

# Wagon Tracks

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(November 2020)

Article 1

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2021

## Wagon Tracks Volume 35, Issue 1 (November 2020)

Santa Fe Trail Association

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: Wagon Tracks Volume 35, Issue 1 (November 2020)

# WAGON TRACKS

*Quarterly Publication of the Santa Fe Trail Association*

*volume 35 ♦ number 1 November 2020*



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## ***On the Cover: Standing Them Off: Kit Carson and the Utes: 1843***

### **The Story behind the Painting**

*by Ron Kil*

One summer afternoon, sitting in the shade of his adobe house, historian Marc Simmons told me a story about Kit Carson that he said ranked as his very favorite. Since Marc was Kit's biographer, and considered by John Carson, Kit's great-grandson, to be the best of the bunch that's written about Kit, I paid particular attention. The story is related in three paragraphs in Kit's modest and understated autobiography, and I quickly realized it was the fodder for a good painting. Over several visits, Marc and I fleshed out Kit's sparse account.

In the spring of 1843, Kit was employed as a hunter for a Bent, St. Vrain & Company freight caravan bound for the states. At the Walnut Creek crossing, near the great bend of the Arkansas River, they met an escort of U.S. Dragoons with a caravan of Mexican and American traders bound for Santa Fe. Texans were reputed to be on the trail raiding the Mexican trains. The U. S. Dragoons could not escort them past the Arkansas, as that was Mexican territory. Kit was offered \$300 in gold to ride dispatch to the Mexican governor in Santa Fe and request Mexican cavalry to escort the train the rest of the way in.

Kit took on the job and rode back to Bent's Fort. The report there was that a large band of Utes was prowling about the country between Bent's and the New Mexican capital, so Bent gave Kit a "fine horse," most likely a thoroughbred, guaranteed to outrun the scrubby Indian *cayuses*. Kit did discover the Ute village but slipped by them and made it to Taos. From there he sent his dispatch to Santa Fe.

After four days he received a dispatch to take back to the waiting caravan. Kit tells of taking one Mexican companion with him on the return trip, but reveals nothing about his identity. Marc was convinced that the anonymous companion was the famed Mexican mountain man Mariano Medina, a friend of Kit's, whose hometown was Taos. Mariano's biographer places him as likely going with Fremont's 1843 expedition to the northwest, the same one that Kit joined after his encounter with the Utes. Given the courage shown by this man, that was in keeping with Medina's character. I'm willing to follow Marc's

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### ***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.*

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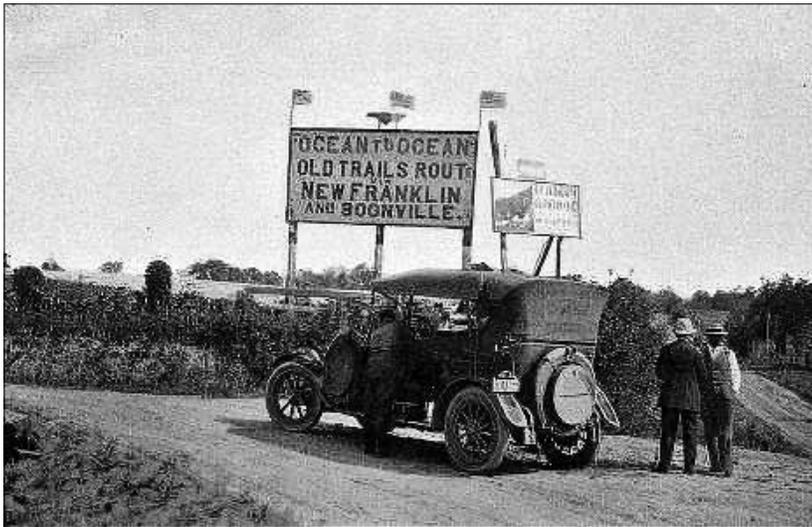
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# WAGON TRACKS

Quarterly of the Santa Fe Trail Association

volume 35 ♦ number 1 November 2020



*"Ocean to Ocean, Old Trails Route, New Franklin and Boonville." National Old Trails Road -- Boone's Lick Trail west of Columbia, Missouri. Photo: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/trgal34.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/trgal34.cfm).*

*Read more in Jere Krakow's story on page 25.*

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## Insights from your President by *Larry D. Short, President of SFTA*

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It is hard to know where to begin. This has been a very interesting year so far, to say the least. With the cancellation of the April board meeting in Dodge City, the September board meeting was the first board meeting that I presided over since becoming SFTA President last September in St. Louis.

I am very proud that the Santa Fe Trail Association, its members, the committee chairs, and its leadership have been actively involved to ensure that we remain one of the most viable trail associations in the country. Our committees have performed admirably to move forward with projects, publicity, social media, website, symposium, interpretation, and mapping/signage.

Our participation with the National Park Service continues to expand, and the cooperation between our organizations is one of respect that our goals are mutually connected to promote, protect, and preserve the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Sometimes we fight change, but as we move forward in our endeavors to promote the trail through wayside exhibits and social media, we must adapt to new generations of Trail visitors.

A loss occurred this year when the Point of Rocks Ranch was sold, and public access to the Point of Rocks historic district is now prohibited. I am currently in talks with the new owner and will meet personally with him very soon. It is our strong desire to make an arrangement with him to ensure that the visitors to this historic site can continue to have access. As a result of this, I encourage ALL landowners where historic districts or sites are located to please look into ways to make the site available to public access in the future, even if by appointment only. It is not easy but it is the right and responsible thing to do.

On September 2 a TEAM video meeting was held with MODOT, NPS, Joanne, and me to discuss the addition of NHT Trail signs to the highways on MODOT right of way. The meeting was designed to include all six National Historic Trails in Missouri for future signing. It was a very successful meeting, with the MODOT representatives taking the plan to the commission for approval. This has been over a decade-long process to secure an agreement for the Santa Fe National Historic Trail signs on MODOT-controlled highways.

On Monday, September 28, a TEAM meeting was set up with KDOT, John Cannella and Coreen Donnelly of the National Park Service, Joanne VanCoevern, and me. I am pleased to report that the meeting had a very positive outcome, similar to the meeting with MODOT. We are pleased to announce that we will soon be able to have our NPS Santa Fe National Historic Trail route signs up on the rights-of-way of both states. We are excited that many of these signs will be installed by the time the 200th commemoration of the Santa Fe Trail begins.

Deb Goodrich and her 200th committee team, along with all SFTA chapters, have planned amazing events along the Santa Fe National Historic Trail as we commemorate the Bicentennial of the Trail throughout 2021. The Bent's Fort Chapter has what should be one of the best Symposiums ever, and I encourage all members to register to attend. Registration is open.

On September 1, 2021, a commemorative day of events will be held at Franklin and Arrow Rock, Missouri, exactly 200 years to the day since William Becknell left Missouri and headed southwest to establish what would become the Santa Fe Trail. Many events will be held throughout 2021 and on into 2022. You will find a current calendar that is updated often on our new website: [www.santafetrail200.org](http://www.santafetrail200.org). You can also access information through our website at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org).

I want to remind you of the importance of sharing with all your friends and family the posts on Facebook and also share the Eblast. This is a very easy way for every one of you to expand our sphere of coverage on social media.

SFTA held its September workshop/board meeting on September 25-26, 2020. Due to Covid-19, we held a combination ZOOM video meeting with those who did not feel comfortable attending in-person, with 15 of our board and others in attendance in Larned, Kansas. I am proud to report that we had a total of 42 attendees for the NPS workshop on Friday and 34 attendees for the board meeting on Saturday. Despite a few technical issues, the meetings went on as planned.

What the next few months hold as far as the ability to hold in-person meetings is a big unknown right now. One thing for sure is that with *Wagon*

## Joanne's Jottings by Joanne VanCoevern, Association Manager



Although travel has been extremely limited, and many chapter events, meetings, and conferences have been canceled, I can honestly say that the past few months have been the busiest months I have ever experienced as manager of the Santa Fe Trail Association. There has been an extreme increase in correspondence via the many formats that SFTA has, including several e-mail accounts, through Facebook and Messenger, through texts, through phone calls, and various forms of online/phone meetings.

Much of this correspondence has been about day-to-day activities relating to the Association. However, there has also been a big increase in requests for information and public interest in the Trail. Additional queries for information include asking for advice before traveling the Trail, such as “Is a museum open?” “Can we visit the geocache?” “Do you still have challenge coin?” “Where can we eat?” “Where can we stay?” “What are the roads like?” etc.

### Larry, *continued*

Tracks, Eblast, and Facebook, we will continue to make our citizens aware of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail and what is happening up and down its length. ✦

Zoom meetings, Teams meetings, and conference calls have been numerous. There has also been a big increase in the amount of correspondence concerning the 200th, which includes everything from general questions to specifics about certain events, providing contact information, sharing information, discussing possible events, and so on.

Many of our planned efforts for outreach (with a focus on the 200th) were canceled due to COVID-19. However, we remain hopeful that these events will return in the near future and provide us with the opportunity to spread the word about the Santa Fe Trail, and especially activities associated with the 200th.

### A Taste of History

*A Taste of History* from the Santa Fe Trail aired in July 2020 as **segment 5 of season 11**. All seasons and segments of *A Taste of History* can be found on Amazon Prime, and the show can be viewed on the following link for the WHYIY PBS station in Philadelphia: <https://video.whyy.org/video/the-santa-fe-trail-95agkj/>. Deb Goodrich provided an interview with Gannett Publications about *A Taste of History* and that article appeared in at least 14 papers in Kansas, including the *Salina Journal* and the *Hutchinson News*: [www.hutchnews.com/news/20200808/food-brings-santa-fe-trail-history-to-life](http://www.hutchnews.com/news/20200808/food-brings-santa-fe-trail-history-to-life).

Chef Staib has stated that he was extremely pleased with the treatment he received from the Santa Fe Trail Association, including our preparation for his visit, our help during the filming, and the follow-up promotion. He further stated that visiting the Santa Fe Trail was one of his favorite experiences EVER! Never in his life did he think he would be able to ride in a stagecoach, or stand next to a buffalo—he thoroughly enjoyed his time on the Trail and the people who wel-

comed him and worked with him. HE WANTS TO RETURN.

We have also learned that season 10 of *A Taste of History* received two Emmy Awards: one for “Lifestyle Program – Program Special” and one for “Talent-Program Host/Moderator.”

We are still anticipating that *A Taste of History* will return to the Santa Fe Trail to film an additional segment – but it depends on COVID, as well as sponsorships. Additional funding would be required to film another segment from the Santa Fe Trail (due to the amount of travel/remoteness of the film sites of Fort Larned and Bent’s Fort). The SFTA budget committee recommended for board action that SFTA provide another \$7,500 sponsorship for an additional segment. SFTA budget committee felt strongly that the \$7,500 we paid for the first segment filmed at Mahaffie and Council Grove was well worth the money and will gain national exposure for the Santa Fe National Historic Trail for years to come through YouTube, Amazon, and Live Streaming. That action was approved by the SFTA Board at their recent Board of Directors meeting.

Both Fort Larned and Bent’s Fort superintendents have agreed to allow *A Taste of History* to film at their sites; *A Taste of History* has expressed an interest in filming a segment from both sites. At this time, all future segments/filming are up in the air due to COVID-19 restrictions. We remain hopeful that during 2021, *A Taste of History* will return to film another segment from the Santa Fe Trail.

