dolores were receiving high quality instruction.37

The last decades of Nestor’s life brought him a lot of sorrow. His brother Nicolás, who had been his close business partner and friend, committed suicide in 1890. Nestor’s son Charles (Carlos) and his wife Beatriz died within weeks of each other. Nestor’s wife died of cancer in 1905 in Rochester, Minnesota, where she was being treated for cancer. At this time, Nestor began to liquidate several of his holdings in the Tularosa area, probably because with the death of his son he did not have anyone to manage them. He did suffer financially from the Mexican Revo-
lution upheaval. Armies and guerillas butchered his cattle and sheep and confiscated his horses. Bank's stock, both in Mexico City and Chihuahua, lost most of its value. El Paso Mortgage and Investment Company failed, and the value of real estate and rents dropped dramatically. He died at his home on May 7, 1911.

Nestor was not the only successful second generation Santa Fe trade merchant. Others, like Felipe Chávez and José Leandro Perea, equalled him in wealth and accomplishments. None of them went into politics, but they contributed to the growth of their communities. Their influence in the development of the trade and the territory of New Mexico should no longer be ignored.

Endnotes
1. The author acknowledges support from the Santa Fe Trail Association Research Grant program that made the study possible. She wants to thank the staff at the Archives and Special Collection Department, University Library, New Mexico State University, particularly Jennifer Olguín and Teddie Moreno, for their assistance in conducting this research.
2. Lewis E. Atherton, The Pioneer Merchant in Mid-America (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 7, 10-23 described in great detail the significant role that merchants played in pioneer communities. Enough documents survive to write a comprehensive biography of Nestor Armijo, but such a document is beyond the scope of the current study.
3. The Nestor Armijo papers are part of the Armijo and Gallagher families' papers (hereafter Armijo and Gallagher) at the Archives and Special Collections at New Mexico State University. Additional records on deeds and a lawsuit against the Southern Pacific Railroad Company are at the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives at Santa Fe. The Armijo documents are both in Spanish and English. John B. Colligan wrote an unpublished manuscript on the Armijo family history in 1991 (Armijo and Gallagher), “Nestor Armijo (José, Vicente, Salvador Manuel ‘El Segundo,’ Vicente Ferrer, Juan, Juan Cristóbal).” The Armijo and Gallagher documents are listed by date.
4. Feliciana, Rafaela, Juan, Pedro died before reaching adulthood. Nicolás Tolentino (1835-1890), Justo R. (1852-1936) and Manuela Armijo de Yrisarry (1840-1926) were his surviving siblings.
6. 1900 Census report for Doña Ana County (Precinct 3. June 15, 1900). The entry records the members of the Nestor Armijo household: Josefa, his wife, Charles, his son, and grandchildren Nestor, Dolores, and Josephine. By this time his only son, Charles, was living with his parents and was already estranged from his wife Beatriz.
7. Colligan, “Nestor Armijo,” 15. Unfortunately Colligan does not provide a source for this quote. Nestor Armijo was instrumental in assisting the settlement of Tularosa.
9. Colligan, Armijo and Gallagher, 2-3. The reliability of some of this information might be questionable. For example, John O. Baxter’s Las Carneradas: Sheep Trade in New Mexico, 1700-1860 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), mentions that a party of New Mexicans testing the California market went west in 1853 with 25,000 sheep, the largest flock of the season. The group included Antonio José Luna, his brother Rafael as well as Ambrosio Armijo (Nestor’s uncle). According to Baxter the expedition ran into trouble west of the Colorado when 1,100 sheep sank down in sandy terrain and were trampled to death by the ones who were coming behind, 121. Katherine D. Stoes’s series of articles on the Armijo family published in Las Cruces Citizen after Nestor’s death might be the source for the information on Armijo’s trip to California.
10. Las Cruces Citizen obituary was published on December 15, 1911. Nestor and Josefa at least had one daughter Maria Carolina. She was baptized in 1856; she apparently died when she was 3 or 4 years old.
11. Fray Angélico Chavez’s genealogical work on New Mexico families indicates that Nestor’s family was not related to that of Governor Manuel Armijo, Origins of New Mexico Families: A Genealogy of the Spanish Colonial Period (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1992), 136-38, 318-19, 344. Census data for 1860 indicate that José Leandro Perea, Mariano Yrisarry, Manuel A. Otero, and Juan Cristóbal Armijo were the richest New Mexicans, Population Schedules, Eighth Census of the United States. Original Returns of the Assistant Marshalls, Microfilm Edition, 14/6. Rolls 712-16. The 1870 Census data show little change with Perea, Otero, and Juan Cristóbal and his brother Ambrosio joining Felipe Chávez as the wealthiest New Mexicans; Ninth Census of the United States. Original Returns of the Assistant Marshall, Microfilm Edition, 12/7, rolls 893–97.
12. Armijo and Gallagher, n.d. The title of the document is Lo que sé de mi padre (What I know about my father). It was probably written in the early 1890s after the death of Juan Cristóbal in 1884. Surviving manifests and guías indicate New Mexican merchants began going east in earnest in the mid and late 1830s. Both Juan Cristóbal and his brother Ambrosio were very active not only bringing foreign merchandise into New Mexico, but also carrying it south to Chihuahua and Sonora. They also hauled many shipments of domestic manufactures to Mexican provinces. Between 1838 and 1844 Ambrosio was issued 8 guías; Juan Cristóbal received 11 guías; MANM, roll 21 frames 305, 316, 325, 349, 351, 354, 356, 358; roll 34, frame 1206, 1208, 1211, 1215; roll 37 frames 395, 398, 399; roll 40 frames 283, 318.
14. The original claim only refers to them as “Indians.” However, from the depositions it appears that the Navajo were at fault in 1860 and 1862 and the Apache in 1865, Armijo and Gallagher, December 14, 1887. Although many of these claims were exaggerated and denied, the information from the depositions helps to document Armijo’s activities during this period.
15. Armijo and Gallagher, December 12, 1887.
18. Colligan, “Nestor Armijo,” 15. Jack Colligan speculates that possibly Nestor moved to Las Cruces to manage Mariano Yrisarry’s store. Mariano was his father-in-law and also had various economic enterprises in the Albuquerque area. While in Las Cruces he befriended the people who would settle in Tularosa, New Mexico. He helped finance and outfit their caravan. Later these settlers and their children would work at Nestor’s Three Rivers ranch.
19. Armijo and Gallagher, October 1, 1863.
20. Armijo and Gallagher, January 21, 1867; October 23, 1863.
RUTS, TRAILS AND SWALES: NOW YOU SEE THEM, NOW YOU DON’T?

By Rich Lawson, Fundraising Chair

As we begin to round up wagons for our 200-year commemoration of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, we have much to be thankful for. Thanks to a group of enthusiasts who had the vision in 1986 to form an organization with the goals to preserve, protect, and promote the SFNHT. From that time forward the SFTA has been busy doing just that.

Help monetarily and with boots on the ground has come from our members, friends, and the National Park Services. This has been the support system which has served the Association well for 35 years—but times have changed.

The costs of administering the SFTA, the expenses of functions across the span of the trail, in short, the costs of preserving, protecting, and promoting the SFNHT will never get cheaper—we no longer have our grandfathers’ budget.

Thanks to our members who have already participated in our early fundraisers. However, WE NEED PARTNERS. If you have already become a partner, thank you.

The committee would like to enlist many members and friends by introducing a way to become a PARTNER before 2021.

If 200 members and friends contribute $200 each before our 200-year commemoration, the SFTA will raise $40,000 to use for the many expenses of the commemoration and continue to preserve, protect, and promote our important history. Help us to ALWAYS be able to see the ruts, trails, and swales.

Write your check and mail it to the SFTA at 1349 K-156 Hwy, Larned, KS, 67550, ATTN: Linda Revello.
Lee Kroh Leaves Legacy of USGS Quad Maps to be Digitized

By Gary L. Hicks
Lifetime SFTA Member

Lee Kroh, named to the Santa Fe Trail Association’s Hall of Fame in 2019, has left a legacy that will soon be accessible to all.

He mapped and marked the original historic trail alignments in the Kansas City area, using Government Land Office (GLO) 1850s surveys of a new Kansas Territory (housed at the Kansas Historical Society). This initiative evolved into the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association (KCAHTA)’s popular Historic Frontier Trails Map. Lee Kroh and his wife Dorothy were among the founders of the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association.

As his interest grew, Kroh collected 342 U.S.G.S. maps (also known as 7.5-minute quadrangles or Quads). (https://www.usgs.gov/core-science-systems/national-geospatial-program/topographic-maps). He used the Quads to reference and map the historical trails and roads of the 1800s era as noted:

- complete historic route of the Santa Fe Trail between Old Franklin, Missouri, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, including alignments of the optional ‘Mountain Route’ and ‘Cimarron Routes’
- segments of the congruent Oregon-California Trails in the Kansas City region
- historic Ft. Leavenworth-to-Ft. Scott Military Road (including portions of which traversed through Johnson County-Wyandotte County-Leavenworth County, Kansas regions of the general Kansas City area.)
- Miscellaneous territorial roads in the Kansas City area

All 342 of the Quads have been grouped by historic trail routes according to associated trails and state Quad indexing. Each Quad has been numbered sequentially from (001) through (342) to correspond to the sequential pattern of a trail’s routing and state Quad indexing. A complete master listing of the Quads has been developed which correlates to the Quad trail route groups, by state. These tasks were undertaken by KCAHTA members Ross Marshall, Robert

Courtney (Chair, KCAHTA Archives Committee), Craig Voorhees, and Gary Hicks, President, KCAHTA.

Five new additional contemporary U.S.G.S. 1:24,000 scale ‘State Quad index maps’ (Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma) have been added to the collection by KCAHTA for reference to guide researchers, scholars, students, and public-at-large to effectively associate the location of an individual 7.5-minute Quad with the same named location indicated on the United States State Quad index maps.

With the passing of Mr. Kroh in February of 2019, materials of his personal estate were gifted to KCAHTA by the Kroh family and subsequently transferred to the newly established Lee and Dorothy Kroh Collection of the KCAHTA Archives contained at the Mabee Learning Commons of MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas. Through the professional photographic services provided by Kansas Historical Society, the digitized Quad files and associated materials will be incorporated online at www.KansasMemory.org for continuous storage, hosting, and public access.

The Quads have not yet been digitized. However, preparations are being finalized to transfer them from the KCAHTA archives in Olathe, Kansas, to the Kansas Historical Society (KSHS) in Topeka which will do the photographic digitization and subsequent upload to the www.kansasmemory.org website. +
Voices from a Disease Frontier: Kansans and Cholera 1867

By James N. Leiker

[Reprinted from Kansas History, A Journal of the Central Plains, Winter 1994, with permission by the Kansas Historical Society. Dr. Leiker presented this topic at the SFTA Rendezvous in Larned, Kansas, in September 2018.]