### SFNHT Signage Update

For several years, the National Trails Office, Santa Fe, has been in conversations with the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) to come up

*Continued next page*

## Joanne, *continued from page 5*

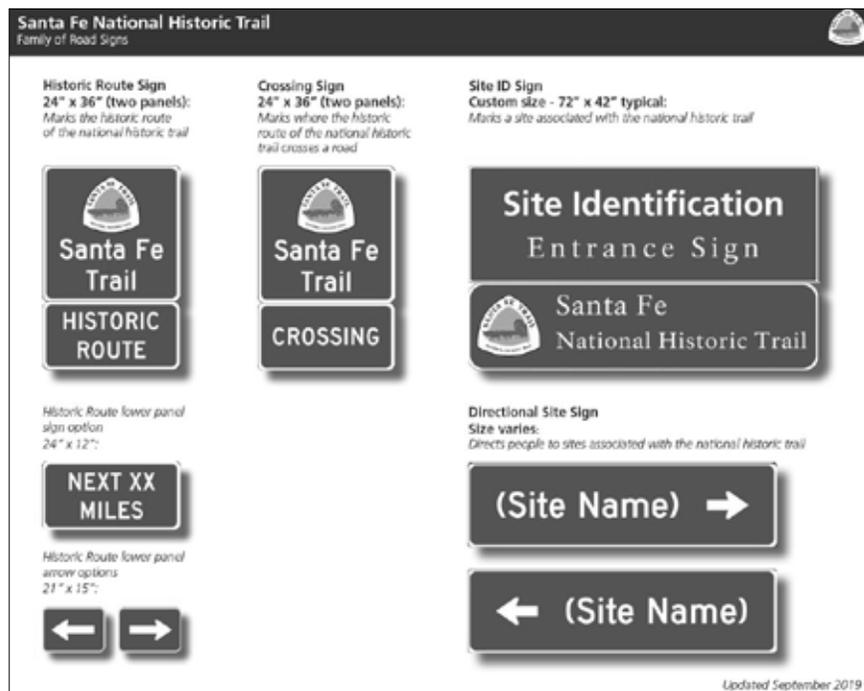
with a new, mutually agreeable sign design and modified suite of signs that meets the MUTCD\* criteria for highway signage. In 2019, NTIR received FHWA's final "stamp" of approval for signage on state highways in the National Historic Trail (NHT) corridor.

With FHWA's approval in place, along with a new sign design, a modified suite of signs, and guidance on how these signs should be placed along highways and other Department of Transportation managed right-of-ways, SFTA and NPS are now re-opening conversations with the Trail states concerning the NHT signage in those states where the NHT aligns with state highways. Working with the National Trails Office, conversations have taken place with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MO-DOT) and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) concerning the placement of SFNHT signage on state highways. In the near future we hope to continue to develop an understanding and agreement on specific state guidance concerning NHT signage; collaborate and work together to plan for, and implement NHT signage across the states; and potentially incorporate national historic trail signage into the state-specific sign guidance manual.

\*The *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* for Streets and Highways, or *MUTCD*, defines the standards used by road managers nationwide to install street and highway signs.

### SURVEY 123 APP LAUNCHED:

The National Trails Office, Santa Fe, has announced that the Survey 123 NHT Asset Inventory application is ready to go. The Survey 123 NHT Asset Inventory will provide the opportunity to survey/inventory signage, exhibits, markers, etc., along the SFNHT and provide an organized way to keep track of this information on a trail-wide basis.



Working with Brian Deaton, GIS specialist in the National Trails Office, Santa Fe, and Sarah Rivera, GIS specialist in the Salt Lake City office, several participants have been invited to install the Survey 123 app.

Brian says, "The Survey123 app utilizes a user-friendly interface, similar to a fillable PDF, and only requires filling out prompted questions and taking site asset photos while the mobile device captures the global positioning system (GPS) location. The location records automatically when the user submits information about the sign, marker, wayside, or exhibit.

The app eliminates the use of complex and sometimes costly GPS devices and in turn enables users the same ca-

pability on their smart phone or tablet utilizing the built-in GPS. No cellular coverage or internet connectivity is required for field recording of locations because uploads can occur once the user is connected back to a network. Association members can use this app on their own smart phones or tablets."

This app does require a registration process, but it is simple to follow with instructions received from Brian Deaton. We are hoping that others along the SFNHT will join us in this effort to inventory information along the SFNHT. To get started on this process and get instructions on downloading the app, contact President Larry Short at [president@santafetrail.org](mailto:president@santafetrail.org) or your manager at [manager@santafetrail.org](mailto:manager@santafetrail.org).

## General Membership Zoom Meeting January 16

Larry Short, SFTA President, will host a general membership meeting via Zoom on Saturday, January 16 at 10 a.m. Central Time. You'll hear updates on projects as well as 2021 plans, and board members will be introduced.

To participate, contact President Short at [president@santafetrail.org](mailto:president@santafetrail.org) to receive a Zoom invitation.

## Partnership for the National Trails System

This extraordinary year has given us all time for reflection. The passage of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), signed into law by President Trump on August 4, 2020, is the highlight of my three years representing the Santa Fe National Historic Trail to the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) organization. Serving on the Advocacy and Policy Committee as well as the Trail Leaders Council allows me to engage with the other historic and scenic trails on the many important issues for which we research and develop strategies for implementation. I am grateful to Larry Justice for appointing me to this position and to Larry Short and Joanne VanCoevern who continue to support me whenever I reach out to them.

The PNTS has transitioned to new leadership with Valerie Rupp beginning her role of Executive Director. Read her bio at <http://pnts.org/new/about-us/staff-board/>. The PNTS office has been relocated from Madison, Wisconsin, to Washington, D.C., to better serve our trail members and work more closely with our partners. Our monthly conference calls have moved to the Zoom meeting format, which creates technology challenges for many of us. A change in administration in the November 2020 election could allow additional trail funding priorities in future fiscal budgets. What remains constant is the professionalism and passion that we all share for the Santa Fe National Historic Trail.

--Marcia Will-Clifton  
SFTA Representative to PNTS

**January 10 is the submission deadline for the February issue of Wagon Tracks.**

## SFTA Research Grants Deadline December 1

The SFTA Scholarly Research Committee awards grants of up to \$1500 to support research on some topic related to the Santa Fe Trail. As usual, applications are due on December 1. The application form is on the SFTA website at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org). Look for "Scholarly Research" under "Our Programs." This would be a good time to apply for a grant if you need to do further research on a person or place to help your area commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail.

Of the applications received in December of 2019, two were selected. Joy Poole researched at the Denver Public Library, where she had located a trail diary. She transcribed the diary of William Baskerville, Jr., a wagon boss for F. X. Aubry. Her article will appear in an upcoming issue of *Wagon Tracks*. Rebecca Atkinson received the other grant. She thinks many "facts" about Cathay Williams are in error and had hoped to research at the Missouri Historical Society. Due to the closure of that facility for an extended period because of COVID, Atkinson was unable to go to St. Louis, and her grant due date has been extended to 2021.

Two previous grants resulted in the publication of two articles. Dr. Susan Calafate Boyle applied in 2018 so she could travel to research two Hispano entrepreneurs. The May 2020 issue of *Wagon Tracks* included Boyle's article "Nestor Armijo: The Capitalist from Las Cruces." The August 2020 *Wagon Tracks* included a photo of Nestor Armijo. Boyle intends to publish a separate article on the other Hispano entrepreneur she researched. Craig Crease had applied in 2017 with the hopes of recreating Bourgmont's 1724 journey into central Kansas and to see what portion of Bourgmont's trip coincided with the later Santa Fe Trail. In May of 2020, that research was published in Volume 40 of *The Kansas Anthropologist*.

--Mary Conrad, Committee Chair



## Santa Fe Trail 200: Commemoration 2021-2025

It's no secret that COVID-19 has wreaked havoc with our schedules. Events and planning for events have been problematic. With our Santa Fe Trail 200 commemoration looming, this has caused great concern about anniversary events. This was a topic of our board meeting a few weeks ago when a winning idea was presented: how about extending our commemoration? Instead of limiting it to 2021, how about 2021-2025?

This is a win-win. Folks are already rolling some activities into 2022. We don't want them to feel like they weren't really a part of the "official" commemoration. This idea has been bandied about for several years. There are so many significant anniversaries in that five-year period, and the events of 1825 include the Sibley Survey which made this an official road. It is also the year that the trade became two-way, when Mexicans began coming to America to trade.

Our story is simply too big to be short-changed by the restrictions of COVID-19. Rather than being defeated by it, let's work past it. Let's do the best we can to get through, meeting safely in person or through Zoom and conference calls, and continue sharing our story.

--Deb Goodrich  
200th Chairperson

# THE SANTA FE TRAIL LIVES ON 200 YEARS OF COMMERCE AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

## 2021 Santa Fe Trail Bicentennial Symposium at Bent's Fort, La Junta, Colorado

September 22-26, 2021

### Activities Feature Tours

The symposium at Bent's Old Fort will feature distinguished speakers, authentic living history events, tours to Santa Fe Trail sites, entertainment, great food, and sharing with many other Trail enthusiasts. It is being hosted by the Bent's Fort Chapter of the SFTA, the largest and most active SFTA chapter in the United States.

Besides activities at Bent's Old Fort, sessions are planned for Otero Junior College, the Koshare Indian Museum, and the Otero County Museum. Bus tours to noted sites in this historical area will be narrated by well-informed historians. One tour will be a full-day east-bound excursion (Friday); the other two tours will take place Thursday and Saturday afternoons. Living history activities will be available at Bent's Fort for those not wishing to go on tours. A traditional membership meeting, awards ceremony, banquet, reception, and vendors' tables are planned.

For the latest information, visit the Symposium website at [www.2021sfts.com](http://www.2021sfts.com).

### Registration is Open

By September 2021 all things WILL be back to normal – whatever that is! For those of you who like to plan ahead, registration for the 2021 Bicentennial Symposium of the Santa Fé Trail is open through the Last Chance Store at [www.lastchances-tore.org/santa-fe-trail-symposium-registration/](http://www.lastchances-tore.org/santa-fe-trail-symposium-registration/).

It may have been a trying time for all—especially for those planning for this unique event—but it will be here before we know it. Speakers, tours, living history, fine food, and great camaraderie will be found in South-eastern Colorado, 22-26 September 2021.

There has been some concern pertaining to lodging in the area. The Planning Committee has – and WILL – continue to work with the area motels and hotels to acquire special rates for attendees of the Symposium. At the present, these establishments have been hesitant to move forward with Symposium rates after the disaster of tourist travel over the past few months. We will continue to work hard on your behalf and keep you up-to-date on any progress we are able to make in this arena.

Don't miss out on the only chance to commemorate the 200th birthday of the Santa Fé Trail at Bent's Fort and at the multitude of events planned up and down the Trail. A calendar of other events can be found on the Symposium website at [www.2021sfts.com](http://www.2021sfts.com) and at the 200 anniversary website <https://santafetrail200.org>.

### Call for Living Historians and Vendors

The Planning Committee for the 2021 Santa Fé Trail Bicentennial Symposium next September continues to work at developing an event that will be educational, enjoyable, and fitting for a bicentennial affair.

Those interested in being part of the living history event or being a vendor during the Symposium are encouraged to submit their information to the planning committee by the end of 2020. More information on what is needed for these submissions may be found on the Symposium website ([www.2021sfts.com](http://www.2021sfts.com)) or contact John M. Carson at 719-980-1581.



## Early Santa Fe Trail Travelers Left Broad Legacies

*By Dotti Russell*

*Bent's Fort Chapter Newsletter Editor*

Events to commemorate 200 years of the Santa Fe Trail will soon begin, including the Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA) Symposium September 22-26, 2021, in La Junta, Colorado. Learning the stories of the early travelers, it is important to remember their accomplishments went beyond their Trail days.

William Becknell's first trip to Santa Fe spurred the development of what we know today as the Santa Fe Trail. Following two more trips to New Mexico, Becknell remained in Missouri, serving as a judge and then two terms in the state legislature. In 1835 he moved to Red River County in Texas, began cattle ranching, and supported the Texas independence movement. Known as the Father of the Santa Fe Trail, Becknell died in his late 70s near Clarksville, Texas, on April 30, 1865.

Ewing Young and William Wolfskill met in 1822 while on Becknell's second trading trip to New Mexico. Upon opening a trade store in Taos, Young sometimes partnered with Wolfskill on trading trips to Missouri and later in trapping parties in search of fur-bearing animals, especially beaver.

In 1831 as beaver numbers declined in the southwest, Wolfskill left for California. En route to the West Coast, Wolfskill led his party over a new, longer, and easier route that became a favored branch of the Old Spanish Trail. Settling in El Pueblo de Los Angeles, he acquired farmland and is known as the father of the citrus industry in the state.

In 1832 Young, too, headed west, making his home in California before heading to Oregon, settling in the Chehalem Valley (near Willamette Valley). Young turned cattleman, then owner of lumber and grist mills, and died intestate in 1841 at the age of 47. His death showed the need for probate courts, a factor leading to the establishment of a provisional government in Oregon.

Another adventurer, Isaac Slover, arrived in New Mexico with the Colonel Hugh Glenn-Jacob Fowler survey and trapping party of 1821-22. Remaining in the West after the

survey party returned East, Slover trapped in New Mexico and the region for 17 years. Moving to California in 1837, he built a homestead in the San Bernardino Valley that became well-known for welcoming travelers. In 1854, at the age of 81, Slover was killed while trying to shoot a bear. In California, both Mt. Slover in the San Bernardino Mountains and Slover Avenue in Fontana are named after him.

Meeting in New Mexico in the late 1820s, Ceran St. Vrain and Charles Bent formed the Bent, St. Vrain & Co in 1831. The partnership, active in Santa Fe Trail commerce for over 15 years, ended with the untimely death of Charles Bent in early 1847 during Bent's tenure as the first Territorial Governor of New Mexico. Following the death of Charles Bent, Ceran moved to Mora, New Mexico. His business activities included owning sawmills and a publishing company, as well as an unsuccessful railroad venture, until his death in October 1870 at the age of 68.

These early travelers not only helped establish the Santa Fe Trail route, but their legacy includes being trailblazers, community leaders, industry entrepreneurs, and the people behind place names. We will learn more about travelers and events along the Trail as we commemorate 200 years of the Santa Fe Trail at the 2021 Symposium, September 22-26, in La Junta, Colorado. To learn more about the Symposium, go to [www.2021sfts.com](http://www.2021sfts.com).

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Socially isolated this winter?

Read about the Santa Fe Trail

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**Kit Carson: the Story behind the Painting, *continued from page 2***

hunch on this.

Several days ride from Taos the two trappers spotted a Ute war party that had already spotted them. These Utes were likely from the Capote or Moache bands, whose material culture and appearance more closely resembled their Plains enemies than it did their northern and western brethren. This unfortunate meeting could likely have happened in the vicinity of the present-day National Rifle Association Whittington Center, where the Mountain Route of the Santa Fe Trail crosses the Canadian River, then turns north to Raton Pass. It's certainly wide open country, and one could surmise the Utes were scouting from the ridges around Red River Peak. I placed the setting of my watercolor just to the east of that peak and the Canadian, on the present-day V7 Ranch.

As the Utes bore down on them, his Mexican companion told Kit to sink spur and make tracks, as no Indian pony could catch his thoroughbred. Kit later said that for a split second he considered it, which I think is a blatantly honest admission he didn't have to own up to, and that few others would have. However, disregarding what was obviously good advice, Kit chose to stay and die with his friend.

The surest tactic on the frontier in this situation was for plainsmen to step off their horses and use them for shields; being dismounted also gave them a surer aim with their long rifles. An old chief approached Carson and feigned shaking hands, while at the same time making a grab for his rifle. The ploy didn't work, and soon the two trappers were surrounded by the whole war party.

Standing back to back, their .54 caliber Plains rifles leveled and cocked while also grasping their horses's reins, the men held their ground as the warriors circled them, shouting

and trying everything they could to stampede their mounts.

Now, to fully appreciate what is happening, you need to consider horses, guns, and the nature of the old-time Plains Indian. This dance of death that Kit and his companion played out—Kit said it lasted a half an hour—was a supreme test of nerves more taxing than any shooting scrape. Anyone who knows horses knows that thoroughbreds are good for one thing—running. Aside from that, they tend to be high-headed, easily excitable, and hard to keep in hand. And that's without being surrounded by dozens of howling Utes. Hanging on to that horse as he reared, plunged, and spun made a nearly-impossible task even more so. Even Mariano's *cayuse* would have been caught up in it.

The Plains rifle was a long, heavy weapon weighing in at 10-13 pounds. I hunted with one for 10 years and can tell you that you have to learn to shoulder it, acquire your sights, and shoot quickly. Hefting one in an authoritative manner while hanging onto berserk horses for 30 minutes would have pushed both men to the limits of their endurance. Factor in, too, all those hooves churning up the parched ground would have created a dust cloud that probably resembled a dust devil from a distance. And the two trappers were in the middle of it.

The average reader is questioning why the Utes didn't just open fire, as they were armed, as Kit noted, with both guns and bows. The old-time Indian did not believe in the white man's theory of acceptable casualties. To them, zero loss was acceptable and if they got your horses, guns, and scalp in the process, then it was a victory. The Indians knew the mountain men were dead shots, and that at least two of them would die at first fire. (Possibly three, as Kit was known to have packed a pistol, as I have shown here.) Instead, they

hoped the two men would drop their guard or open a flank so the Indians could slip an arrow or a trade ball into them. The two trappers never obliged them.

After a half an hour, the Utes conceded defeat and broke contact, riding off. Kit and Mariano made it safely to Bent's Fort. While enroute to Taos from the fort, Kit rode and led Bent's race horse: for the painting I've shown him riding it on the return trip. The Carson autobiography is vague on this, but the thought of Kit hanging onto two excitable horses while standing off the Utes stretches credulity. *Quien sabe?* Like much of historical painting, sometimes you just have to take your best shot.

Regardless of the lack of clarity of some details, Marc Simmons considered this encounter to be the finest example of courage and loyalty in the annals of frontier history. As Kit Carson has always been one of my heroes, I certainly agree.

The original watercolor painting was commissioned by Robbie Roberts, curator of the Brownell Museum of the Southwest, and is part of the permanent collection of the NRA Whittington Center. ✦

Sources:

- Kit Carson's own story of his life
- *Kit Carson Days*: Vol 1. Edwin Sabin
- *Mariano Medina: Colorado Mountain Man*. Zethyl Gates
- *Utes, People of the Shining Mountain*. Charles Marsh

## Historical Painting: Taking your Best Shot

by Ruth Friesen

A historical artist must rely on stories and as much research as possible, but without knowing the truth of being there. As Ron Kil notes, he placed the setting of his watercolor just east of Red River Peak, without knowing exactly where the event occurred. This is artistic license, based on research of what might have been, all the information a historical artist has.

The seed of the Kit Carson painting was planted by a story in Kit's autobiography. Did it really happen? Probably, but Kit's autobiography (dictated to John Moslin by illiterate Kit some 13 years after this incident) was later turned over to Army Surgeon De Witt Peters who, by all accounts, embellished the stories considerably for publication in 1858. The purpose of those stories was to create heroes, not stick to documented facts, according to historian Leo Oliva.

An artist depicts a moment in time, an impression. Even a photograph, which one could say portrays the truth, is the perspective of the person behind the camera. A beautiful photo of a pink hollyhock against an adobe wall doesn't show the trash can which the photographer angled to keep out of the photo.

The photographer Timothy O'Sullivan, known for his views of the Civil War and later for Western landscapes as part of the Wheeler survey, chose images of American Indians doing everyday things, dressed in what they actually wore, such as denim jeans. (See note.) Many other photographers of the day requested that their subjects pose in ceremonial garb. Likewise, most photographs of our ancestors depict them posing in their Sunday best clothes, in a studio setting. It's a rarity to see them in the kitchen or pitching hay in the fields. Each image promulgates a different view of the subject.

So too the historical artist conveys an impression and a point of view. Did the incident happen just this exact way? The artist must use imagination and creativity to portray as accurately as possible a specific scene. Sometimes details are known, and sometimes there is a "lack of clarity," as Kil notes. As with photography, the perspective can make a difference too. What would the impact of the painting have been if Kil had portrayed the aftermath of the standoff, with Indians riding off into the distance and Kit and his companion calming distraught horses? Do the Indians in the foreground convey a stronger threat than the defeated natives riding into the sunset? Oh, and what time of day was it?

As Kil says, "Sometimes you just have to take your best shot." ✦

Note:

- [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2149899/The-American-West-youve-seen-Amazing-19th-century-pictures-landscape-charactered-time.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2149899/The-American-West-youve-seen-Amazing-19th-century-pictures-landscape-charactered-time.html)
- <https://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/timothy-osullivan-historic-spanish-record-of-the-conquest-1873/>

## 374 Ratified Indian Treaties Now Online

DigiTreaties provides access to 374 digitized ratified Indian treaties from the National Archives and provides context and tools for working with the treaties online at [digitreaties.org](http://digitreaties.org).

The Museum of Indian Arts & Culture (MIAC), located in Santa Fe, New Mexico, teamed up with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) to create this new online tool.

"The treaties between the U.S. and Native nations are relevant, and few people have had access to know about treaties that are related to where they live," says Della Warrior (Otoe-Missouria), MIAC director. "MIAC is pleased to be able to provide this online resource that we all can use to explore our relationships using maps and a carefully curated set of historical documents from the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian, and other sources. This is part of a multiyear project we're undertaking to provide more access online to historic documents often otherwise unavailable to the people and communities to which they relate, and which often have impacts and continuing legacies today." ✦



Sierra Blanca Peak in Colorado in the background, Ft. Garland, Colorado. Timothy H. O'Sullivan. Part of series: U.S. War Dept., Corps of Engineers; Geographical Explorations and Surveys West of 100th Meridian, Expedition of 1874; Lieut. Geo. M. Wheeler, commanding. Library of Congress. [United States] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2005695633/>.

## Junior Wagon Master Continues Popularity

Travel on the Santa Fe Trail has perhaps been a bit slower than normal, but it is still going on. Whether actually traveling or virtually, families are still traveling our great trail.

Since last April, 29 booklets and 22 patches have been distributed to 16 different states. Several of our sites which have reopened have been restocked. Families continue to be complimentary to the Junior Wagon Master Program.

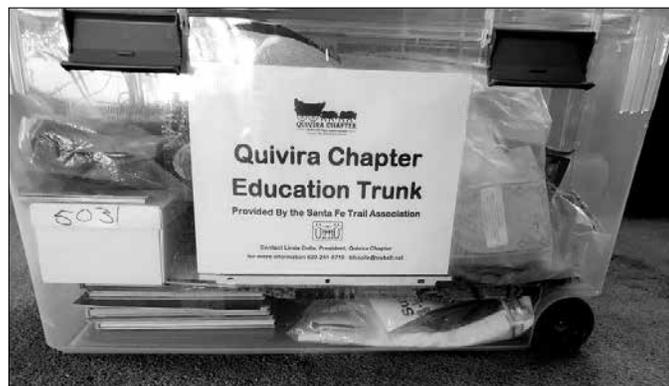
As predicted, we are now very low on Scout (ages 15 and up) and Cavy (ages 5-8) booklets. The funds have been raised for one printing and the Santa Fe Trail Association will finance the other one. Cavy booklets will be ordered after January 1st, 2021. Hopefully, by our 200th commemoration activities all along the trail, we will be fully stocked and ready to go.

If you'd like to contribute to the shipping/postage costs, just put Jr. W. M. in the memo line of your check made out to SFTA. Thank you for supporting this important program.

*--Janet Armstead, Junior Wagon Master  
Program Director*

## Education Trunks Inventoried

The Education Committee is currently working on locating, taking inventory, and updating the chapter education trunks. We are still missing two trunks. One is feared gone for good. The other one should be around somewhere, so folks out in the Wagon Bed Springs area, keep your eyes open. It is a big plastic tub with a lid. The trunks are full of trade samples, costumes, and lesson plans. Other chapters, please work on your inventory list and let us know what is needed. Vice President Chris Day has been invaluable in this project.



*The Ehmann family from Lexington, Massachusetts, working on their Junior Ranger/ Junior Wagon Master booklets at Ft. Union National Monument near Watrous, New Mexico.*

## Trail Center Names New Director

Seth McFarland has been selected as the new director for the Santa Fe Trail Center in Larned, Kansas. He most recently served as the Operations Manager for over seven years at the New Mexico History Museum at the end of the Santa Fe Trail. Mr. McFarland has more than 20 years of experience with various museums, and looks forward to working with the Fort Larned Historical Society and the Santa Fe Trail Association in educating and preserving the legacy of the Santa Fe Trail.

He fills the position left vacant by Rebecca Hiller, who served as Curator and Archivist of the Trail Center Museum and Research Library from February 2006-2008, and then returned to the Trail Center in 2013 and became the Director in January 2015. She died October 30, 2019, in Madison, Wisconsin, near her extended family. ✦

## John Cannella Gains Leadership Role

John Cannella has been promoted to the NPS National Trails and Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems senior program manager, where he will help provide national program oversight and interagency collaboration across systems. He will continue to work from the NPS-National Trails office in Santa Fe. John joined the National Park Service in 2004, and most recently was the Deputy Superintendent at NPS-National Trails. He co-founded the National Trails System GIS Network, and served as the acting NPS lead for the National Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Trails Systems for most of this year.

## 2020 Santa Fe Trail Association Awards

The **Award of Merit** is presented to those who have made a significant contribution to the preservation, protection and promotion of the Santa Fe Trail or the Santa Fe Trail Association.

★ Larry Short

Larry is a champion in pursuing projects with Avila College students and professors for the 2021 Commemorative logo design and the media video series the students are producing for the 200th Anniversary of the SFNHT in 2021.