In the summer of 1867 as the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, pushed westward to establish a transportation link between Kansas City and the Colorado gold fields, the Kansas Plains filled with railroad workers, settlers, soldiers, and camp followers. With their weaponry and adaptive farming techniques, the new arrivals sought to extend their version of “civilization” to the area west of Fort Riley, known colloquially as “no man’s land.” These voyagers transported more than their technology and their cultural and social values; they also carried in their bowels thousands of tiny, invisible, swiriling organisms known to a later age as *Vibrio Comma* or *Vibrio cholera*, the comma-shaped bacilli that transmit cholera. Under normal healthy conditions, the bacillus poses little threat to humans, yet when it comes in contact with decaying matter, usually found in contaminated food or water, the cholera becomes deadly.

In 1866–1867 Kansas was the site of a devastating cholera epidemic that killed hundreds of persons, the total of which is still debated. During its first year the disease struck at the older, established communities of eastern Kansas, sending their citizens into dreadful anticipation of a renewed outbreak in 1867. But people transport part of the environment with them in their travels, and in that year Kansans traveled west. The advancing railroad camps and rugged military outposts practiced the worst of hygiene, allowing conditions that rarely would have been tolerated in the filthiest of nineteenth-century communities. Common misperceptions about cholera’s spread and health officials’ confusion regarding its treatment aided the disease’s prevalence in eastern U.S. cities as well. But Kansas at this time differed from eastern areas in that the coarseness of life on the expanding frontier provided a compatible atmosphere for cholera, producing death rates high in proportion to its meager yet growing population.

Studies of disease on the frontier are relatively rare compared with studies of urban areas, primarily because rural epidemics generally were less destructive due to lower population density. Although disease claimed far fewer lives in places such as Wyoming and Montana than in Pittsburgh or New York City, the study of disease in the West offers a valuable opportunity for examining what happens when settlers carry new organisms into unfamiliar areas, bereft of institutions and mores that could encourage hygienic practices found farther east. Locked in debates about definitions of “frontier” or “the West,” western historians have not explored such phenomena sufficiently, perhaps due to a lack of alternate meanings for what constitutes a frontier. For examining medical history through a social approach, a useful model could be the “disease frontier,” a region of social disorder or rapid population growth that allows disease to thrive.

The disease frontier model will be applied here to the Kansas cholera epidemic of 1867. Documented nearly exclusively through military records, the epidemic’s chronology has been well developed by earlier historians. However, the scarcity of civilian accounts has led to speculation that it was an aberration producing few or no social effects.1 By interpreting the epidemic through a social history approach, it can be seen that the cholera epidemic was a natural result of confusion about the disease’s spread, manifested in the poor sanitation and hygienic procedures that accompanied westward-moving railroad and military camps. To this day no one has determined how the disease entered Kansas or how many lives it claimed. But cholera’s dependence on new places of primitive living conditions was proved by its prevalence in areas of the state that experienced sharp increases in settlement. While a measure of the epidemic’s causal impact on medical thinking and other social attitudes may not be tenable, the 1867 outbreak clearly was part of a larger pattern of poor health that added to fears about contagious travelers and physical uncleanness. Both of these concerns became targets of progressive reformers at the turn of the century.

A disease frontier, as it applies to the 1867 epidemic, can be defined as the relationship between migrating humans and the organisms they carry into new environments. Understanding this relationship necessitates a thorough description of cholera’s epidemiology. Symptomatically, cholera in its earliest stages bears great resemblance to gastrointestinal ailments such as common diarrhea, a similarity that frustrated the diagnoses of nineteenth-century doctors. The cholera bacillus is a water-borne organism—one of dozens of parasite-types that reside in the human body—that cannot live for long periods of time without a human host. Once activated by unsanitary conditions, the bacillus goes through an incubation period that lasts from a few hours to several days. It then begins releasing a toxin that expels bodily fluids via massive vomiting and diarrhea, resulting in rapid loss of fluid as high as one liter per hour. As tissues dry out, the blood becomes thick and concentrated, manifested in the victim’s gaunt, whitish appearance and cold, shriveled outer extremities such as the fingers. The heavy fluid expulsion overburdens the kidneys to a point where they cease functioning, and the victim expires either from dehydration or kidney failure.2
Modern physicians treat cholera with tetracycline antibiotics, which effectively kill the bacterium. If lost body fluid is replaced intravenously, the disease rarely becomes fatal. In the nineteenth century, however, cholera was feared widely as a killer. Although it afflicted less than 1 percent of the total populations of Great Britain and the United States, the disease, once contracted, had a mortality rate of about 50 percent. The sudden, explosive nature of cholera struck rich and poor alike seemingly at random.3

As medical historian Charles Rosenberg stated, “Cholera was the classic epidemic disease of the nineteenth century, as plague had been of the fourteenth.”4 Like the Black Death, the sudden, explosive nature of cholera struck rich and poor alike seemingly at random.4

Lacking this key scientific knowledge, the medical profession polarized in subsequent years as to cholera’s spread and the proper means of treating it. One school emphasized the disease’s contagion, maintaining its spread through casual contact with infected carriers. Most field doctors during the Kansas epidemic held this belief and recommended quarantine as the primary means of prevention.

The second school, proved in retrospect as closer to the truth, minimized the impact of carriers, stressing that an unhealthy environment sustained the disease. The miasmatic theory claimed that cholera fermented itself in contaminated atmospheres of filth and putrid matter. Such an approach, having little regard for the effectiveness of quarantines, instead recommended careful disposal of waste and protection of food and drinking water from contaminants.

Although both theories had strong evidentiary support, the truth actually lay somewhere in between. Unsanitary conditions could and did create cholera epidemics, but only if the bacillus was present in a human host. Advocates of the quarantine school struggled for years to determine precisely how infected carriers transmitted the germ. In his early observations, Dr. Snow correctly surmised that the disease spread through the patient’s diarrheal evacuations. The painful and violent discharge of a cholera victim’s feces ejected a watery spray that could infect material as far as three to four feet away.8

After discovering the cholera organism in the 1880s, researchers developed sophisticated methods for handling, removing, and disinfecting choleraic discharges. Prior to that, few physicians on either side of the argument saw the need for such measures, although some professionals did suggest combining the two approaches. Just a few months before the 1866 outbreak, an author for The Nation insisted that cholera was indeed spread by humans but required filth to activate it, demanding both sanitation and quarantine for its prevention:

With this help it is not difficult to explain why the cholera selects the great routes of travel; why its advance from place to place is no faster than a man may journey the same distance ... why its pace has been quickened since the introduction of railroads; why the common atmosphere of a ship does not ensure the sickness of all the passengers; and other similar problems. Quarantine, therefore, has its uses, but, of course, entire dependence cannot be placed upon it; ... for scientific and prudential reasons, it is advantageous to consider the cholera contagious, and, as much as possible, to isolate patients afflicted with it.9

Placing blame on the doorsteps of 1860s physicians is not the task of the historian, but confusion over cholera’s nature did contribute to its prevalence. Contemporary theories viewed the disease either as mobile- or place-oriented when in fact it was both. A contaminated pond could not generate an epidemic by itself, nor did an infected carrier necessarily pose a public hazard. But when brought together, the probability for cholera ran high.

A frequently overlooked issue in western history has been the extent of safe health practices in the beginning stages of land occupation. As white settlers penetrated undeveloped areas, safety precautions with regard to potable water supply and proper food preservation received low priority. Distance from medical care and government health authorities hindered treatment of sick, rendering an
epidemic’s disastrous effects on the frontier proportionately greater than those in urban areas. While superstitions of the day explained cholera’s westward migration as its natural tendency to return to the Orient, a more basic explanation exists: the organism accompanied Americans on their journeys westward, and as the first arrivals altered their new environment ever so slightly, they inadvertently opened a “disease frontier,” an area extremely conducive to the rampaging onslaught of disease.

The persistence of cholera and other diseases has been well documented in western history. Ramon Powers and Gene Younger examined its presence on overland trails from 1832 to 1869 and illustrated its adhesion to railroad and military routes. Treatment by army doctors was based sufficiently on sound medical knowledge of the time. Most remedies merely provided relief from the horrifying abdominal cramps, producing little curative effect. Preventive medicine proved more successful when physicians isolated cholera patients. But even when doctors practiced quarantine, the possibility of epidemic still existed as long as food and water supplies remained contaminated.

Kansas’s central position as a major avenue of transport ensured its vulnerability as a disease frontier. The state shared in a huge epidemic that afflicted the eastern United States in 1866. Believed to have entered the country on a ship from England to New York City, the disease spread throughout the East and then into the Ohio and Mississippi valley regions. Evidence of cholera’s strong connection to political and social events can be seen in the increased movement of army troops westward. With the end of the Civil War, military authorities could more easily address the needs of western settlers and railroad developers, who increasingly demanded protection from Indian attacks. As military forces were redistributed to forts farther west, the new strain of cholera accompanied them. Spreading as far as southwest Texas, the disease claimed 1,269 lives in the army alone during 1866, only about thirty of those at Fort Leavenworth and Fort Riley. The 1867 epidemic, by contrast, inflicted far less total damage, killing an estimated 230 in the army, but more than half of those fatalities occurred in Kansas.

What factors account for Kansas’s high losses in 1867, after emerging from the previous year relatively unscathed? The answer lies in troop migration to forts farther west during the later year. As the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, expanded construction westward along the Smoky Hill River, new military bases such as Fort Harker and Fort Hays became more important for guarding the advancing railroad. Army regulations concerning proper sanitation were quite clear, but implementing safe policies usually took low priority during a new fort’s first few months when buildings were under construction. Railroad officials’ high demand for remaining on schedule and the need for military protection from hostile Indians meant that procuring adequate foodstuffs and safely removing waste received little attention.

Worsening the situation were the new civilian communities that emerged along the route to provide supplies and labor to the railroad and military. Usually in close proximity to one another, the raw new towns, forts, and railroad camps lacked adequate facilities for waste disposal and often were poorly located so that drainage from one site flowed into the water supply of another. In their haste, the newcomers abandoned careful sanitary precautions and created a recipe for disaster that firmly established Kansas as a disease frontier in 1867.

Although conditions for an epidemic certainly existed, an outbreak still required infected carriers. The organism’s source of entry into Kansas became a matter of contention both for medical authorities at the time and for twentieth-century historians. Complicating the question is the issue of race. Congressional legislation of 1866 admitted newly-freed blacks into the regular army for the first time, albeit in racially segregated units. Known in the West as Buffalo Soldiers, regiments of black cavalry and infantry comprised a large proportion of the troops dispatched to Kansas forts. Cholera first appeared at Fort Riley on August 30, 1866, five days after the arrival of nearly four hundred black cavalrymen from Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, the site of a known epidemic. Over the course of the following year, a prevalent opinion in Kansas, one shared by most doctors, held that Buffalo Soldiers carried the disease into the area.