★ Kenton Thomas

Kenton Thomas contacted Joanne VanCoevern and made SFTA aware of a 50-mile Boy Scout Trail from Burlingame, Kansas, to Council Grove, Kansas, which was popular in the 1960s. This awareness turned into a National Park Service Project with the cooperation of SFTA and the Boy Scout leaders. A portion of the trail from Allen, Kansas, through Council Grove, Kansas, will follow the Flint Hills Kansas State Park Trail.

The **Paul Bentrup Ambassador Award** is given to a person clearly identified with promotion of the Santa Fe Trail Association, development and dissemination of knowledge of Trail history, preservation of Trail related ruts, artifacts, or historical sites, or which otherwise promote the knowledge and understanding of the Santa Fe Trail in the history of the United States.

★ Janet Armstead

Janet Armstead has provided numerous hours of volunteer time to help create and administer the Junior Wagon Master program for the Santa Fe Trail Association. She coordinates with volunteer sites along the entire length of the Trail, corresponds with all participants, and fulfills the awards for those who complete the program. In addition, Janet has provided leadership for the Santa Fe Trail Youth Trip

for several years, and has written and performed a musical program about the Santa Fe Trail. She is a member and supporter of several chapters and is more than happy to spread the word about the Santa Fe Trail to anyone she meets.

The **Marc Simmons Writing Award** is awarded for the best *Wagon Tracks* article over the past year.

★ Dr. Susan Calafate Boyle for:  
“Domestic Manufactures and the Santa Fe Trade,” *Wagon Tracks*, Volume 34, No. 2, February 2020.  
“Nestor Armijo: The Capitalist from Las Cruces,” *Wagon Tracks*, Volume 34, No. 3, May 2020

The **David Clapsaddle Memorial Chapter Award** honors work done by chapters or individuals or groups within a chapter who have done outstanding work or provided outstanding leadership in a chapter (erecting signs, guiding tours, giving programs, etc.).

★ Bill Bunyan  
Bill Bunyan is a founding member of the Santa Fe Trail Association. Twice he has served as President of the Dodge City/Ft. Dodge/Cimarron Cutoff Chapter. Under his leadership, the chapter has erected numerous signs and storyboards about the trail. Bill led the charge to preserve the famous "Point of Rocks" Santa Fe Trail Landmark and save it from the bulldozers of the highway department. He led the effort to restore the monument in Chilton Park, and coordinated efforts to identify, verify, and mark newly-discovered ruts at Burr Parkway Dodge City and Cimarron Golf Course.

The **Ralph Hathaway Memorial Heritage Preservation Award** is presented to landowners, former landowners, leaseholders, or tenants of SFT ruts, remnants, structures, or sites.

★ City of Olathe for the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm

Since 1979, the City of Olathe has owned the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm and preserves it as a living history of life along the Westport Route of the Santa Fe Trail. Today, Mahaffie is one of the few stagecoach stops left on the Santa Fe Trail, and the only one preserved as a public historic site. The site is listed on the National and Kansas Registers of Historic Places. Operated by the City of Olathe's Parks and Recreation Department, the site is also designated an official component of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail by the National Park Service and a partner site of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.

The **Gregory Franzwa Memorial for Lifetime Achievement Award** is presented for extraordinary achievement in the preservation, protection and promotion of the Santa Fe Trail.

★ Dr. Leo E. Oliva  
Leo has dedicated his life to research, writing, and the preservation of the Santa Fe Trail. As a founding member of the Santa Fe Trail Association, he provided countless hours of service as editor of *Wagon Tracks* for 25 years and volunteer operator of the Last Chance Store since 1986. In addition, he has provided guidance for chapters in marking projects, provided numerous programs on the history associated with the Trail, and published articles and books with topics related to the history of the Santa Fe Trail.

### Special Award of Appreciation

★ Rod Podszus for his work in developing, launching, monitoring, and editing the SFTA e-blast.

--Linda Colle, Awards Chairperson

Photo provided by Catherine C. Compton



### John Simpson Hough (1833 - 1919)

John Simpson Hough was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on Christmas Day in 1833. He learned the wholesale dry goods trade from his uncles in Philadelphia. Around 1850, he left home, headed for Independence.

At age 16, he was hired by Seth Hays as an ox driver based in Council Grove, Kansas. Hough moved back to Westport in 1855 and engaged in merchandising. He also married Mary A. Prowers, sister of John Wesley Prowers, who later became a Colorado cattle baron. When the Civil War broke out, he was chief clerk at the Fort Leavenworth Arsenal. In 1862, he went into active service as a 2nd Lieutenant with Company E, 77th regiment.

After the war, Hough took up the dry goods business at Council Grove. In 1867 he purchased a stock of goods in Leavenworth City and transported the goods and his family over the Santa Fe Trail to Colorado Territory. His brother-in-law, John Wesley Prowers, had bought some land along the Purgatoire River from Thomas Boggs. The two families settled into Boggsville. There he opened a store in partnership with Prowers. Early in 1868, Kit Carson and his family moved to Boggsville and lived in the same house as the Hough family.

In 1869 Hough moved his family to Trinidad, Colorado. In 1873 Hough sold his Greek Revival-style house to the Baca family. He moved to another booming town on the Arkansas River, West Las Animas, which had sprung up around the Kansas Pacific railhead. The firm of Prowers & Hough established themselves as forwarding and commission merchants. Hough was also a member of the firm Prowers, Goodnight & Co., the heaviest shippers of beef to New York and Chicago. He helped organize the Bent County Bank in 1875. Early in 1876, he was in Denver as a Bent County representative to the Colorado Constitutional Convention. In 1880 he was the Democratic candidate for Governor of Colorado, but he lost to Fred W. Pitkin. At the time of his death, he was the county judge of Hinsdale County.



### Malcolm Conn (1831 - 1898)

Malcolm Conn was born to James Clay and Mary Conn in Baltimore County, Maryland, on December 12, 1831. An 1850 Maryland census listed James Conn as a farmer having real estate worth \$6,000. In 1855, he left Maryland to seek employment in Westport, Kansas. After only a year in Westport, Conn moved to Council Grove, which was in the middle of the Kansa or Kaw land. Malcolm became a major figure in trade with Santa Fe traders and the Kaw tribe. The Stone Store was built in 1858 by the partnership of Conn, Hill & Munkres right on the Santa Fe Trail. Conn bought out the partnership the next year. In 1860, he was one of the town's wealthiest citizens, having a personal estate of \$10,000.

William Shamleffer, who later owned the Stone Store, reminiscenced about Conn's store in the early 1860s, "The merchant had to hustle with business customers all day, and then entertain them royally at night; for some of them came hundreds of miles to trade, and the business house had to furnish many of them with sleeping quarters, place to cook their meals, corrals in which to keep their stock, and open access to corn cribs."

On May 4, 1863, Dick Yeager and his band of Missouri guerrillas camped near Council Grove, intent on destroying the town. Conn, who had known Yeager as a Santa Fe freighter before the war, went to the camp and persuaded him to spare Council Grove. Yeager's band then went to Diamond Springs and raided Howell's Stage Station, killing Howell and wounding his wife. In 1864, Conn advertised that he would close his mercantile business by December of that year, and requested that all accounts be settled. He sold his business to C.N. James and William Shamleffer, and between 1866 and 1870 sold them his remaining interests. Conn became a cattle dealer in 1870 and the proprietor of the Barnum Hotel in Kansas City in 1880. He eventually owned hotels in three more major cities. He died in Lawrence, Kansas, of stomach cancer on February 28, 1898, at his most famous hotel, the Eldridge House.

Photo provided by Kathryn D. Gardner

Photo provided by Christine St. Vrain Fischahs



### Benedict Marcellin St. Vrain (1835 – 1887)

Benedict Marcellin St. Vrain was a nephew of the famed mountain man and fur trader, Ceran St. Vrain. Ceran had nine other siblings, and except for his youngest brother, Marcellin, most are unknown to the general reader. However, one of Ceran's younger brothers was Domitille St. Vrain. Domitille (1808-1867) was born at the family home in Spanish Lake, St. Louis County, Missouri. He is listed as a farmer in the 1850 and 1860 Federal censuses and died in 1867. His eldest son was Benedict Marcellin. Like his older cousin, Marie Felicite St. Vrain, Benedict joined Uncle Ceran in the Southwest. However, unlike his cousin, he chose to leave Missouri and make the Southwest his home.

It is not clear exactly when Benedict first traveled the Santa Fe Trail, but it had to be between 1860 and 1870 as his first daughter, Maud, was born in 1867 at Mora, New Mexico. After his first wife, Sarah Longuevan, died, Benedict made arrangements to take her body back to Missouri for burial. After returning to New Mexico, he began writing letters to his wife's sister, Martha, persuading her to marry him and help raise his two young children, Maud and baby son Paul. He again traveled the Trail to Missouri to marry Martha and bring her to Mora. They continued to build their family with five more children.

Benedict helped Uncle Ceran with the mill in Mora and a store in Watrous, New Mexico. Watrous, previously known as La Junta, was in a strategic location to facilitate Santa Fe Trail trade exchanges. It was there that the two main branches of the Santa Fe Trail, the Cimarron Branch and the Mountain Branch, rejoined before heading either to Taos or Santa Fe. Benedict was appointed to U.S. Postmaster in Mora in 1870, and was one of the executors of Ceran St. Vrain's will. Benedict is buried in the St. Vrain family cemetery in Mora, New Mexico, near his Uncle Ceran.



Photo provided by Christine St. Vrain Fischahs

### Royal Red St. Vrain-Bransford (c. 1827 – 1886)

Royal Red St. Vrain was a Sioux woman born into an important Oglala-Teton family about 1827. Her brother was the famous Chief Red Cloud and her nephew was Crazy Horse. She was married/traded in 1840 at age 13 to Marcellin St. Vrain, majordomo of Fort St. Vrain in Colorado Territory.

After Marcellin abandoned her in 1848, she and her three children spent time at Bent's Fort before brother-in-law Ceran St. Vrain took them to his home in Taos, New Mexico. In Taos she became friends with Felipe and Delores Baca, two of the earliest settlers of Trinidad, Colorado. When Ceran moved to Mora, New Mexico, Red followed, lived there for 10 years, and married William Bransford. They had seven children. The Baca family was living in nearby Guadalupita, and at their suggestion, the Bransford family moved with them to help settle Trinidad, Colorado.

Not long after their arrival, Red and William began operating a boarding house, where they rented several *jacals* (small residences) on the property to visitors. The Columbian Hotel that currently stands at First & Commercial Street was built on the site of the Bransford boarding house. That corner marked where the newer route of the Santa Fe Trail climbed up the hill from the Purgatoire. At the corner of Bridge and Main Street, this newer trail met the original route that came into town along Main Street.

Red lived her final days with her friend Delores Baca in "the Baca House." On April 12, 1886, Red St. Vrain Bransford died at the age of 59 and is buried in Trinidad Catholic Cemetery.

Royal Red and Red Cloud's mother was Walks as She Thinks, the sister of the famous Sioux chief, Smoke. Decades-long speculation on whether Red was actually related to Chief Red Cloud was recently put to rest with DNA testing, which proved that Red's descendant, Christine St. Vrain Fischahs, is indeed related to Chief Red Cloud.

## The Diary of Pedro Ignacio Gallego Wherein 400 Soldiers Following the Trail of Comanches Met William Becknell on his First Trip to Santa Fe

*Editor's note: To mark the 200th anniversary of William Becknell's historic journey to Santa Fe, Wagon Tracks will reprint several articles from past issues. We've selected articles which are important to a broad knowledge of the Trail, but which may be buried too deeply in the annals of the past to be known by readers newer to the history of the Santa Fe Trail. These articles will be marked with the 200th anniversary logo, as well as the original publication date, and updated biographical information about the authors.*

**By Dr. Michael L. Olsen  
and Harry C. Myers**

*Published in the November 1992  
issue of Wagon Tracks*

For over a century historians have speculated about the circumstances surrounding William Becknell's journey across the plains in 1821, including such issues as where he was heading and the route he followed into New Mexico. Almost exclusively they have relied on Becknell's own account of his trek. But other documentary evidence exists in the diary of Militia Urbana Captain Pedro Ignacio Gallego, who, with his troops, encountered Becknell's party near present Las Vegas, New Mexico, on November 13, 1821. This diary has lain untranslated and unappreciated in the Mexican Archives of New Mexico for over 100 years. It challenges some previously held views of Becknell and his expedition. It is presented here with a short introductory narrative, annotation of its salient points, and commentary on the precise geographical information it provides.

William Becknell has been credited with being the "Father of the Santa Fe Trade," having initiated successful trading contact and the first legal commerce with New Mexico from the United States in 1821 and, the following year, opening a wagon route later



known as the Santa Fe Trail between Missouri and New Mexico. This set in motion over a half century of commerce and cultural exchange between New Mexico and eastern trade centers and contributed to the acquisition of the region by the United States during the Mexican War. Gallego's diary, published here for the first time, sheds new light on Becknell's initial journey to Santa Fe.

The summer of 1821 was a difficult one for New Mexico Governor Don Facundo Melgares. Navajo Indians beset the territory's scattered settlements from the west. In August, Comanche Indians from the eastern plains raided San Miguel del Vado. There were rumors of revolution in Mexico itself. To meet the Indian threat, Melgares fielded several companies of troops.<sup>1</sup> One was under the command of Pedro Ignacio Gallego of Abiquiú. Originally dispatched against the Navajo, Gallego's company was redirected to investigate the plunder of San Miguel by Comanches. It was on November 13, 1821, while following the trail of these Indians, that Gallego met the Becknell party at Puertocito, on Piedra Lumbre Creek, just south of present Las Vegas.

Several important questions concerning Becknell's exploit continue to surface. For example, did Becknell have prior knowledge that Mexico was about to lift its trade restrictions (or knowledge of the Mexican revolution for independence from Spain which

made the removal of trade prohibitions possible)? Trade had been closed to Americans and other outsiders with New Mexico and the rest of Spain's colonies until Mexican independence in September 1821. There was a question also about the route the Becknell party followed, especially from the Arkansas to the vicinity of present Las Vegas.

Becknell, of course, was not the first American in the opening decades of the nineteenth century to attempt trade with New Mexico. That earlier expeditions had been accorded a less than cordial reception in Santa Fe was common knowledge on the Missouri frontier. Zebulon M. Pike, in 1806-1807, had been leading a military venture, so his fate may not have served as a warning, but what of the party of James Baird and Robert McKnight, imprisoned in Mexico from 1812 to 1821? Or of Auguste P. Chouteau and Jules De Mun (also DeMunn), who during the summer of 1817 spent 48 days incarcerated on the plaza in Santa Fe and had \$30,000 worth of their goods confiscated?<sup>2</sup> H. M. Chittenden, in his early landmark history of the fur trade, surmised, "The outrageous treatment of Chouteau and De Munn in 1817, and the knowledge that a party of Americans (McKnight) even then were languishing in the dungeons of Chihuahua, seems to have deterred further adventure in that direction until the overthrow of Spanish power in Mexico in 1821."<sup>3</sup>

In the face of such odds, why did Becknell think he would fare any better? The question of who in Missouri knew what about Mexican independence, and when they knew it, is unclear. Becknell, in advertising for companions with whom to mount an expedition, said only that he was headed westward. Consequently, historians have advanced several explanations. Josiah Gregg, in *The Commerce of*

*the Prairies* (1844), took Becknell's advertisement at face value and asserted that he actually intended to trade with plains Indians and "accidentally" fell in with "a party of Mexican rangers."<sup>4</sup>

Max Moorhead, who edited a later edition of Gregg's book, echoed Gregg in *New Mexico's Royal Road* (1958). In Moorhead's rendition, "Becknell . . . meant only to hunt, trap, capture wild horses, and barter with the Comanche." After ten weeks on the plains, Moorhead stated that Becknell and his men "happened upon a detachment of troops from New Mexico." This interpretation was long accepted, although Henry Inman, so notoriously inaccurate about so much of the lore of the Santa Fe Trail, concluded in his late 19th-century book that Becknell, after trading the previous year with the Comanche, "determined the next season to change his objective point to Santa Fe."<sup>5</sup>

In his *Opening the Santa Fe Trail* (1971), Marc Simmons also advanced the view that Becknell planned all along to go to Santa Fe. In so doing he inaugurated contemporary debate on Becknell. Simmons concluded that, "an assessment of available evidence clearly shows that Captain Becknell intended from the very first to visit the New Mexico settlements."<sup>6</sup> As David J. Weber noted, with this essay "Simmons argues...an interesting new interpretation that subsequent writers cannot ignore."<sup>7</sup>

Weber also contributed to the inquiry through his many perceptive publications on New Mexico and the Southwest. In one article, he attempted to determine the dates when the Spanish government in Santa Fe knew officially of Mexican independence and, hence, of the lifting of trade restrictions.<sup>8</sup> The last in a series of revolts against Spanish rule in Mexico came under Augustin de Iturbide early in 1821. Iturbide embodied his conservative vision of an independent Mexico in his Plan of Iguala, February 24, 1821. Weber noted that New Mexicans had some inkling of new

rebellion in Mexico and the Plan of Iguala as early as May 1821.<sup>9</sup> By early September New Mexico had reports of widespread support for Iturbide, though his forces did not occupy Mexico City until September 27. Chihuahua had joined the revolt during the summer and, under orders from Durango, Governor Melgares in Santa Fe administered an oath of loyalty to the new government on September 11. News of Iturbide's occupation of Mexico City reached Santa Fe by November 30, but Governor Melgares did nothing to mark independence until ordered to do so in a dispatch which he received on December 26. Meanwhile, Becknell arrived in Santa Fe on November 16, 1821.

Becknell's biographer, Larry M. Beachum (writing in 1982), declared, without citing any document as proof, that in 1821 "Becknell was also aware that a new revolt had begun in Mexico." Beachum concluded that "Becknell's arrival in New Mexico seems to have been no accident; he prepared as thoroughly as possible with that end in mind." Whether hints of Mexican independence circulated in Missouri during the spring of 1821 might be determined by a close examination of regional newspapers. Simmons claimed that "between February 24 and the following June 25 when Becknell published his advertisement [for men to accompany him], more than sufficient time had elapsed for news to reach Missouri of the state of Mexican affairs."<sup>10</sup>

Becknell, who left Franklin, Missouri, on September 1, was not the only trader to set out for New Mexico that year, suggesting some general conception of changing conditions in Santa Fe. An expedition under John McKnight and Thomas James headed down the Mississippi from St. Louis on May 10, and thence went up the Arkansas. This group arrived in Santa Fe two weeks after Becknell. Jacob Fowler and Hugh Glenn, with another party, left Glenn's trading house on the Verdigris River in east central Oklahoma on September 25 and reached south-

eastern Colorado in mid-November; from there Glenn and four companions went on to Taos and Santa Fe.<sup>11</sup>

It is interesting to note that all of these men, Becknell included, had financial difficulties at the time. Simplistically put, trade with and trapping in New Mexico may have represented a chance for them to recoup their fortunes. They may have been desperate enough to take the risk of being rebuffed or even incarcerated in New Mexico. If that is the case, some of them did find treasure at the end of this particular rainbow.

Beachum ascertained that "Becknell's financial problems culminated in at least five law suits ... in late 1821 and the first months of 1822, all while he was on his westward journey." Thus, he concluded, "Becknell's journey west was clearly an act of desperation. He was hundreds of dollars in debt and his salt business was in ruins.... Everything he cherished was at stake." From a financial perspective, Becknell's first venture to Santa Fe brought relief. Beachum noted that "Becknell returned from New Mexico with enough valuables to repay at least part of his debts."<sup>12</sup> The profit motive must have been an important factor in Becknell's first trip, as well as his second trip to Santa Fe in 1822.

Weber advanced one further interpretation on the question of how those three parties that arrived in Santa Fe in late 1821 and early 1822 may have learned about Mexican independence. He suggested that all three may have encountered New Mexicans on the plains and thereby heard of the lifting of trade restrictions. In Becknell's case, however, Weber may have misread Becknell's journal. Becknell reported his first encounter with New Mexicans on November 13. As the Gallego diary indicates, this meeting was at Puertocito near present Las Vegas, not on the Arkansas as Weber would have it.<sup>13</sup>

Another debatable aspect of Becknell's first trip to New Mexico, as noted

above, has concerned the possible route the party followed. The Gallego diary is quite precise on locations concerning Becknell's party as far north as the Rio Colorado (Canadian River) in New Mexico. Gallego himself marched from Abiquiú to Bosque de Santo Domingo on the Rio Grande, then crossed to Galisteo and San Miguel del Vado. From there he traveled to Ojo de Bernal and Puertocito de la Piedra Lumbre, where he met Becknell. He and his men then attempted to trace Becknell's trail. They followed it north past the Mora and Sapello rivers but lost it at the Rio Colorado. This information, along with a careful reading of Becknell's journal, helps to better determine Becknell's route and, perhaps, to correct an error that has dominated Trail literature for more than 60 years.

In 1930 Robert L. Duffus published a book, *The Santa Fe Trail*, a popular overview of the history of the route. While Duffus summarized in excellent prose the available information about the Trail, he also repeated some errors and made some uninformed suppositions. One of those suppositions was that Becknell's party had entered New Mexico via Raton Pass.<sup>14</sup> He apparently assumed that Becknell followed in 1821 what became known many years later as the Mountain Route of the Trail. Such a conclusion, however, was not consistent with either Becknell's journal or the landscape. Nor is that conjecture consistent with the recently-discovered Gallego's diary.

Had Becknell crossed into New Mexico at Raton Pass, his journey to where he met Captain Gallego would most likely have been along the eastern side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. There are several major problems with that routing. First, where Robert Duffus had Becknell crossing Raton Pass, Becknell in his journal<sup>15</sup> stated that he had insurmountable cliffs to ascend. On his way into Santa Fe on the same journey, Becknell says that he crossed mountainous country. Why did he, if he was at the Raton Mountains, say he only had cliffs to ascend?

Becknell next said that two days later his band crossed the Canadian River, which also had rugged cliffs which they overcame with considerable difficulty. Two days south of the Raton Mountains would put Becknell's party at a location east of the Canadian River, where the only difficulty in crossing the river with horses was the quicksand in the river bottom. Perhaps Becknell had misidentified the Canadian and was actually crossing a different stream. The third problem is that after surmounting the cliffs and crossing what he called the Canadian River, Becknell recorded that his party encamped a night without wood and water. That was unlikely if they did cross the Canadian, but it was possible if Becknell had labeled another river, as will be suggested below, as the Canadian. Given the terrain and other information gleaned from Becknell's journal, it is improbable that Becknell's party had come over Raton Pass.

When the pieces do not all fit together, perhaps another route is more plausible. Because of the general nature of Becknell's journal, any suggested alternate routing must be somewhat speculative. But the available evidence strongly indicates that Becknell and his five men, if they were indeed headed for Santa Fe, took a route other than Raton Pass between the Arkansas River and Puertocito Piedra Lumbre. The following excerpts from Becknell's journal, accompanied by an innovative interpretation of the evidence of the way his party headed south from the Arkansas River, may shed some light on Becknell's route and, at the same time, set the stage for the significance of Gallego's diary.

Becknell Journal: *"On the 21st we arrived at the forks of the river, and took the course of the left hand one. The cliffs became immensely high, and the aspect of the country is rugged, wild and dreary."*

Becknell, in preparation for his journey, met with others at the home of Ezekiel Williams. When employed by Manuel Lisa,<sup>16</sup> Williams had been out on the Plains and could give valuable

advice.<sup>17</sup> But perhaps the only tangible and most valuable item Becknell could take to show the way would have been Zebulon M. Pike's "Chart of the Internal Part of Louisiana." This map was published with Pike's account in 1810. If Becknell's intention was to enter Santa Fe for trade, Pike's account of his 1807 adventures in Mexico and his description of the route would have been required reading. In fact, Jacob Fowler of the Glenn-Fowler expedition, hard on the heels of Becknell in 1821, was carrying either Pike's map or his book which included the map.<sup>18</sup>

A comparison of Becknell's Journal with Pike's map shows that both parties crossed to the south side of the Arkansas in the vicinity of Great Bend, Kansas, and continued up the river. A notation on Pike's map stated: "Above the first Fork of the Arkansas the bank becomes very rough which altho' narrow (the fork) carries a quantity of water of a red colour, and is the left branch of the Arkansas, which connects with the Red River of the Mississippi, which is extremely easy distinguishable in ascending; as from a few miles above nearly in a parallel line, is a high Ridge bearing off at right angles from the main River."<sup>19</sup> Becknell, describing his course, used terms similar to those of Pike. This first fork, or left branch, was the Purgatoire River.<sup>20</sup> Becknell headed south up the Purgatoire River, it being the left branch of the Arkansas. He kept to the left, following Chacuaco Creek, a tributary of the Purgatoire. On October 26 the group saw large flocks of mountain sheep which were described in the journal. Then they encountered the cliffs.