Even though blaming blacks for social problems usually resulted from nineteenth-century racial attitudes, the specific theory concerning their transport of cholera into Kansas had some scientific basis. In the spring of 1867 black troops of the Thirty-eighth Infantry entered Kansas en route from Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, to Fort Union, New Mexico. Jefferson Barracks’s location near St. Louis, a virulent cholera site, left the troops there vulnerable to infection. Cholera’s advance across western Kansas in the summer and fall of 1867 followed almost precisely the route taken by the Thirty-eighth Infantry in its march to the Southwest.

Nevertheless, identifying with certainty the bacillus’s carriers remains a nearly impossible task. Black troops may indeed have transported the disease across the state, but the original germ could have been transmitted just as easily via civilian laborers or white soldiers. Powers and Younger’s study minimizes the Buffalo Soldiers’ influence on the epidemic. Racial segregation at Jefferson Barracks kept the Thirty-eighth in relative isolation from white troops and civilians, lessening the likelihood that they became infected. While cholera did follow the arrival of blacks at each Kansas fort, most first cases were reported in the civilian communities. Since it was unlikely that the Thirty-eighth could infect others without first contracting the illness among
themselves, Powers and Younger conclude that cholera may well have been imported by white civilians.  

A contributing factor to antipathy toward the black units was that most army medical personnel adhered to the contagion theory, which recognized contact with carriers as cholera’s primary cause rather than poor sanitation. The extreme isolation of the new forts may have created overconfidence that cholera would not spread west. Public health authorities in eastern Kansas, by contrast, accepted the miasmatic theory that cholera fermented itself in conditions of filth. Although proponents of the miasmatic theory minimized the influence of carriers, their responses to the disease ultimately proved more successful at preventing outbreaks.

As news of cholera’s prevalence on the Atlantic Coast reached the Midwest in 1866, citizens of eastern Kansas adopted sanitation procedures that helped curtail the disease. Leavenworth especially survived with few casualties. Residents burned refuse, drained stagnant pools, and disinfect ed their belongings with carbolic acid or chloride of lime. Not all precautions were clinically wise; waste and manure were thrown into the Missouri River, used by some as a source of drinking water. Still, Leavenworth’s low affliction and fatality rate, only five dead in 1866, testifies to the success of proper sanitation.

Local capitalists managed to exploit the new concern for cleanliness to their economic advantage. In the early weeks of the summer of 1867, advertisements in the Leavenworth Daily Conservative reminded fearful readers that cholera season approached and that social atmosphere. A contributing factor to antipathy toward the black units was that most army medical personnel adhered to the contagion theory, which recognized contact with carriers as cholera’s primary cause rather than poor sanitation. The extreme isolation of the new forts may have created overconfidence that cholera would not spread west. Public health authorities in eastern Kansas, by contrast, accepted the miasmatic theory that cholera fermented itself in conditions of filth. Although proponents of the miasmatic theory minimized the influence of carriers, their responses to the disease ultimately proved more successful at preventing outbreaks.

As news of cholera’s prevalence on the Atlantic Coast reached the Midwest in 1866, citizens of eastern Kansas adopted sanitation procedures that helped curtail the disease. Leavenworth especially survived with few casualties. Residents burned refuse, drained stagnant pools, and disinfect ed their belongings with carbolic acid or chloride of lime. Not all precautions were clinically wise; waste and manure were thrown into the Missouri River, used by some as a source of drinking water. Still, Leavenworth’s low affliction and fatality rate, only five dead in 1866, testifies to the success of proper sanitation.

Local capitalists managed to exploit the new concern for cleanliness to their economic advantage. In the early weeks of the summer of 1867, advertisements in the Leavenworth Daily Conservative reminded fearful readers that cholera season approached and that social atmosphere. A contributing factor to antipathy toward the black units was that most army medical personnel adhered to the contagion theory, which recognized contact with carriers as cholera’s primary cause rather than poor sanitation. The extreme isolation of the new forts may have created overconfidence that cholera would not spread west. Public health authorities in eastern Kansas, by contrast, accepted the miasmatic theory that cholera fermented itself in conditions of filth. Although proponents of the miasmatic theory minimized the influence of carriers, their responses to the disease ultimately proved more successful at preventing outbreaks.

As news of cholera’s prevalence on the Atlantic Coast reached the Midwest in 1866, citizens of eastern Kansas adopted sanitation procedures that helped curtail the disease. Leavenworth especially survived with few casualties. Residents burned refuse, drained stagnant pools, and disinfect ed their belongings with carbolic acid or chloride of lime. Not all precautions were clinically wise; waste and manure were thrown into the Missouri River, used by some as a source of drinking water. Still, Leavenworth’s low affliction and fatality rate, only five dead in 1866, testifies to the success of proper sanitation.

Local capitalists managed to exploit the new concern for cleanliness to their economic advantage. In the early weeks of the summer of 1867, advertisements in the Leavenworth Daily Conservative reminded fearful readers that cholera season approached and that social atmosphere. A contributing factor to antipathy toward the black units was that most army medical personnel adhered to the contagion theory, which recognized contact with carriers as cholera’s primary cause rather than poor sanitation. The extreme isolation of the new forts may have created overconfidence that cholera would not spread west. Public health authorities in eastern Kansas, by contrast, accepted the miasmatic theory that cholera fermented itself in conditions of filth. Although proponents of the miasmatic theory minimized the influence of carriers, their responses to the disease ultimately proved more successful at preventing outbreaks.

As news of cholera’s prevalence on the Atlantic Coast reached the Midwest in 1866, citizens of eastern Kansas adopted sanitation procedures that helped curtail the disease. Leavenworth especially survived with few casualties. Residents burned refuse, drained stagnant pools, and disinfect ed their belongings with carbolic acid or chloride of lime. Not all precautions were clinically wise; waste and manure were thrown into the Missouri River, used by some as a source of drinking water. Still, Leavenworth’s low affliction and fatality rate, only five dead in 1866, testifies to the success of proper sanitation.

Local capitalists managed to exploit the new concern for cleanliness to their economic advantage. In the early weeks of the summer of 1867, advertisements in the Leavenworth Daily Conservative reminded fearful readers that cholera season approached and that social atmosphere. A contributing factor to antipathy toward the black units was that most army medical personnel adhered to the contagion theory, which recognized contact with carriers as cholera’s primary cause rather than poor sanitation. The extreme isolation of the new forts may have created overconfidence that cholera would not spread west. Public health authorities in eastern Kansas, by contrast, accepted the miasmatic theory that cholera fermented itself in conditions of filth. Although proponents of the miasmatic theory minimized the influence of carriers, their responses to the disease ultimately proved more successful at preventing outbreaks.
hours after the symptoms first appeared.\textsuperscript{22} Soldiers then began exhibiting symptoms over the weekend of June 29–30. Captain George Armes, a white company commander in the Tenth Cavalry (Buffalo Soldiers), received a visit from his younger brother William, who planned to begin fall classes at West Point. Captain Armes’ diary described the tragic surprise and rapidity with which the disease moved:

I returned this evening from my scout, and after making my report to Gen. A. J. Smith, he broke to me the sad news of the death of my brother, whom I had left yesterday morning in the best of spirits and apparently in excellent health. He was taken with cholera and died before three o’clock that afternoon... I reached his camp just in time to see his dear face again before they took him to his grave, but was unable to see him buried, being overcome with grief and completely prostrated.\textsuperscript{23}

Armes was not alone in his grief. Sternberg’s official report confirmed 46 cases and 31 dead that summer, but these figures included only army personnel, not civilian employees or nearby townspeople. As civilian communities along the route lacked newspapers, most reports on civilian cases came from the eastern Kansas press, which lacked substantiated eyewitness accounts. Thus, the precise number of dead remains open to speculation.

While accurate statistics are not available, little doubt exists about the cholera’s destructive force. Ellsworth, established in January 1867 about a mile west of Fort Harker, suffered more than any civilian community. Located on bottomland that received drainage from Harker’s waste water, the town was extremely vulnerable. Following a flood in June, residents were relocating the town when the epidemic began. One report estimated that from June 28 to July 16, six Ellsworth citizens perished daily.\textsuperscript{24}

As panic over the epidemic set in, hordes of residents fled the area. A popular story tells how Ellsworth declined in population from over a thousand to about forty within two weeks.\textsuperscript{25} While that version may be exaggerated, reliable sources indicate that Ellsworth was almost deserted during this time. A \textit{Leavenworth Times} correspondent wrote that all the city’s councilmen and the local postmaster had departed the town.\textsuperscript{26}

One of the few recorded accounts of the Fort Harker epidemic by a non-physician was provided by Elizabeth Custer, whose famous husband was patrolling with the Seventh Cavalry in the vicinity of Fort Wallace. Traveling through Harker in late July, Elizabeth recalled it as “the most absolutely dismal and melancholy spot I remember ever to have seen.”\textsuperscript{27}

She described corpses lined up awaiting burial since lumber was unavailable for coffins. Undertakers simply wrapped bodies in army blankets before interment, followed by a hurried service since all available people were needed as nurses.\textsuperscript{28}

As the epidemic wore on through July, Sternberg and other medical personnel could do little more than administer tinctures that lessened the cholera’s severe cramping pain. Regular policing action began, including disinfecting sinks and privies and burning rubbish. Choleraic victims were quarantined from other patients, and fecal matter was disinfected and buried in a safe location. As in most cases where cholera struck, the biggest problem lay in finding enough help to tend the sick. As volunteers from Topeka and Manhattan traveled west to assist in the epidemic, the \textit{Leavenworth Times} made this appeal:

Now is the time for physicians to show heroism and win honor. They are wanted in Ellsworth; wanted probably at other cities near it. Two—honor to them! from Topeka have gone up to Ellsworth. Who

will volunteer from our city?

The truth is, death has occurred, from all we can learn, in seven cases out of ten in Ellsworth for want of good nursing and good physicians. This has created a panic, and caused a fearful loss of life.