Becknell Journal: *"We had now some cliffs to ascend, which presented difficulties almost insurmountable, and we were laboriously engaged nearly two days in rolling away large rocks, before we attempted to get our horses up, and even then one fell and was bruised to death."*

As the cliffs lining the creek began to close in, Becknell realized he had to get out of the creek valley. Only the

year before, Major Stephen Long and his party, on an exploring expedition to determine the sources of the Red River, went up Chacuaco Creek to where they “arrived at a part of the valley beyond which it was found impossible to penetrate.”<sup>21</sup> Long’s party had to backtrack and were finally able with great difficulty to emerge from the canyon. Becknell apparently had the same experience.

Becknell Journal: *“At length we had the gratification of finding ourselves on the open plain; and two days travel brought us to the Canadian fork, whose rugged cliffs again threatened to interrupt our passage, which we finally effected with considerable difficulty.”*

Once out of the canyon of Chacuaco Creek, there is indeed a plain which is fairly level. Depending on where a party left the creek and how many miles it traveled per day, it was possible to spend two days traveling to the Dry Cimarron River. Becknell apparently came to the Dry Cimarron and called it the Canadian, an error that had been made before. Edwin James, a member of the 1820 Stephen H. Long exploring expedition, had called the Dry Cimarron “the most remote sources of the great northern tributary of the Canadian river.”<sup>22</sup> If the Long party misnamed the Dry Cimarron, Becknell could have made the same mistake. John M. Tucker, in his description of Long’s route, related (with a quotation from the report) the difficulties that party had in crossing the Dry Cimarron: They “arrived at the cliff bounding the south side of the valley at a distance of 3 miles from their camp. This “mural barrier” they found impassable “except at particular points; where it is broken by ravines. One of these we were fortunate in finding without being compelled to deviate greatly from our course, and climbing its rugged declivity, we emerged upon the broad expanse of the high plain.”<sup>23</sup> Thus Long’s difficulty in crossing the Dry Cimarron was matched by Becknell’s difficulty in crossing the Dry Cimarron and each called it the Canadian.<sup>24</sup>

Becknell Journal: *“Nov. 1st, we experienced a keen northwest wind, accompanied with some snow. Having been now traveling about fifty days ... our horses are so reduced that we only travel from eight to fifteen miles per day. We found game scarce near the mountains, and one night encamped without food or water. On the 4th, and several subsequent days, found the country more level and pleasant discovered abundance of iron ore, and saw many wild horses.”*

Traveling southwest from the crossing of the Dry Cimarron, Becknell and his party would have passed through an area of old volcanoes, lava flows, and intrusive peaks. Such features would include Sierra Grande, Capulin Volcano, Laughlin Peak, Palo Blanco Peak, Eagle Tail Mountain, Tinaja Peak, Sugar Loaf Mountain, and Johnson Mesa-Raton Mountains in the northern background. In this area there are places where wood was scarce and in November some creeks were dry. They probably crossed the Canadian River north of the Rock Crossing (or possibly at the Rock Crossing itself), heading for the Sangre de Cristo Mountains which would have been in sight for several days. The mountains would have been a natural target, since Becknell and his men knew they would have to cross this range to reach Santa Fe. It is also likely that they were looking for the “gap” in the mountains and the trail which would lead them to Taos and on to Santa Fe.

Becknell Journal: *“After several days’ descent towards Rock river, on Monday the 12th we struck a trail, and found several other indications which induced us to believe that the inhabitants had here herded their cattle and sheep. Timber, consisting of pine and cottonwood, is more plentiful than we have found it for some time.”*

Becknell’s Rock River was most likely the modern Canadian River. He does not mention crossing Rock River in 1821, but the next year, when bringing wagons across the Trail, he reported that the “greatest difficulty was in the vicinity of Rock river, where we were under the necessity of taking our wag-

gons up some high and rocky cliffs by hand.” Gregg’s 1844 Map of the Indian Territory, which was included in *Commerce of the Prairies*, shows the routing of the “First wagon Route to Santa Fe.”<sup>25</sup> That route cut south from Cold Spring, passed south of Rabbit Ears, crossed Ute Creek, and crossed the Canadian in the vicinity of what is now Conchas Lake. There are deep canyons along both Ute Creek and the Canadian. However, the most likely candidate for Becknell’s “Rock River” is the Canadian. And, although Gregg is not always completely accurate, a crossing here was indicated by the Marmaduke Journal of 1824.<sup>26</sup> The crossing in the vicinity of present Conchas Lake was a traditional gateway to the plains long before Becknell came through, and a road crossed there as late as 1877.<sup>27</sup> That he crossed it farther upstream in 1821 was, perhaps, an indication that Becknell, as he should have, recognized the Canadian both above and below its great canyon.

The corridor through which Becknell traveled between the Arkansas River and the point where he met Gallego had been used before. In 1706, Juan de Ulibarri on his way to El Cuartejejo crossed the Dry Cimarron in the same vicinity as did Long and Becknell. In 1804 and again in 1805, Pedro Vial on his way to the Pawnee Villages forded the Dry Cimarron in the same vicinity.<sup>28</sup> The Hugh Glenn-Jacob Fowler and Thomas James expeditions, which arrived in Santa Fe in 1821 on the heels of Becknell, joined together to journey home in 1822. They left from Taos, passed through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, and headed northeast. They skirted the mesas at the head waters of the Dry Cimarron, forded the Purgatoire, and camped on Chacuaco Creek, before heading northeast across the country. Thus, if Becknell asked Ezekiel Williams how to get to Santa Fe (which he surely did if he intended to go there), Williams might have told him to follow the Arkansas River, take the left fork and keep to the left branch, cross the Canadian (Dry Cimarron) fork and head

southwest to the mountains, follow a creek to the gap in the mountains, and cross over to Taos. The corridor through which Becknell and his men probably passed into New Mexico had been in use for over a hundred years.<sup>29</sup>

By November 13, 1821, Becknell, a desperate man with dreams of riches in Santa Fe, had brought his small party of tired, dirty, and discouraged men into the province of New Mexico. On that day they met New Mexican troops under command of Militia Urbana Captain Pedro Ignacio Gallego. Gallego's brief diary of his activities, so long buried, reveals a new perspective and additional details on that historic encounter and the opening of the Santa Fe trade.

#### Diary of Pedro Ignacio Gallego<sup>30</sup>

A diary, kept by Captain of the Militia Urbana,<sup>31</sup> Don Pedro Ignacio Gallego,<sup>32</sup> of an expedition undertaken at the command of the political chief of the Province of New Mexico, Governor Don Facundo Melgares, commencing at the Plaza of San Raphael de Abiquiú,<sup>33</sup> from the day indicated in the present year, November 2, 1821.

2. . . At about 3 a.m. on this morning, in obedience to superior orders, the horses, kept according to instructions, were rounded up and prepared for the march, with the company of 148 men under my command. These men include those who should observe general written orders given by the commanders of the various company divisions, and men appointed for service, assigned as follows: Company No. 1, militia men and citizens from Cañada,<sup>34</sup> to guard the cattle, under the command of Second Lieutenant Don Jose Manuel Salazar; Company No. 2, 25 men from the central Rio Arriba,<sup>35</sup> acting as vanguard. The company halted at the Cuesta del Cuerpo Espin<sup>36</sup> a little after 5 p.m. Nothing further occurred. At 6 p.m. the Alcalde, Don Jose Jaramillo, appeared with 63 men. Nothing more

happened.

3. . . Departed from the Cuesta del Cuerpo Espin at about 5 a.m. The company proceeded in the accustomed manner until about 6 p.m. and halted at the Vallecito de las Indios.<sup>37</sup> Nothing further to report.

4. . . Began marching from the Vallecito de los Indios about 4 a.m. Traveled in the usual formation to the Pueblo of Xemez,<sup>38</sup> stopping at about 5 p.m. Nothing further to report. A soldier, Jose Francisco Sanchez, of the militia company from San Buenaventura,<sup>39</sup> presented himself with an official communication from Governor Don Facundo Melgares,<sup>40</sup> requesting that I proceed to El Vado<sup>41</sup> with my company.<sup>42</sup> Nothing more to report.

5. . . Began marching from the Pueblo of Xemez in the direction of El Vado in compliance with the order from Governor Don Facundo Melgares, dated October 29, 1821. Halted at the Bosque of Santo Domingo<sup>43</sup> a little after 3 p.m. About 4 p.m. Manuel Chavez, commander of the company from Rio Arriba, informed me that a member of his company, Diego Gonzales, wounded Jose Lucero by throwing a hat at him. I sent the Second Lieutenant of the Militia Urbana, Don Jose Manuel Salazar, and the Corporal of the company of volunteer militia, Miguel Quintana, to look at the wound. They swore to me and said that having thrown the hat, Diego Gonzales then punctured Jose Lucero in the chest with the point of a flint. Diego Gonzales turned himself in to the Sergeant Jose Maria Sandoval and was arrested and imprisoned.

6. . . Began marching from the Bosque of Santo Domingo about 5 a.m. Left behind two sick people, the citizen wounded by Diego Gonzales and an Indian from Santa Clara who is ill. Turned them over to Diego Martin, a citizen of Cañada, with orders to keep them in his care or turn them over to the Alcalde<sup>44</sup> of Cañada. Halted at Galisteo<sup>45</sup> at about

4 p.m. Nothing further to report.

7. . . Left Galisteo at about 4 a.m. in the usual manner and with the usual arrangement of the company. Halted at about 8 a.m. in the Cañon de San Cristobal de Sortiada.<sup>46</sup> Resumed marching at about 2 p.m., stopping at the Mesa del Oja de la Baca.<sup>47</sup> Nothing further to report.

8. . . Left the Mesa del Ojo de la Baca at about 6 a.m. and halted at about 2 p.m. at Poblacion del Vado.<sup>48</sup> Nothing further to report.

9. . . At Poblacion del Vado. About noon we were reunited with companies from Jemez, Alameda<sup>49</sup>—with 77 men, and Santa Fe—with 45 men. Nothing further occurred the rest of this day. Later we were reunited with 50 cavalymen of the garrison.

10. . . At Poblacion del Vado. On this day I relieved from duty 20 men of the cavalry garrison.

11. . . Halted this day at Poblacion del Vado awaiting orders. Nothing further to report.

12. . . About noon I ordered all the cavalymen to assemble in the Plaza, to march into the wilderness<sup>50</sup> with my company, consisting of a force of 445 men: 123 armed with guns and the rest with bows and arrows. [We had] 356 pack animals. I gave general orders to the commanders of the various companies. Halted at Ojo de Bernal<sup>51</sup> at about 4 p.m. Nothing further occurred.<sup>52</sup>

13. . . Left Ojo de Bernal about 9 a.m. Followed the usual formation. About 3:30 p.m. encountered six Americans at the Puertocito de la Piedra Lumbre.<sup>53</sup> They parleyed with me and at about 4 p.m. we halted at the stream at Piedra Lumbre.<sup>54</sup> Not understanding their words nor any of the signs they made, I decided to return to El Vado, in the service of your excellency.<sup>55</sup> At this point Vicente Villanueva<sup>56</sup> presented himself. Nothing further occurred.

[Becknell Journal: "On Tuesday morning the 13th, we had the satisfaction of meeting with a party of Spanish troops. Although the difference of our language would not admit of conversation, yet the circumstances attending their reception of us, fully convinced us of their hospitable disposition and friendly feelings. Being likewise in a strange country, and subject to their disposition, our wishes lent their aid to increase our confidence in their manifestations of kindness. The discipline of the officers was strict, and the subjection of the men appeared almost servile. We encamped with them that night, and the next day about 1 o'clock, arrived at the Village of St. Michael, the conduct of whose inhabitants gave us grateful evidence of civility and welcome."]

14. . . This day about 1:30 a.m. Vicente Villanueva presented himself to me with five citizens of El Vado, to serve as an interpreter. Learning nothing new I left them [the Americans] with him, to present themselves to your excellency.<sup>57</sup> Then, at about 6 a.m. I resumed my march, separating a party of 100 men under Corporal Lucero,<sup>58</sup> with the intention of following the trail of the Americans. Halted at about 3 p.m. at the Cañon del Pecos<sup>59</sup> and at about 4 p.m. the party under Corporal Lucero returned, having lost the trail of the Americans at the falls of the Rio del Sapello.<sup>60</sup> Nothing further occurred.