Who then, we ask again, will volunteer?\textsuperscript{29}

A correspondent from Ellsworth later corrected this account by stating that one of the “volunteers” from Topeka insisted on receiving pay for his services. Even so, the appeal produced a favorable response. Two Catholic priests and four nuns of the Sisters of Charity from Leavenworth donated their help to the Ellsworth victims.\textsuperscript{30}

Various personalized accounts describe the terrible summer at Fort Harker. George Sternberg, who had battled the epidemic tirelessly but had done little to prevent it, experienced personal tragedy when his wife, Maria, contracted cholera and died suddenly on the afternoon of July 15. When relief surgeons arrived at Harker a week later, they noted that Sternberg remained in a state of grief and fatigue, and again had allowed sanitary and medical conditions at the fort to deteriorate. Shortly thereafter, Sternberg requested a leave of absence from the army. The replacement surgeon, J.W. Brewer, ordered new procedures for disinfecting privies, boiling water, and handling choleraic excretions. Brewer’s inspection report details the extent to which Sternberg’s incapacity allowed sanitation to lapse:

As soon as evening settled in, a horrid stench settled down on the fort. The source of this for a time was veiled in obscurity; it could not be accounted for by the emanations from the sinks and privies, (though these last were not in a cleanly condition,) for the same odor continued after disinfection had been practiced. The Medical Director
soon discovered the source of this impurity, which was a large pit, situated directly in the quarter whence came the prevailing wind, from one-quarter to half a mile from the post; this was and had been (for how long a time is not known) the receptacle of every kind of filth, decomposing meats, offals, &c. This hot-bed of disease swarmed with large maggots, and the stench emanating there from was intolerable.\textsuperscript{31}

As Brewer and other physicians initiated new sanitation procedures, citizens throughout the state reacted to the news from Ellsworth. Originally eastern newspapers regarded the early reports with skepticism. During the height of the epidemic in mid-July, the \textit{Leavenworth Times} expressed its belief that fatalities had been exaggerated and condemned a competitor newspaper, the \textit{St. Louis Democrat}, for erroneous reporting.\textsuperscript{32} Part of this skepticism originated from the obviously wild reports of panic-stricken refugees fleeing the area. By the last week of July, however, it became clear that a major catastrophe was developing out west. Newspapers advised all persons to remain calm and continue boiling their drinking water. The state board of health warned that all material coming in contact with choleraic excretions should be thoroughly disinfected, indicating a new awareness among health officials about how the disease actually spread.\textsuperscript{33}

While genuine insights might have been gained by a few physicians, most laymen remained confused about the disease's basic epidemiology. One writer expressed bewilderment over why Kansas, with its fresh air and open spaces, suffered cholera to the same extent as the tenements of big cities: “Its grim secret seems past finding out.... About all we know of cholera is that it is a great circumnavigator; and that it seems to be ravaging the plains now because it has got that far on its dreadful journey back to the Orient.”\textsuperscript{34} In some respects cholera even injected a sense of state pride, albeit one generated out of defensive-ness toward easterners. An article in the \textit{Boston Journal} attributed the epidemic to the rough demeanor of Kansas citizens. Like most westerners, the newspaper maintained, Kansans had little knowledge of personal hygiene, rarely engaged in exercise, and allowed their prairies to become strewn with rotting carcasses. Their nonsensical aversion to fruits and vegetables prompted consumption of meat that was buried in fat and burned to a crisp. The \textit{Journal} claimed that filthy clothes and premises also were common among frontier people. The \textit{Leavenworth Daily Conservative} answered with the following reply:

Poor Bostonians!... Don’t you think you had better go to Braman’s and take a bath, before our western winds blow this dreadful state of things into the midst of your nice, clean, vegetable-eating community?... The writer of that article knows less about Kansas than swine do of paradise, and we advise him to get his mamma to furnish him a clean pinafore.... As for the “carcasses” which this truthful Bohemian described, we occasionally find the remains of an eastern loafer on the plains.\textsuperscript{35}

While accounts such as this certainly testify to the opinion of journalists and boosters, discovering the epidemic’s effects on the general population remains much more difficult. Virtually no records exist about the reception refugees found in distant communities. Since most information on the frontier still traveled by word-of-mouth, news of the epidemic usually spread no farther than the cholera itself.

Settlers fleeing the Fort Harker region generally sought refuge farther east, many presumably carrying the organism. For all the fears of residents in towns like Leavenworth and Topeka, however, the 1867 epidemic spared eastern Kansas, largely because adequate sanitary precautions had been taken that allowed the bacilli to pass without incident. Locales west of Ellsworth were not so fortunate. As the Harker epidemic abated in late July and people began returning to their homes, the Union Pacific’s advance ensured the continued westward movement of military and civilian workers. Although none matched Fort Harker in terms of poor hygiene, conditions at the westernmost forts and camps proved sufficiently conducive for the epidemic’s geographical expansion.

Fort Hays, for example, located about sixty miles west on the Smoky Hill River, experienced a devastating outbreak beginning about mid-July. A civilian teamster became the first casualty on July 11, followed by extensive affliction among black troops of the Tenth Cavalry and Thirty-eighth Infantry. Health officers at Fort Hays permitted civilians to receive treatment at the post hospital, which at that time consisted of several tents that offered little protection from the strong Kansas wind. A shortage of medical attendants ensued once the quarantine ward began filling in late July. Local volunteers aided in the work, even though surgeons often complained that inexperienced attendants hurt patients more than helped them. Simon Motz, an early resident of Hays City, expressed surprise over the charitable efforts of some fellow volunteers:

Few, indeed, that possessed the fortitude equal to the demand of the calamitous occasion. The work of these few will stand in commendation of the inherent, inner, better self when contrasted with outward of a dual life. As strange and surprising as it was unexpected, the charitable work was rendered by those from whom it was least and last expected. All day long they did their utmost to assuage and comfort the sick. At night the flickering rays of light could be seen moving from place to place as these women ministered to the wants of those afflicted. Surely the higher and better attributes of
noble womanhood had withstood, and, for the time, absolved the degradation of their outward life.\textsuperscript{36}

Presumably, the women to whom Motz referred were prostitutes, a sizable number of whom accompanied the railroad camps through western Kansas.

**Personal accounts also reveal** the diversity of popular myths about the nature of disease. Although nineteenth-century beliefs sometimes held that alcohol weakened the body’s resistance, Motz recalled Hays City residents’ conviction that stimulation with alcohol served as an efficient preventive to illness. Motz maintained that during the height of the epidemic, local merchants placed kegs on the street, with signs reading, “free, help yourself”—part of saloon keepers’ contribution to better public health in the Hays area. Even so, Motz stated that few locals actually imbibed to excess:

Strange as the statement may seem, there was not a drunken man in the town. This was before prohibition in Kansas, but it was unqualified temperance in defiance of every inducement. The universal feeling was, “if my time has come, I want to go sober.”\textsuperscript{37}

Captain Henry Corbin, post commander at Fort Hays, had a much different view about the sobriety level in the Hays City area. As an officer in one of the black units, Corbin held his men blameless for the cholera, believing that drunken railroad workers carried the disease. Corbin complained in August that Union Pacific employees, all of them in dire need of baths, loitered about Fort Hays when they should have been at their camps. By August 9, the cholera had abated somewhat, but Corbin feared a renewed outbreak if the workers were permitted to stay:

They cannot but contract the cholera and thereby lay the post liable to another siege from that terrible disease. For ten days we have not had a case among the soldiers but several citizens brought to hospital with it, and our medical people are confident of more if these people are permitted to hover around as I have mentioned.\textsuperscript{38}

The workers that so aroused Corbin’s ire congregated in the small village of Rome on the outskirts of Hays City. There they remained in an almost constant state of intoxication by patronizing local whiskey stands and relieving themselves in Big Creek, which flowed less than a quarter of a mile into Fort Hays’ water supply. Corbin claimed he had evidence that the whiskey merchants planted rumors about vicious Indians preparing to attack the construction camps. The fearful crews, some possibly carrying cholera, then fled to the relative safety of the fort vicinity where they imbibed at the whisky stands to the delight and profit of the merchants.

When two more civilian workers and one black infantryman contracted cholera, Corbin decided he had enough. On August 12 he ordered a small party of Buffalo Soldiers from the Thirty-eighth Infantry to confiscate all liquor that belonged to any merchant without a civilian or military trading license. The troops seized all liquor held by the illegal traders, one of whom was a young scout and buffalo hunter named William F. Cody, who later gained fame under the sobriquet Buffalo Bill.\textsuperscript{39}

Corbin’s raid produced the desired effect of dissipating the congregation of railroad workers and serves as an example of the drastic actions that frequently were taken as fear of the cholera spread. Other such instances occurred after the epidemic extended to areas farther south in late July and early August. While confusion still exists as to precisely how cholera was transmitted along the Union Pacific route between Hays and Fort Harker, little doubt remains that Buffalo Soldiers did transport the organism south along the Arkansas River on their journey to New Mexico, despite extensive precautions. Colonel George McGill, a surgeon traveling with those companies of the Thirty-eighth Infantry, had chief responsibility for the unit’s health. McGill conducted rigid troop inspections and left all suspicious cases behind at Fort Harker. Departing on July 10, the command included more than two hundred enlisted men, a dozen officers, and nearly a hundred wives, children, and assorted quartermaster employees.\textsuperscript{40}

McGill’s strenuous efforts minimized cholera’s impact en route to New Mexico but failed in halting it completely. As troops and civilians began contracting the disease, McGill directed the command in disinfecting all patients’ discharges with carbolic acid and emptying them into pits covered with fresh earth. All soiled bedding and articles were burned. To prevent spread into forts and civilian communities, the command camped two to three miles from each settlement and limited direct contact with other military personnel to medical officers and quartermasters.\textsuperscript{41} Nevertheless, the epidemic still extended into new areas. Fort Larned experienced a mild outbreak that inspectors attributed to the Thirty-eighth’s poor location choice upriver from the post’s water source. McGill expressed his regret for the error but stated that he had been in a hurry to select a campsite and provide the troops some rest.\textsuperscript{42}

As the command moved west along the Arkansas toward Fort Lyon, Colorado, McGill himself became a victim. The surgeon’s wife contracted cholera on the morning of July 17, west of Dodge City. Sending the rest of the troops ahead, McGill set up a solitary camp and remained behind to care for his wife, who died later that evening. Riding alone the next day, McGill attempted to catch up with the rest of the group but eventually succumbed to the disease. His body later was discovered about eighteen miles west of the crude marker he had posted on his wife’s grave.\textsuperscript{43}

As the infected infantry units neared
the vicinity of Fort Lyon, near Bent’s Fort in southeastern Colorado, an angry reception awaited them. A buffalo hunting party from Kansas had brought news of the epidemic and the approach of its infected carriers. William Bell, a geographer and surveyor for the Southern Pacific Railroad, described the events. Fort Lyon’s commander, Colonel William H. Penrose, sent a messenger ordering the units to proceed no farther. The troops’ commanding officer responded that daily changes of camp were necessary for preserving the men, and that the disease was abating. Penrose eventually relented, but for convenience’s sake he insisted on quartering the party near the fort’s burial ground to eliminate unnecessary work in hauling the dead.44

From all indications the companies of the Thirty-eight Infantry traveling through Kansas in the summer of 1867 took reasonable precautions to prevent cholera’s spread. Upon arrival at their final destination of Fort Union, New Mexico, in mid-August, the regiment camped at a quarantined location for two weeks before entering the garrison on August 31.45 By that time the epidemic had dissipated. Some mild cases occurred after the command crossed the Kansas border but none proved fatal. Sanitation conditions gradually improved once the troops left Fort Harker. Lacking a contaminated environment, the cholera organism’s disastrous effects diminished along the cleaner waters of the Arkansas and Santa Fe Trail.

As stated previously, more than half the recorded deaths in the 1867 epidemic occurred in Kansas alone. The rest died in areas farther south, such as Indian Territory, Texas, and eastern Louisiana. Of the 146 who perished in Kansas, nearly all contracted the disease in the forts and outlying camps along the Union Pacific route. Army records reveal no definitive statistics on numbers of civilian dead. Even less remains known about the epidemic’s effect on Native American groups. One undocumented account claimed that emigrants passing through the state in 1869 viewed scores of unburied corpses. Guides supposedly informed the travelers that the bodies were those of Wichita Indians killed by cholera.46

Unlike the previous year’s epidemic that concentrated in the more populous eastern part of the state, the 1867 outbreak thrived as a frontier phenomenon, inseparable from the crude hygiene of the developing West. The military physicians responsible for the public health at that time worked diligently in tending the sick but, either out of neglect or misunderstanding about cholera’s cause, failed in implementing sanitary precautions that might have allowed the cholerae bacilli to pass without harm. The new forts and towns under construction attracted people faster than improvised waste disposal facilities could accommodate. Cholera’s dual nature both as a mobile- and a locale-oriented disease permitted it to find a destructive niche on the disease frontier that opened briefly in western Kansas during 1867.

Besides its impact on hundreds of grieving families, the cholera epidemic left significant legacies for the state and the country. Most noticeable was the concern it generated for improved sanitation in the western forts. An 1870 War Department study reported that Fort Harker practiced daily disinfection of contaminated material. A permanent police sergeant stationed at the post oversaw regular waste and manure removal and conducted frequent water inspections.47 The same study reported that Fort Hays received shipments of spoiled beef and bread, and that soldiers continued urinating in the drinking water.48 A similar study five years later stated that conditions at Fort Hays had improved greatly, with refuse transported to and burned in a ravine one mile west.49

The Buffalo Soldiers’ role raises a question about the epidemic’s influence on racial attitudes. Like many western states, Kansas experienced its share of race conflict during the late 1860s and the 1870s, especially in communities near forts with a high number of black troops.50 But the specific extent to which cholera strengthened white prejudice remains a subject for speculation. Examination of newspapers and personal correspondence reveals no evidence that the epidemic reinforced racist views about black inferiority. The Leavenworth Daily Conservative never connected the Buffalo Soldiers’ presence with cholera; rather it complimented black settlers during the height of the crisis, praising them as hard-working farmers and good soldiers, and it welcomed their migration to the state.51 Although it seems reasonable to assume that the blacks’ purported role increased white resentment in some instances, explicit cases of prejudice linked directly to cholera have not been recorded.

The epidemic’s impact on individual lives remains too immense to measure, but its impact on one individual bears mention. Dr. George Sternberg, the military surgeon whose negligence aided the outbreak at Fort Harker, experienced drastic changes in his personal and professional life as a result of that summer. After his wife’s death and his subsequent near-breakdown, Sternberg returned east for a few months before being assigned to Fort Riley in December 1867. The principles of sanitation he learned at Fort Harker served his medical career well in later years. As a consultant at a New York immigration quarantine station, he implemented sanitary procedures credited with preventing the import of a cholera strain from Hamburg in 1891. Sternberg’s recognition as a disease prevention expert led to his appointment as surgeon-general of the United States from 1893 to 1902. During this term he published a bacteriology textbook and worked closely with physicians such as Walter Reed on
yellow fever research. Remarried in his later years, Sternberg occasionally visited his relatives in Kansas but never permanently returned to the area where he had planned a future as a young man, and where his lifelong work in eliminating disease had begun. When he died in 1915, he was recognized as a pioneer in American medicine. The epidemic’s most useful clinical legacy was its vivid illustration of the need for synthesis between old approaches. By the 1870s most doctors no longer believed that cholera could generate itself in a filthy atmosphere without a human carrier. This revelation produced a call for inspection of persons entering the state and in some cases limitations on what groups could enter. Medical professionals demanded stringent health standards for public buildings. W.F. Troughton, in an article for the Kansas Medical Journal in 1893, advocated attacking cholera at its source through vigorous enforcement of cleanliness:

Cholera, then, must be treated prophylactically. Garbage systems, sewerages, flushings, lime washers, pure water and a general clean-up is all right so far as they go, but the true breeder of pathogenic disease germs are the social scavengers. Clean out the human rookeries, the moral and physical hot-beds of crime and disease. Let in Nature’s sunlight, change the atmosphere with Nature’s scavenger ozone. Bath houses, soup kitchen and general contentment are as essential as garbage systems or general clean-ups. Lift the dull and soul-depressing care from off the brain and heart of the people. This is your work and my work. Don’t be afraid of being called a political doctor; assume your full duty or honor your profession by leaving it.

Troughton’s activist philosophy of clean body and soul, representative of progressive reform attitudes, illustrates the extent to which preventive medicine became aligned with political action during the 1890s. Fascinating research awaits investigation about the connection between disease conditions on the expanding frontier and the Populist and Progressive ideologies at the turn of the century.

After medical research in the 1880s revealed the existence of the Vibrio cholerae organism and its transportability through fecal matter, measures were adopted to maintain the purity of culinary water. In 1893 the Kansas State Board of Health issued new rules not only regulating the location and maintenance of privies and cesspools, but also prohibiting the sale and use of diseased animal flesh. The circular also demanded that all cases of cholera be reported immediately to local authorities under the supervision of the board of health.

While medical professionals gradually grew more aware of how cholera was transmitted, great confusion still existed among laymen. In 1886 the army began exhuming bodies of cholera victims from a Fort Hays cemetery with the intent of reburying these soldiers in the official military cemetery at Fort Leavenworth. The U.S. surgeon general halted the work after protests by local residents who feared that moving the bodies would reactivate the cholera germ and ignite another epidemic. When the military advertised a few years later for a contract to move the graves, Hays City residents appealed to the board of health, which upheld the first decision. Fort Leavenworth authorities cited numerous instances where bodies had been moved from other locations with no recurrences of cholera.

Finally in 1905 the state board of health resisted pressure from Hays citizens and authorized removal of the bodies to Leavenworth. The corpses of more than one hundred soldiers and civilians were exhumed, most buried at an average depth of only about three feet, an indication of the haste with which funerals had been conducted during the epidemic. Individually sealed in air-tight, zinc-lined caskets, the cholera dead arrived at Fort Leavenworth on December 20, 1905, and were reinterred with military honors. Despite the fears of Hays residents, the epidemic did not recur. The cholera bacilli required the presence both of infected carriers and filthy sanitation conditions, a combination that existed only during the pell-mell early months of settlement.

The 1867 epidemic can only be understood within its relationship to social conditions and the circumstances of time and place. A detached scientific approach does not explain its virulence since medical knowledge was advanced sufficiently to prevent major outbreaks, as it did in eastern Kansas. Social history offers an opportunity to explain the epidemic and other similar outbreaks in frontier conditions.

The medical knowledge in the late nineteenth-century, which emphasized hygiene and inspection, helped produce a sterile environment that deprived cholera and other water-borne diseases of their destructive potential. But, as scientists sometimes forget, such advances never occur in a social vacuum. Discovery and implementation of safe medical practices require the order and efficiency of established institutions, which often cease functioning in times of chaos. For a brief duration in the 1860s, the routes of passage along the Smoky Hill River witnessed a vast wave of newcomers who, in their haste to control the region, lost control of themselves. Forgetting the fragility of human life in closed surroundings, they created an environment conducive to the worst scourge of their time, one they carried with them in their very stomachs. Western Kansas in that year became a disease frontier, one that attests to the important relationship between health and history, between people and their environment.

Endnotes


8. Ibid.


13. Ibid., vi.


15. Ibid., 357-60.


19. Ibid.


22. Ibid.


28. Ibid.


30. Ibid., July 28, 1867.


32. *Leavenworth Times*, June 17, 1867.

33. Ibid., July 26, 1867.

34. Ibid., July 25, 1867.


38. Henry Corbin to T.B. Weir, August 5, 9, 1867, Letters Sent, Fort Hays, T-713, roll 1, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

39. Mirand W. Saxton to J. Milton Thompson, August 12, 1867, Letters Received, Fort Hays, T-713, roll 5, National Archives.


41. Ibid., 106.


48. Ibid.


55. *Topeka Daily Capital*, October 1, 1905.

56. Ibid., December 21, 1905.

James N. Leiker is professor of History and Chair of the History and Political Science Department at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas. He is the author of several articles and books on race relations and the American West, including *Racial Borders: Black Soldiers along the Rio Grande* and with Ramon Powers, *The Northern Cheyenne Exodus in History and Memory*. He is currently co-authoring with Kristen Epps *An American Crossroads: Kansans and Their Histories*, a college-level textbook for Kansas History courses. +
Hell on Wheels - Railhead Towns on the Santa Fe Trail: Introduction

This series of articles is a project submitted to the National Trails Intermountain Region (Santa Fe Trail NHT) Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 2019. Besides documenting the impact of these towns on the demise of the Santa Fe Trail, the project included highlighting the "rowdy" Wild West aspect of each railhead, hence "Hell on Wheels."

By Dr. Michael L. Olsen
Project Historian

Contextual Summary

The old Santa Fe Trail [Santa Fe National Historic Trail] "opened" on November 16, 1821, when William Becknell, a frontier Missouri trader, and five companions arrived in the northern New Mexico town of Santa Fe, their pack horses laden with various trade items. The Republic of Mexico had won its independence from Spain that year and had opened its borders to trade, which had been prohibited by Spain.

The Trail “ended” on February 8, 1880, when the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) completed an 18-mile branch line from Lamy, New Mexico, to Santa Fe, thus connecting that centuries-old capital with Kansas City and the U.S. Atlantic coast. The AT&SF then built on to Albuquerque and continued westward, reaching Needles, California, on the Colorado River in 1883, San Francisco in 1884, and San Diego and Los Angeles in 1885. The AT&SF, along with other railroads, had conquered the Southwest.

By the mid-1830s, the value of trade on the Santa Fe Trail sometimes topped $1 million annually. The number of wagons departing Independence, Westport, or Kansas City, Missouri, might exceed 6,000 per year. A manifest for one wagon train of James Josiah Webb, a prominent merchant-trader, could list textiles from Manchester, England, wines from France, and canned oysters from Chesapeake Bay. Even most of the wagons were sold in New Mexico. Those that did return in the early years carried Mexican pesos and silver bullion, Rocky Mountain furs, and buffalo hides. Numerous herds of mules, the progenitor of the iconic “Missouri Mule,” also were trailed east. In later years, New Mexican wool — sometimes approaching as much as 1,000,000 pounds a year — eventually reached Boston, destined for the woolen mills of New England and the British Isles.