15 ... Left the Cañon del Pecos at about 5 a.m. in good order, detaching a party of 100 men under Corporal Lucero with orders to follow the trail of the foreigners. Halted at about 4 p.m. at the point where the Rio Sapello joins with the Mora.<sup>61</sup> A little after 4 p.m. the party under Corporal Lucero rejoined us; he traced the trail of the foreigners to a point below the Sierra de la Gallina.<sup>62</sup> The trail of the "hostiles" [Indians] who threaten us runs in a northerly direction to the gap in the Sierra de Taos.<sup>63</sup> Nothing further occurred.

16 . . . Began marching this day about 6 a.m., separating the party of 100 men under Corporal Lucero with orders

to follow the trail of the foreigners. Halted at about 4 p.m. at the Rito del Capulin,<sup>64</sup> where Corporal Lucero was camped with his detachment. He lost the trail at the Rio Colorado.<sup>65</sup> At the ford of the Rito del Capulin I noticed traces of the Indians who attacked El Vado.

17... Left El Rito del Capulin at about 5 a.m., dividing the men with the horses under Sergeant Antonio Garcia, with orders to cut across the land to where the foreigners might have come through.<sup>66</sup> Halted at El Aguague del Lobo<sup>67</sup> at about 4 p.m., where I again encountered traces of the same Indians who plundered El Vado. At about 5 p.m. we reunited with the detachment under the Sergeant mentioned above, who did not find evidence of the trail. Nothing further occurred.

18... Left El Aguague del Lobo at about 6 a.m., dividing a party of 150 infantry under Juan Lucero, ordering him to go up the Mesa de Rayado<sup>68</sup> to identify all the places where the Indians might hide. Halted at El Ojo de la Mesa de Rayado<sup>69</sup> about noon. About 6 p.m. we reunited with the party under Corporal Lucero, who did not find any sign of the Indians on the mesa. Nothing further to report.

19... Left El Ojo de la Mesa de Rayado at about 5 a.m. Reunited the whole company and halted on the Rio Colorado<sup>70</sup> at about 4 p.m., where I encountered the trail of the Indians. Nothing further to report.

20... Left the Rio Colorado at 6 a.m. in the direction of the Sierra Grande,<sup>71</sup> following the trail of the Indians, and halted at Los Cerritos del Aire<sup>72</sup> about 4 p.m. Nothing further to report.

21... Left Los Cerritos del Aire about 5 a.m. Traveled one league; about half way the Sergeant of the rear guard came and reported two animals were worn out. About 2 leagues further on the commander of the company from Rio Abajo,<sup>73</sup> Don Eutivio Real, presented himself, asking permission

to hunt some buffalo which could be seen at the edge of the river.<sup>74</sup> Forty men went on the hunt and provided the camp royally with meat. After traveling about 4 leagues, we lost the trail halfway between the Sierra Grande and the Jicara.<sup>75</sup>

The remainder of the diary is missing from the Archives.

## NOTES

1. John P. Wilson, *Military Campaigns in the Navajo Country, Northwestern New Mexico, 1800-1846* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1967), 12-13.
2. Frank B. Godley, "James Baird, Early Santa Fe Trader," *The Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society*, 3 (April 1959): 171-193; & George S. Ulibarri, "The Chouteau-DeMunn Expedition of New Mexico, 1815-1817," *New Mexico Historical Review* (hereafter *NMHR*), 36 (Oct 1961): 263-273.
3. Hiram M. Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West* (2 vols.; reprint; New York: R. R. Wilson, 1936), II, 148.
4. Josiah Gregg, *The Commerce of the Prairies*, ed. by Milo M. Quaife (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.) 6-7.
5. Max L Moorhead, *New Mexico's Royal Road, Trade and Travel on the Chihuabua Trail* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 60; & Henry Inman, *The Old Santa Fe Trail, the Story of a Great Highway* (Topeka: Crane & Company, 1899), 38. Inman, characteristically, had the date of Becknell's expedition wrong, having him depart in 1812.
6. Marc Simmons, *Opening the Santa Fe Trail* (Cerrillos: Galisteo Press, 1971), 3.
7. David J. Weber, ed., "William Becknell as a Mountain Man: Two Letters," *NMHR*, 46 (July 1971): 259 fn1.
8. David J. Weber, "An Unforgettable Day: Facundo Melgares on Independence," *NMHR*, 48 (January 1973): 27-44.
9. *Ibid.*, 29.
10. Larry M. Beachum, *William Becknell: Father of the Santa Fe Trade* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1982), 21-22; & Simmons, *Opening the Santa Fe Trail*, 3.
11. Thomas James, *Three Years Among the Mexicans and Indians* (Chicago: The Rio Grande Press, 1962); & Harry R. Stevens, "A Company of Hands and Traders:

Origins of the Glenn Fowler Expedition of 1821-1822," *NMHR*, 46 (July 1971): 181-221.

12. Beachum, *William Becknell*, 22-23, 33.

13. David J. Weber, *The Taos Trappers, the Fur Trade in the Far Southwest, 1540-1846* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 53; & Weber, *The Mexican Frontier, 1821-1846, the American Southwest under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), 126, 128.

14. Robert L. Duffus, *The Santa Fe Trail* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1930), 68. Duffus was apparently the first to propose that Becknell crossed over Raton Pass. Almost all others who have written since have accepted this routing without question. Duffus's book remains an excellent overview of the Trail.

15. Becknell's Journal has been published several times since its first appearance in the *Missouri Intelligencer*, April 22, 1823. These include *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, 2, 57-75; [William Becknell], "The Journals of Capt. Thomas Becknell from Boone's Lick to Santa Fe, and from Santa Cruz to Green River," *Missouri Historical Review*, 4 (January 1910): 65-84; & Archer Hulbert, ed., *Southwest on the Turquoise Trail, the First Diaries on the Road to Santa Fe* (Colorado Springs: Stewart Commission of Colorado College and Denver Public Library, 1933), 56-68. The quotations from the journal included here are from the *Missouri Historical Review* (1910), although the other editions contain the same journal entries.

16. Manuel Lisa was an early fur trader and partner in the St. Louis-Missouri Fur Company. Among many other activities, he attempted to open trade with Santa Fe in 1812. Ezekiel Williams was part of the party Lisa sent toward Santa Fe. Along the way Indians attacked them and killed all except Williams.

17. Beachum, *William Becknell*, 19; and Weber, *The Taos Trappers*, 44.

18. Fowler, while traveling up the Arkansas on November 13, passed a fork in the river and in his journal commented that he supposed it to be "Pikes first forke." Unless he had the map memorized, this is strong evidence that he had the map in hand. Elliott Coues, ed., *The Journal of Jacob Fowler* (Lincoln: Univer-

sity of Nebraska Press, 1970), 47.

19. Donald Jackson, ed., *The Journals of Zebulon Montgomery Pike with Letters and Related Documents*, Vol. I (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), map between 388 & 389.

20. *Ibid.*, 349 fn132.

21. John M. Tucker, "Major Long's Route from the Arkansas to the Canadian River, 1820," *NMHR*, 38 (July 1963): 195-196, quoting from the account of Edwin James who accompanied the expedition.

22. *Ibid.*, 202.

23. *Ibid.*, 205.

24. In all fairness it must be noted that both Jacob Fowler and Thomas James in 1821 and 1822 identified correctly the Canadian River. Both started from the Arkansas River generally between Fort Smith and Fort Gibson. This is the area where the Canadian River flows into the Arkansas River. James identified the river early in his journey to Santa Fe, and Fowler identified it in 1822 coming over the mountains just west of Rayado. Each may have had the correct information by virtue of being or residing near its mouth and information from various Indians. Coues, *Journal of Jacob Fowler*. 117; & James, *Three Years Among the Mexicans and the Indians*, 106.

25. "Map of the Indian Territory, Northern Texas, and New Mexico showing the Great Western Prairies, by Josiah Gregg," in Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, also published separately by the Santa Fe Trail Association, 1990.

26. Hulbert, *Southwest on the Turquoise Trail*, 74. Hulbert stated that, on July 22, Marmaduke was at Las Vegas because he mentioned being at Juan Peno's. Las Vegas had no permanent residents in 1824, but a Juan Pino was having sheep herded on the land for which he applied for a grant. The area of the grant was to the west of the crossing and present-day Conchas Lake, near Pino Spring and Pino Creek in San Miguel County. G. Emilen Hall, "Juan Estevan Pino, 'Se Los Coma': New Mexico Land Speculation in the 1820s," *NMHR*, 57 (January 1982): 31.

27. Wheeler Map, sheet No. 78 (A), which essentially is the Las Vegas sheet.

28. James H. Gunnerson, "Documentary Clues and Northeastern New Mexico Archeology," *New Mexico Archeological Council Proceedings*, VI, 48-56, 68-72, gives convincing evidence of the route of Ulibarri and Vial. Vial's journals are more accessible in Noel M. Loomis and Abraham P. Nasatir, *Pedro Vial and the Roads to Santa Fe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 428-438, & Abraham P. Nasatir, "More on Pedro Vial in Upper Louisiana." *The Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1762-1804*, ed. by John F. McDermott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 100-119.

29. While this seems convincing evidence of Becknell's route, the authors would like to hear differing views.

30. The diary is found in the Mexican Archives of New Mexico (MANM), Twitchell Collection, #3 & 120, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives (NMS RCA), Santa Fe, New Mexico. The editors express their sincere thanks to the translation team of Michael Olsen and Charles Truxillo, New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, NM; Jan Garcia, Las Vegas, NM; Lucy Romo, Fort Union National Monument; and Richard Salazar, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, NM.

31. The "Urban Militia" was an elite unit, "theoretically controlled and funded by the national government, [which] functioned as a reserve force for the regular army." Weber, *The Mexican Frontier*, 116. For this expedition, the militia was joined by other New Mexican and Indian volunteer units, which was the usual procedure. Wilson, *Military Campaigns*, 12-13.

32. Gallego was Alcalde of Abiquiú at least from 1816 to 1832. In early 1822, Gallego was chosen as an elector to help choose the first legislative body of New Mexico, and in 1826 he was elected a member of the Territorial Deputation. Malcolm Ebright, "Manuel Martinez's Ditch Dispute: A Study in Mexican Period Custom and Justice," *NMHR*, 54 (January 1979), 27; Spanish Archives of New Mexico (SANM) I, Twitchell No. 1061, SANM 11, Twitchell No. 2688, NMSRCA; & Rev. Lansing Bartlett Bloom, "New Mexico under Mexican Administration 1821-1846," *Old Santa Fe*, I (Oct 1913 & Jan. 1914): 146, 246.

33. Abiquiú is located in Rio Arriba County, on the Chama River, about 40

miles northwest of Santa Fe.

34. A 1779 map shows a jurisdiction (Alcaldia) of Cañada and a town named Santa Cruz de la Cañada. It is likely that these troops were from the town, which was the second established in New Mexico by De Vargas in 1695. Miera y Pacheco map of 1779 in Alfred B. Thomas, *Forgotten Frontiers: A Study of the Spanish Indian Policy of Don Juan Bautista de Anza, Governor of New Mexico 1777-1787* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932), 86.

35. "Central Upper River" would have been in the vicinity of the Rio Grande north and west of Santa Fe. Ibid.

36. Porcupine Hill or Peak.

37. "Little Valley of the Indians," is 13 miles northeast of Jemez Pueblo. T.M. Pearce, ed., *New Mexico Place Names* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1965), 174.

38. Jemez Pueblo is about 50 miles directly west of Santa Fe.

39. Chimayo (east of Espanola) was known as San Buenaventura de Chimayo. The militia unit was probably from there, perhaps comprising part of the group from central Rio Arriba. San Buenaventura was also the name of the church at Cochiti Pueblo, and the volunteers could possibly have been from there.

40. Facundo Melgares, a native of Spain, was no stranger to the Great Plains and American incursions into New Mexico. In 1806, in anticipation of Zebulon Montgomery Pike's expedition, Melgares led a detachment of 500 troops and over 2,000 horses and mules which ranged as far north and east as the Pawnee nations between the Kansas and Platte rivers. Melgares also ultimately commanded the troops who accompanied Pike to Chihuahua. Pike had a high opinion of him, as did Becknell, who found him "to be well informed and gentlemanly in manners; his demeanor was courteous and friendly." Melgares was governor (or interim governor) of New Mexico from 1818 to 1822. Ralph E. Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexico History*, 2 vols. (Cedar Rapids: Torch Press, 1911), I, 458, 469, 480; & Zebulon Montgomery Pike, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi, and through the Western Parts of Louisiana* (Philadelphia: C. & A. Conrad, & Co., 1810), 228-229, 250; Becknell Journal, 77.