The Santa Fe Trail, it should be emphasized, was a multicultural “trail.” By the 1830s roughly half of the trail trade was conducted by Hispanics with deep historical ties in New Mexico, such as the Otero, Chávez, Armijo, and Perea families. A bit later, men like Miguel Antonio Otero, Sr., would found mercantile houses that followed the railroads west and came to dominate trade in New Mexico.

After the United States’s conquest and annexation of the Southwest during the Mexican War in 1846, government freight trains swelled traffic on the Trail. These trains supplied forts in West Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, with Fort Union, established on the Trail in 1851 in northeastern New Mexico specifically to guard the Trail, as the major supply depot.

Concerning the Trail, it must also be noted that it was never a route for settlers seeking a new livelihood. New Mexico was not Oregon. Families did travel the Trail, but in negligible numbers compared to freighters, bullwhackers, herders, and merchants. Wealthy Hispanic New Mexican families sent their children, boys and girls, to be educated in Catholic schools in St. Louis. Some even maintained homes there. Army wives and their children, such as Lydia Spencer Lane, whose husband commanded Fort Union for a time, traveled the Trail summer after summer, visiting parents and other relatives in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, or even Maine.

As already mentioned, westward building railroads ended this colorful era in American history. This study covers three of those railroads and twelve railhead, or “end-of-the-track” towns along them. For purposes of clarification, these rail companies and the towns are listed here; their general history and characteristics are briefly highlighted.

Establishing dates for the arrival of a railroad in a specific town is frustrating, even when consulting contemporary newspapers. Besides misinformation and lax reporting, a date might reference when railroad tracks reached a town, when the first locomotive steamed in, when the first passenger cars arrived, when the first freight went east, or when freight being warehoused for shipment west came in.

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway can be considered the most important of the three lines that “shortened” the old Santa Fe Trail. President Abraham Lincoln signed congressional legislation authorizing the construction of a rail line from Atchison, Kansas, to Topeka, Kansas, on March 3, 1863. This was the humble origin of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway. As with most western railways, unforeseen construction delays and complicated financial restructuring often hampered the AT&SF.

“Hell on Wheels” towns along the AT&SF included in this study and each approximate arrival date are:

- Las Animas, Colorado. In the Arkansas River Valley, southeastern Colorado. Arrival, fall of
1875.

- Trinidad, Colorado. Southeastern Colorado, on the border with New Mexico. Arrival, September 1878.

The Kansas Pacific Railway, as it came to be known, was incorporated as the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western Railroad in 1855. It became the Union Pacific Eastern Division (UPED) in 1863, and was refinanced as the Kansas Pacific in 1869. Its main line connected Kansas City with Denver, Colorado. Service between these two cities began on September 1, 1870.

“Hell on Wheels” towns along the Kansas Pacific included in this study and each approximate arrival date are:

- Sheridan, Kansas. Northwestern Kansas; the town no longer exists. Arrival, late spring or early summer, 1868.
- Las Animas, Colorado. In the Arkansas River Valley, southeastern Colorado. Arrival, October 1873.
- La Junta, Colorado. In the Arkansas River Valley, southeastern Colorado. Arrival, December 1875.

The Denver & Rio Grande Railway (D&RG) had less impact on the Santa Fe Trail than the AT&SF or the Kansas Pacific. Incorporated on October 27, 1870, it ranged south from Denver, Colorado, through Colorado Springs and Pueblo, to the railroad town of El Moro. Freight and passengers used the Pueblo-El Moro connection but switched to the AT&SF for continental connections after the AT&SF reached Pueblo in March 1876. The AT&SF bypassed El Moro when it laid its tracks across Raton Pass and into New Mexico.

El Moro, then, was the only “Hell on Wheels” town on the Denver & Rio Grande. It was/is located five miles northeast of Trinidad, Colorado, in the southeastern quarter of the state, near the border with New Mexico. The D&RG arrived April 10, 1876.

Given the focus of this research - “Hell on Wheels” - each of the 12 towns covered, as might be expected, had almost stereotypical “wild west” elements in its day. For some the contemporary evidence is scant, for others it is abundant. But nearly all of them boasted saloons, dance halls, “fancies” (prostitutes), vigilance committees, crooked sheriffs, card sharks, “desperados,” drunken brawls, “shoot-outs,” murders, and lynching.

Behind these stories, though, are other more complex developments, which are also considered. With the exception of Sheridan, Kansas, and Otero, New Mexico, these towns are still functioning communities. So each profile touches briefly on economic, social, and sometimes political aspects of their history while they were “hell on wheels” towns. The same format is followed for each community. After a short general introduction, the two main sections are a summary of the arrival and impact of the railroad, and the commercial and “hell on wheels” activity during the town’s heyday. Where appropriate, there is special emphasis on major mercantile houses such as Otero, Sellar & Co.

One aspect of this research which might seem to be missing involves life in the “rough and tumble” railroad construction crew “camps.” However, there are almost no contemporary accounts of these camps, though a few turn up for some towns in contemporary newspapers or in the accounts of prairie travelers such as William Bell, who went to the Kansas plains to hunt buffalo, and Elizabeth Custer, who with her husband General George Custer, visited various Kansas military posts. One inclusive view of such camps is provided by Miguel Otero, Jr., in his delightful memoir My Life on the Frontier, 1864–1882. He noted:

> “While the grading of the railroad bed was continuing south of Las Vegas, [New Mexico c. 1879] many camps were established along the line, especially through Glorieta Pass, and practically every camp had its saloon and gambling tent. Frequently, three or four soiled ‘doves’ or camp followers, would have a tent or two at the rear of the saloon and assist the bartender in entertaining the patrons all during the day. Of course bad men and confidence men followed these camps and many an innocent wandering boy was relieved of all his belongings by running against them.” He also recalled, “In the case of killings, usually the right man got killed, and when that happened, rejoicing took the place of grief and the drinks were freely ordered.”

Two further items need to be highlighted in this “Contextual Summery” before concluding. The first, somewhat lengthy, comes from the columns of the New York Tribune for October 14, 1867. There New Yorkers, and in a way the nation, could read:

> “Just as fast as the Pacific Railway passes the great military posts upon its line, these become unnecessary, and are, in effect, abandoned. Fort Leavenworth, which was of such magnitude as to be a little city of itself, is reduced to a vast storehouse of war materials, and a pleasant place of call for army officers on their way to, or returning from the Plains. The Road went to Fort [Riley] and three miles beyond...
created Junction City. The frontier was changed in a day. Immediately the large military work at [Riley] ceased to be an outpost and the troops quartered there went to the West. This very month Fort Hays will also cease to be an outpost and became an inpost. So will Fort Wallace by the middle of May next. The Kansas Pacific Railway pushes “the Plains” further and further West, saves the Government the necessity of expense of permanent forts, and narrows the field of operations against the Indians.”

The second item, which can serve as an epitaph, comes from the pen of the prominent Kansas historian Leo Oliva. In his book Fort Hays - Keeping Peace on the Plains, he writes:

"The advance of the railroad was possibly the most significant event in the opening of the West. That transportation system made possible such developments as the buffalo slaughter, the large-scale cattle industry, successful pioneer farming, the end of Indian resistance, the rise of urban oases, and other aspects of settlement of the plains and mountains in the region west of the Missouri River. The army protected the construction and operation of early rail lines, and in return the railroads increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the frontier army."

The following profiles of Junction City, Ellsworth, Hays City, Sheridan, Kit Carson, Granada, Las Animas, La Junta, El Moro, Trinidad, Otero, and Las Vegas demonstrate the importance of the westward progression of the Kansas Pacific, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, and the Denver & Rio Grande.

**Hell On Wheels: Junction City, Kansas**

*A few years ago the freight wagons and oxen passing through Council Grove were counted by the thousands, the value of merchandise by millions. But the shriek of the iron horse has silenced the lowing of the panting ox and the old Trail looks desolate.*

*The Junction City Union, August 1867*

**Location:** Geary County, northeastern Kansas, 125 miles west of Kansas City.

Approximate distance remaining on the Old Santa Fe Trail: Via Cimarron Route - 620 miles; via Mountain Route - 675 miles. [In an article, "The End of the Trail: Rail-Roads, Commission Houses, and Independent Freighters," Santa Fe Trail scholar David Clapsaddle notes of this first of the railhead towns which shortened the Santa Fe Trail, "Leaving Junction City, the road (now joining Junction City with the Santa Fe Trail) replicated the route of the Butterfield Overland Despatch westward along the north bank of the Smoky Hill River to Salina and on to Fort Ellsworth. There, it crossed the river and continued on to strike the original route of the Santa Fe Trail at Walnut Creek." *Wagon Tracks*, 23:2, (February 2009), p. 22]

It is difficult to evaluate Junction City as an "end-of-the-track" railhead "hell on wheels" town because its founding and development pre-dated the arrival of the Union Pacific Eastern Division (UPED, later - 1869 - known as the Kansas Pacific) by a decade. It was platted and settled in 1858 and became the county seat of then Davis County in 1860. The UPED arrived in 1866. Furthermore, Junction City was a regional center for anti-slavery sentiment in "Bloody Kansas," drawing a population committed to the Union cause. Notably, the first newspaper in the city, The Smoky Hill and Republican Union, had as its motto, "We Join Ourselves to No Party That Does Not Carry the Flag, and Keep Step to the Music of the Union."

The military post at Fort Riley was another factor in the pre-railroad days of Junction City and pre-dated it. Established in 1853, the fort was named after Major General Bennet C. Riley, who led the first military escort along the Santa Fe Trail.

After the Civil War it became the major military installation providing protection to the construction of the Kansas Pacific, sending various expeditions west to the Kansas prairies to encounter indigenous Indian peoples. General George Custer for a time was headquartered at Fort Riley. Junction City itself lay just three miles west of the fort.

For a year, however, from the fall of 1866 until the fall of 1867 when the Kansas Pacific reached Ellsworth, 85 miles further west, Junction City was the eastern terminus of the Santa Fe Trail. Freight moving to the distant southwest and goods arriving from there and the Great Plains, notably wool and hides, passed through the warehouses and mercantile establishments of the city.

**THE RAILROAD**

In 1855, the Territorial Legislature of Kansas chartered the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western Railroad, which was to run from Atchison, Kansas, to Fort Riley. Given financial troubles and the looming Civil War, it was eventually re-chartered as the Union Pacific Eastern Division in 1863 and construction west now commenced also in Kansas City. Another corporate reorganization came in 1869, when it became the Kansas Pacific, which reached Denver, Colorado Territory, in 1870.

William G. Cutler, writing his *History of the State of Kansas* in 1883, just 17 years after the UPED reached...
Junction City, captured the immediate impact of the railroad on the town - and its brief importance. He reported, "As the Kansas Pacific Railway neared the city, new-comers crowded in by the score, until there were neither hotel accommodations nor house-room for them. This was an exceedingly prosperous year for the town, and houses sprang up as if by magic, and still the cry was, 'More, more.'" He further recorded that the UPED marked off its depot grounds and installed a turn-table in October 1866, and the first train from Fort Leavenworth arrived in November. However, just three years later the railroad sold its roundhouse, workshops, depot, and thirty acres of ground to the Union Pacific Southern Branch, which moved its division headquarters from Junction City to Wamego, Kansas. By that time the Kansas Pacific, as noted above, was approaching Denver.

THE TOWN

Established: 1858. It was named for the local junction—the confluence of the Smoky Hill and Republican rivers. From this point it is known as the Kansas River, flowing east to the Missouri River.

Post Office: June 30, 1858
Population: 1870, 2278; 1880, 2684; 1890, 4502 (U.S. Census reports)

Commercial Activity

As already mentioned, Junction City was a regional trade center for nearly a decade before it became the railhead for the UPED. Its stores, hotels, saloons, dance halls, and other amusements were well established. It had churches, schools, fraternal lodges, substantial brick buildings, and a newspaper.

A column touting the stock of one mercantile house, Blakely & Martin, in the November 19, 1867, issue of The Junction City Union newspaper serves as a reminder of the volume of trade even before the railroad came. The proprietors wrote: "We wish through your paper to inform the people of Western Kansas that we now have and will be constantly receiving, a large and well selected stock of Dry Goods, Ready Made Clothing, Boots & Shoes, Hats and Caps, Hardware, Queensware, etc. etc." The notice went on to include a bewildering variety of goods, such as the list of "Ladies' Goods"—"We have a beautiful selection of Prints—de laines, scotch plaid, ladies' cloth, plain and printed flannel, plaid linseys, etc. Also ladies hoods, nubias and sottangs in profusion; cassimeres, satinetts, heavy twills for pants, bleached and brown sheeting, and drills, cotton flannel, white bed blankets, gray blankets, etc." What some of these items might have been is something of a mystery.

On the other hand, the UPED did boost the community. Six months after it arrived, a local correspondent for the Emporia News visited and reported, "Junction City especially is a regular bee-hive, in which the resident insects, with characteristic assiduity, are rapidly storing vast quantities of honey typified by greenbacks. Indeed, one might travel far to find a busier, more prosperous or more muddy town." And it did serve as the destination for freight wagons arriving from New Mexico and the Southwest—for a year. The same reporter mentioned, "Crowds of people from all the Western Territories may be found there any day, and oxen and mules, 'bullwhackers' and 'greasers,' wide-brimmed hats and meerschaum pipes form a medley as curious as pleasing." (April 26, 1867)

Interestingly, none of the merchants in Junction City seems to have extended their businesses farther west along the line of the railroad. The day of the dominant mercantile houses along the Kansas Pacific and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe was yet to come. For example, Miguel Antonio Otero, Sr., and his partner John Sellar, did not incorporate as Otero, Sellar & Company until 1867, when they opened the first of their numerous warehouses and stores in Ellsworth.

Hell on Wheels

The police force in Junction City had its share of thefts, murders, robberies, and general drunken altercations to deal with in the 1860s, but it is impossible to say whether these were caused by the usual town riff-raff, soldiers off-duty from Fort Riley, freighters on a spree, railroad construction workers, or "card sharks" just off the train. Crime in Junction City did reach the pages of the New York Tribune on February 8, 1867, however:

"A few weeks since a notorious desperado named Jack McDowell, hired a span of horses at Council Grove to go to Junction City. As he did not return, the owners of the horses traced him to Omaha and brought him back on Friday last. He was very defiant, threatening to fire the town and kill 38 of the citizens whom he had marked. He further stated that he was a Rebel and had been in Quantrill's raid. The citizens took him from the Sheriff on Sunday night and hung him."

Soon there would be similar incidents, more directly connected with "end-of-the-track" towns all the way to Denver and Santa Fe—in Ellsworth, Hays City, and Sheridan, Kansas; Kit Carson, Las Animas, La Junta, El Moro, and Trinidad, Colorado; and Otero and Las Vegas, New Mexico.

On to Ellsworth

Junction City's role in the Santa Fe trade ended within a year after it began, when the Union Pacific Eastern Division steamed into Ellsworth on October 1, 1867. Unlike other railhead towns further down the line, though, Junction City continued to flourish as a commercial, educational, and governmental hub. As of 2010 its population topped 25,000. Its neighbor, Fort Riley, also remains vital to its economic health. Fort Riley today is a major U.S. Army installation covering
over 100,000 acres and with a daytime population of 25,000.

**Junction City Specific Bibliography**


**Newspapers**

*Junction City Union*

*New York Tribune*

*The Smoky Hill and Republican Union*

Dr. Michael L. Olsen holds a B.A. from St. Olaf College, and the M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from the University of Washington. He taught for 30 years at New Mexico Highlands University and for four years full-time at Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado Springs. He has published extensively on the Santa Fe Trail and has consulted with the National Park Service on projects related to the old Santa Fe Trail. ♦

**Partnership for the National Trails System**

*By Marcia Will-Clifton*

**Hike the Hill**

Another successful, shorter trip to Washington, D.C., on February 9-12. This year I focused on Oklahoma legislators and meeting Sharice Davids (Kansas Third District) and Ron Estes (Kansas Fourth District). I finally met Senator Jerry Moran, Kansas, in the hallway of the Dirksen Building and got a picture with him and the bison in his office. My individual meetings were focused on the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the SFNHT in 2021.

We also discussed the permanent funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Restore our Parks, and the gold sheet of volunteer contributions. Happily, the two bills have been packaged together as the Great American Outdoors Act on the Senate side, and parallel bills on the House side are being advocated by PNTS. The Senate seat held by Tom Udall in New Mexico will be vacated due to his retirement. Representative Ben Lujan (New Mexico’s Third District) will be running for this seat.

**Leadership Changes in PNTS**

Gary Werner, longtime PNTS Executive Director, retired on February 9, 2020. I contributed a SFNHT t-shirt from Bent’s Old Fort to the trail quilt that was presented to him at the reception. The search committee is looking for a new ED.

PNTS has an interim ED, Karen Crossley in Madison, Wisconsin, and an interim Advocacy and Policy Director, Kathy DeCoster, in Washington, D.C. Kathy is very well-connected in D.C., having just retired from the Trust for Public Lands.

I am in support of the move of PNTS leadership from Madison, Wisconsin, to Washington, D.C. Having a presence in D.C. closer to our non-profit partners, The American Hiking Society and American Trails among others, is critical for our shared goals for the future. There is a lot of transition in personnel on the Federal agencies side, including NPS and BLM leadership. ♦
SFTA Annual Membership January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020

Name(s) _______________________________________________ □ Life $1000, payable over 4 years

Address _______________________________________________ □ Patron $100/year

City _______________________ State _______ Zip ___________ □ Family $65/year

Phone _______________ Email ____________________________ □ Individual $50/year

□ New member □ Renewing member □ Youth (18 and under) $5/year

I am a member of the following chapter (s) ___________________ □ Non-profit Institution $65/year

□ Individual $50/year □ Business $65/year

I’d like to make a donation to assist the SFTA with programs and events. □ $50 □ $100 Other $________

I’d like to donate to the Junior Wagon Master Fund. □ $50 □ $100 Other $________

I’d like to donate to the Marker Fund. □ $50 □ $100 Other $________

To pay by credit card, go to www.santafetrail.org, and click on “Join the Organization.”

The Santa Fe Trail Association is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation, and all donations beyond membership dues are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

The Santa Fe Trail Association is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation, and all donations beyond membership dues are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Make checks payable to Santa Fe Trail Association

Mail to Ruth Olson Peters, Treasurer, Santa Fe Trail Center, 1349 K-156 Hwy, Larned, KS 67550

Renew by mailing using the above form or renew online at www.santafetrail.org

If you have renewed your membership, pass the form along to a friend or colleague.

Chapter Reports

Chapters are listed in order from the beginning of the Trail in Missouri westward.

TO CONTACT CHAPTER PRESIDENTS,
PLEASE EMAIL THEM AT info@santafetrail.org.

Missouri River Outfitters
Independence, MO
President Anne Mallinson

The MRO chapter and board meetings scheduled for March 15 at the National Historic Trails Museum in Independence were canceled. Nominating Committee Chair Mary Conrad has created the following slate of officers for consideration for the next term: President, Anne Mallinson; Vice President, Sarah Tucker-Poff; Secretary, Mary Conrad; Treasurer, Rich Lawson; Historian, Sandy Slusher; board members John Atkinson, Dick Nelson, Larry Short, and Ross Marshall. Nominations from the floor are always welcome. Bylaw revisions have been submitted to board members and chapter members, but we will have to discuss and ratify those at the next meeting to be scheduled when shelter-in-place guidelines are eased.

SFTA President Larry Short was part of a team of National Historic Trail partners (Trails Head/OCTA, Missouri River Outfitters/SFTA, Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association) who met with NPS staff and the 106 Design group to assess area sites for new or replacement wayside exhibit signage. The sites range from Independence to Olathe to Prairie Village. NPS will review information submitted. Of special interest are plans for the 200th anniversary of the Sibley Survey in 2025.

Plans continue for the 2023 symposium. Mary Conrad has been appointed as Chairperson of the Speaker’s Committee. She has chaired many such committees so we are confident she will choose an excellent array of subjects and presentations.

Douglas County
Baldwin City, KS
President Roger Boyd

We were disappointed not to have the opportunity to catch up with everyone at the SFTA board meeting in Dodge City. We have been able to keep our projects moving along through email and texting.

For the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail we continue to work closely with Douglas County, Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area, Kansas Department of Transportation, National Park Service, and Santa Fe Trail Association to improve visitor access to the Black Jack Ruts and the Log Cabin Museum.

The first portion of trail will be ADA accessible, 350 feet long, composed of compacted fine gravel, and end at the first swale. The rest of swales will be accessed along a 1,500-ft loop trail that will be compacted native soil. This portion of the trail, constructed by a team of volunteers, winds through native prairie with over 250 species of grasses and wildflowers. As I write this, we anticipate the local township fire department will burn the prairie in the next few days. If not, we will mow the area where the trail will be constructed. So either way work will begin sometime in April. We expect the formal dedication of the trail in June 2021.

Baldwin City was incorporated in 1870, so this year is the sesquicentennial, and we are heavily involved in planning...
activities, if we can ever have any of those activities actually occur. Our next big event will be our fall covered dish dinner on September 27. We anticipate the program will be about the early development of Baldwin and Palmyra. Stay tuned.

Heart of the Flint Hills
Council Grove, KS
President Sharon Haun

Planning continues, by email and phone, for SFT 200th-year events. The local committee members have great ideas and plans for a number of events, but everything is on hold, because of the COVID-19 national emergency.

Cottonwood Crossing
Hillsboro, KS
President Doug Sharp

Everything is cancelled.

Quivira
McPherson, KS
President Linda Colle

The Quivira Chapter April 28th joint program with the Inman Museum Association is canceled. Our next program isn’t until July so we’ll see how things go before we make any decisions for that one!

Wet/Dry Routes
Great Bend, KS
President George Elmore

Everything is cancelled for now for the Wet/Dry Chapter.

Dodge City/Fort Dodge/Cimarron
Dodge City, KS
President Bill Bunyan

Like everyone else we are at a standstill here. We were getting ready for the national board meeting, and Mike Rogers and I had planned a meet and greet for the board on Wednesday the 15th of April. Now everything has been canceled including our April 19th chapter meeting. Chris Day and Janet Armstrong were to be our speakers and talk about the Junior Wagon Masters.

Our winter meeting was chapter member Carrol Burnett talking about a trunk and its contents that a family would have taken on the trail. Our summer meeting is tentatively a trip to Larned to tour the Santa Fe Trail Center and Fort Larned.

Wagon Bed Spring
Lakin, KS
President Linda Peters

The August 24, 2019, event for Wagon Bed Spring was moved to the Historic Adobe Museum in Ulysses due to inclement weather and a muddy road. It rained enough for water to be standing across the road and out into the fields on either side at one area. The day was cool and windy, as a smaller group enjoyed the activities at the Museum, but missed being at the Springs. Our usual displays and demonstrations were set up in the museum. A new activity, flint knapping, couldn’t be done inside. However, that was the most popular area as there was discussion and examples of arrowheads. The wagon rides with draft horses were fun even though the city setting wasn’t like the prairie setting.

Our chapter president had total knee replacement in October and has spent most of her time in therapy and recovery. And now, as this article is written in March, we are keeping mostly to ourselves as the coronavirus now affects Kansas. The “new normal” is not getting together much.

The chapter hopes to develop some kind of activity for the 2021 Commemoration of the opening of the Santa Fe Trail.

Cimarron Cutoff
Elkhart, KS
President Jay Williams

With the COVID-19 Virus, our chapter is not doing anything right now. We are hoping to be able to replace Santa Fe Trail signs that are missing on the Cimarron National Grasslands.

I’d like to promote three of the museums that are located within our chapter area. At the time of this writing they are closed to the public. When everything gets back to normal please plan to stop by and take a tour.

Victoria Baker retired from the Herzstein Memorial Museum in Clayton, New Mexico. Elisa Townsend is the new Director. They have been doing some rearranging at the museum. The museum phone number is 575-374-2977.

The Cimarron Heritage Center in Boise City, Oklahoma, has been receiving some new items. The Mineral City School house will be moved to the museum grounds. Road construction will have the road to the museum closed for a while, but the staff will give private tours to some interesting locations in the area. Please call the museum at 580-544-3479 for information.

At the Morton County Historical Society Museum in Elkhart, Kansas, employees and board members are working on plans to build a new shop and do some rearranging in the museum. They are also planning to add a Dirty Thirties exhibit. As I write this report in early April, I can hear the wind howling, giving us a reminder of those days. I am sure some of the wheat fields are being blown out with this 35-mph wind this afternoon!

On May 2, SFTA President Larry Short and Vice-President Chris Day plan to have a booth at the renaming of Clayton Lake to Clayton Lake State Park and Dinosaur Tracks. Some of our chapter members plan to attend and help in the booth. I am hoping to have a chapter meeting at the lake that day. We have not received any official word if the ceremony will be canceled.

Bent’s Fort
Lamar, CO
President Kevin Lindahl

The Bent’s Fort Chapter annual meeting was held January 11 at the J. W. Rawlings Heritage Center in Las Animas. In addition to election of 2020 officers, two members were recognized...
for all their hard work. Recipients of the Member(s) of the Year Award were Verna Ruddick and Shannon Venturri. Due to inclement weather in Kansas, our speakers, Joanne VanCoeurn and Deb Goodrich, were not able to travel. Thanks to technology, the ladies sent their presentations via email and Kevin Lindahl and LaDonna Hutton were able to share the presentation with members.

February 15 found members at our annual “Love to Read along the Santa Fe Trail” in Lamar with several members sharing book reviews of fiction and non-fiction books relating to the Santa Fe Trail. By March 21, we were all under “house arrest” but several of our members chose to enjoy a day out in the fresh air heeding strict social distancing rules by attending Doc Jones Farm Days in North La Junta. Activities included harnessing draft horses and a demonstration of trimming draft horse hoofs while the horse is held in a stand. There were four different two-horse teams pulling single bottom plows, a four-horse team pulling a tandem disc, and a two-horse team pulling a single disc. Those in attendance were able to take lots of great photos and videos.

At this writing, the April 11 Bent’s Fort Chapter archive meeting has been postponed. The May 9 Higbee Valley tour is on hold—we are all praying the virus will be waning by then and restrictions can be relaxed somewhat.

While you are sitting at home on your computers, this might be a great time to register for the 2021 Symposium—the registration form is now available on the Last Chance Store and on the 2021sfts.com website.

In the midst of all of this, we need to take time to remember two of our members who made the “trek” to heaven this winter. Sadly, longtime members Dub Couch and Ron Darcey passed away. Even though they are no longer in our midst, they will always be remembered and missed.

Like all of you, Bent’s Fort Chapter members are “faunching (sp) at the bit” ready to get boots on the trail. We all know though, the better we heed the guidelines, the sooner we all will be able to enjoy our treks and activities. Please, everyone, stay home, stay safe, stay well, and stay calm and pray on!

**Corazon de los Caminos**

Cimarron, NM

President Doyle Daves

Our last meeting was at Springer, February 8, where we focused on plans for the SFT Bicentennial in 2021. A decision was made to begin planning a complete 2021 event schedule for the chapter. We will seek to arrange events in as many northeastern New Mexico communities as possible. Already we have some commitments: Fort Union National Monument will dedicate its Fort Union Days Program, June 19-20, 2021, in commemoration of the Fort’s SFT role; Wagon Mound’s Bean Day program, September 6, will feature SFT topics and memories; September 22-26, Raton and Trinidad (Bent’s Fort Chapter) are planning events involving both communities; Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron is planning for summer-long SFT programming; Clayton is beginning planning. Our chapter and the End of the Trail Chapter are in discussions concerning a joint program for November 13-15, to be held in both Las Vegas and Santa Fe. The program will note the beginning of the SFT by the meeting of William Becknell and Pedro Gallegos near Las Vegas on November 13, 1821.

Owing to the corona virus outbreak, our planned March 14, April 11, and May 9 meetings were canceled. Subject to more cancellations, upcoming meetings are:

June 13: Joint with Bent’s Fort Chapter, All-day Tour, Folsom, NM, along the Dry Cimarron to Kenton, OK, details pending.

July 25: Folsom: Sheep History Tour; meet at the Folsom Museum at 7 a.m. Early bird tour of the sheep folds of the Folsom stockyards. Latecomers can join the group at 9 a.m. for a drive to the Cornay Ranch, where BeBe and Dino Cornay will describe the sheep history of their family. Then we will go to the Archuleta Ranch where Dr. Andrew Guilford will talk about the history of sheep in the southwest from 1500 to date. He will then sign copies of his book, *The Wooly West: Colorado’s Hidden History of Sheepscapes*. Lunch will be provided by the Archuletas (about $10). Then we will tour the Archuleta Ranch and visit the remains of the sheepherder’s town on the TO Ranch.

**End of the Trail**

Santa Fe, NM

President Joy Poole

I’m tempted to simply say COVID-19—and end the chapter report there since all of our chapter members are self-isolating per the orders from our NM Governor Michele Lujan-Grisham, who happens to have an extensive background in health.

Our 2020 NM Legislation session was a short thirty-day session. By working with Brian Moore of the NM Association of Counties, Peggy Poling and Sharon Calahan, who are new EoT members, along with Elizabeth West, were able to secure a $40K legislative appropriation to the Department of Cultural Affairs for exhibitions and programs on the Santa Fe Trail. These ladies were organized, engaged the trail communities, and were effective in securing an appropriation by working with Sen. Pete Campos.

Joy Poole received an SFTA Scholarly Research Grant to transcribe the William Baskerville diary. Baskerville was a Wagon Boss for Francis X. Aubry. After Aubry was murdered, Baskerville made one final trip from New Mexico across the trail and settled in Bates County, Missouri.

The remainder of this year’s End of the Trail programs are tentative due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Recipes from the Trail

These recipes were prepared and served during the filming of "A Taste of History" along the Santa Fe Trail and will appear on the PBS show, hosted by Chef Walter Staib, this season.

Dried Peach Pie
Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm, Olathe, Kansas
Submitted by Katie Lange

The specific instructions for dried peach pie are “prepare the fruit and finish the same as dried apple pie”—so the dried apple pie recipe is below. This is from American Lady’s System of Cookery by Mrs. T.J. Crowen, 1860.

Cut out all imperfections from tart dried apples (a sharp pair of scissors is best for this purpose), then rinse them in cold water, put them in a vessel and pour water over three inches more than to cover them; let them stand one night, then put them over a gentle fire with the water in which they were soaked, cover them and let them stew gently; boil a lemon in water until a straw will pierce the skin; cut it in thin slices, or smaller, and put it to the apples with the juice from it; add half a pound of clean brown sugar for each quart of apples, let them stew until they are soft, then turn them into dishes to become cold.

Rub the pie dishes over with a small bit of sponge, dipped in butter, line them with pie-paste, put in the stewed apple half an inch thick, thinning it towards the edge; roll an upper crust rather thin, cut three or four small slits each side of the middle and put it over the pie; trim them neatly with a sharp knife, and bake in a quick oven for three-quarters of an hour.

Shirley McClintock’s Iron Kettle Soup
Trail Days Cafe, Council Grove, Kansas

In a big cast iron kettle, place 1 1/2 lb bison stew meat chopped small and that has been rolled in about 1/2 cup flour. Brown in 2 T. butter and 2 T. sunflower seed oil along with 1 garlic clove, chopped. Add about 6 cups water. Add 1 cup each of chopped turnips, carrots, onion, and 3 cups chopped cabbage. Add 1/2 cup each of wild rice, steel cut oats, and hard red winter wheat berries. Add 1/2 tsp. dried thyme, 2 T. dried parsley, 1/8 tsp. pepper, 2 tsp. salt, 1/2 tsp. paprika. Bring pot to a boil and then cook on low for 2 hours or more, until grains and vegetables are tender. Add one 28 oz. can fire roasted tomatoes, then heat and eat.