41. "The Ford" was San Miguel del Vado located on the Pecos River. This "ford" was used long before Coronado first entered the country in 1540. San Miguel, as it is better known, was settled by Indians and Mestizos in 1790 and, in 1821, was the eastern frontier town of New Mexico.

42. A search of the SANM and MANM at the NMSRCA has not produced this document. There is, however, a document which is attributed to Melgares, dated October 29, 1821, which seems to be only a second page.

43. "The Bosque of San Domingo" was undoubtedly at the Santo Domingo Pueblo on the Rio Grande, 25 miles southwest of Santa Fe.

44. *Alcaldes* headed municipal districts, or *alcaldias*, of which there were fourteen in New Mexico in 1822. Weber, *Mexican Frontier*, 19.

45. Galisteo is about 20 miles south of Santa Fe.

46. "San Cristobal Canyon" runs east from Galisteo.

47. "Vaca Spring on the mesa" is about 20 miles southeast of Santa Fe.

48. The command marched from Vaca Spring over Glorieta Mesa to the present-day town of Rowe, and followed the Pecos River Valley to the "frontier town" of San Miguel del Vado.

49. Alameda is about seven miles north of Albuquerque. It was a Spanish settlement at the time.

50. The "wilderness" was the eastern plains of New Mexico.

51. Bernal Spring is about 25 miles southwest of Las Vegas, present town of Bernal, New Mexico.

52. Becknell recorded that on Nov. 12, "[W]e struck a trail, and found several other indications which induced us to believe that the inhabitants have here herded their cattle and sheep." There were no settlements east of San Miguel in 1621, though pastoralists from there tried but failed to establish a new community on the Gallinas River near present-day Las Vegas that year. "The meadows" of the various river bottoms throughout this area were frequented by herders, as illustrated in the diary of Captain Francisco Salazar, whose company of troops was camped near the confluence of the Mora and Sapello rivers during the

second week of May 1821. They, too, were tracking Indians. Salazar encountered both wandering cattle and cattlemen in this vicinity. Diary of Captain Francisco Salazar, SANM II, Twitchell No. 2978, NMSRCA. Santa Fe.

53. "Puertocito" is known today as Kearny Gap, about two miles south of Las Vegas. "Piedra Lumbre" (flint stone) creek is called today Agua Zara through the gap. There has been much speculation about the size of Becknell's group. Ralph E. Twitchell thought there were five men altogether, while Marc Simmons has put the number as high as thirty. Twitchell, *Leading Facts*, II, 103; & Simmons, *Opening the Santa Fe Trail*, 2. With only five other men, Becknell was lucky he did not encounter Indians. This is another point which emphasizes that Becknell was bound for Santa Fe. Ezekiel Williams undoubtedly would have warned Becknell about the danger to his small party from Indians who could easily overwhelm them.

54. Gallego probably moved east through the gap and met Becknell and his party on the plains. If they returned to the gap to camp, it was probably on the western side where there was wood for fires and shelter by the Crestone.

55. With these words, Gallego was probably disobeying an order from Melgares, thinking that this was important enough to do so and that he would be forgiven.

56. Vicente Villanueva was Alcalde at San Miguel del Vado in 1818. SANM II, Twitchell No. 2755, NMS RCA.

57. Becknell found a "Frenchman" in San Miguel who could interpret for him and accompanied the group of Americans into Santa Fe, where Becknell arrived on the 16th. He had an interview with Governor Melgares who said he would like to see more American trade.

58. Corporal Juan Lucero was no ordinary soldier. He accompanied Pedro Vial to Natchitoches in 1788 at a young age, perhaps 15 or 16. He was with Vial on his attempted expedition to the Pawnees in 1805, was sent to make peace with the Kiowas in late 1805, returned to the Kiowas twice in 1806, met with the Cuampe and Flecha Rayada tribes in 1807 near present-day Colorado Springs, Colorado, was on an expedition to the Arkansas River from November 25, 1808, to March 5, 1809, accompanied expeditions to the Comanches in 1810, 1816, and twice in 1818, and made a trip to the "Indians" in 1819. He was described in 1806 as a native of New Mexico, "of very good conduct, of spirit and demonstrated valor, of knowledge in

the field and of a disposition suitable of command; his height, 5 feet, 1 inch; 17 years, 20 days of service. He knows how to read." It is estimated he was 49 or 50 in 1821. Lucero was not only a good soldier, but an excellent frontiersman by any standards. Loomis and Nasatir, *Pedro Vial*, 449-454; & Alfred B. Thomas, "Documents Bearing upon the Northern Frontier of New Mexico, 1818-1819," *NMHR*, 4 (April 1929): 156.

59. "Pecos Canyon" is present Pecos Arroyo just east of Las Vegas. Gallego probably accompanied Villanueva part way back to San Miguel and then returned to Las Vegas. The reason to choose present Pecos Arroyo for Gallego's "Cañon del Pecos" is that, during his expedition, Gallego and the troops marched an average of 16.8 miles a day or approximately 1.17 miles an hour. It would be totally out of line to march from the river valley of the Pecos, close to San Miguel, to La Junta in the next day's travel, a distance of about 38 miles in one day.

60. The diary reads: "*las caidas del rio del Sapeyo*". "Caída" can be translated as "falls, drop, or descent." "Rapids" might be the best translation, even though the location on the Sapello River cannot be pinpointed. The Sapello River heads in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains near Rociada, New Mexico, and joins the Mora at present Watrous, New Mexico.

61. Present Watrous, New Mexico, known as La Junta during Santa Fe Trail days. The Mora River heads in the mountains above Mora, New Mexico. Its valley was used to travel from Picuris Pueblo over the mountains and out onto the Plains.

62. The "Turkey Mountains" are about 10 miles north of Watrous.

63. The "gap in the Taos Mountains" is where the Rayado River comes out of the mountains west of Rayado, New Mexico. For most Spanish expeditions to the plains, this was where they came out of the mountains from Taos and headed for Laughlin Peak. A trail also ran from here to Point of Rocks, New Mexico, which was used by *Cibolleros* and later Santa Fe Trail travelers.

64. Based on past distances traveled, "Chokecherry Creek" had to be within 20 miles of La Junta. There are a couple of possibilities, but present Vermejo Creek, south of Wagon Mound, New Mexico, is the best candidate based on the next two days' travel.

65. "Red River" is the present Canadian River. Although we do not know exactly where Becknell crossed this stream, it was likely between present-day Springer and Maxwell, New Mexico.

66. In essence, Sgt. Garcia was sent across the Canadian River in the direction of Laughlin Peak which is about 13 miles southeast of Capulin, New Mexico.

67. The location of "Wolf Spring (flowing)" is not known. Based on the travel of the next day, it could be placed about 10 miles south of Rayado on what would later be called the Mountain Route of the Santa Fe Trail, at the mouth of what today is called Aguaje Canyon.

68. Rayado and Gonzalitos Mesas are prominent landmarks southwest of Springer, New Mexico, with Rayado Mesa closest to the mountains.

69. "The Spring of Rayado Mesa" is at present Miami Lake, about 3.5 miles southeast of Rayado.

70. They were at a crossing of the Canadian essentially somewhere between Springer and Maxwell.

71. "Big Mountain," known as Sierra Grande today is about 5 miles slightly southwest of Des Moines, New Mexico. They were following the corridor of the Indian-Spanish trail to the plains.

72. "Windy hills" are the Chico Hills, just north of Chico and south of Laughlin Peak

73. "Lower River" of the Rio Grande, means this company came from the vicinity of Albuquerque, Belen, or was perhaps the group from Alameda.

74. No matter which way traveled, the river has to be present Carrizo Creek, which was known as Rock Creek in the time of the Santa Fe Trail.

75. The "Jicara" was probably a reference to the Jicarilla River, which is probably present Ponil Creek. Gunner-son, "Documentary Clues," 57. ✦

Updated bio: Olsen has held nearly every office in the SFTA except President. He retired from NM Highlands in 2002 and currently lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Myers died in 2010.

[Original bio: Michael Olsen is professor of history at New Mexico Highlands University at Las Vegas, and Harry Myers is superintendent of Fort Union National Monument. Both are acknowledged scholars of the Santa Fe Trail and frequent contributors to *Wagon Tracks*. Their discovery and preparation of this significant document is a substantial contribution to Trail historiography.]

## IN SEARCH OF ARTICLES

For this bicentennial year, *Wagon Tracks* is looking for articles that explore

- the full spectrum of people traveling the trail,
- how the Santa Fe Trail fit into the big picture of westward expansion and Manifest Destiny,
- how travelers and the trail intermingled/used other trails which have since been designated national historic trails or may be in the future,
- and the global aspect of trade along the SFT.

If you have an idea for an article, contact Ruth Friesen at [editor@santafetrail.org](mailto:editor@santafetrail.org).

## Preservation Efforts on the Santa Fe Trail

*Editor's note: To mark the 200th anniversary of William Becknell's historic journey to Santa Fe, Wagon Tracks will reprint several articles from past issues and related publications. We've selected articles which are important to a broad knowledge of the Trail, but which may be buried too deeply in the annals of the past to be known by readers newer to the history of the Santa Fe Trail. These articles will be marked with the 200th anniversary logo, as well as the original publication date, and updated biographical information about the authors.*

**By Jere L. Krakow**

*Originally published in The Journal of the West in April 1989. It also appears in Mark Gardner's The Mexican Road: Trade, Travel and Confrontation on the Santa Fe Trail.*

LITTLE did teamsters, traders, soldiers, and other travelers recognize the imprint they were placing on America's heritage as they journeyed to and from New Mexico. The endless miles of dust, cold rain, swollen rivers, and natural impediments, not to mention cantankerous animals and hostile tribes of American Indians, captured their attention, not the role of the Santa Fe Trail in the nation's history. As they traveled that vast route and its many branches, they left behind an indelible record on much of the land, and in the collective memory of the nation. This record has had its proponents and keepers throughout the years.

Efforts to preserve the Santa Fe Trail began early this century with the work of several organizations, in particular state chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The DAR recalled the past by marking the trail, in order to commemorate what had gone on and to inculcate feelings of patriotism and loyalty. As



DAR trail-marking came to an end, automobile touring came to the fore and indirectly aided in preservation of the trail. These early endeavors were byproducts of broader thrusts; nevertheless they provided initiative for ongoing preservation activity in the late twentieth century.

Preservation early in our nation principally focused on structures associated with great men (for example, Mount Vernon, George Washington's home), Revolutionary and Civil War sites, or great natural areas like Hot Springs, Arkansas, Yellowstone, or Yosemite. Both coasts of the United States and a few interior locales had early structures associated with the past, but much of the Midwest, such as the five states through which the Santa Fe Trail wound, had few. Trails and roads, commonplace and used every day, tended to be taken for granted. Little thought was given by preservationists in the nineteenth century to commemorating a road.

As an early patriotic group, the DAR, open only to women with proper genealogical qualifications, sought opportunities to preserve the American past. In the 1890s most of their work occurred in the Eastern chapters, since that is where the Revolutionary War took place. For those chapters in the Midwest, as one writer put it, "There are so few landmarks in this part of the country that it is difficult to find anything interesting. I often envy the Chapters of Eastern cities. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Not to be deterred, creative members of the Kansas Chapter of the DAR fastened onto a project which became the first systematic preservation of the Santa Fe Trail. At the November 1902 meeting State Regent Fannie Geiger Thompson suggested that the trail should be marked as it was "fast becoming obliterated." Though she died before the next conference (the Burlingame SFT marker was placed in her memory), the organization voted in 1903 to proceed, in consultation with the State Historical Society. A Mr. Roy Marsh was asked to map the trail across Kansas preparatory to placing the markers, and he completed that charge in 1905 for the magnificent sum of \$7.50.<sup>2</sup>

In order to garner the necessary funds for the project, the legislature was asked to provide \$1,000, and the schoolchildren of Kansas were to participate in a fund drive. Legislation submitted in 1905 appropriated the money, and schoolchildren contributed \$698.83 for expenses related to marking the trail. Granite markers, each with an inscription and some with a bronze plaque, were placed along the trail, beginning in 1906. The DAR placed the first marker one mile south of Lyons in Rice County; subsequently 96 markers



*DAR Marker in Rice County, Kansas.*

found placement by the end of 1907, including ones on the Mountain Branch and the Cimarron Cutoff. What began with the Kansas DAR soon gathered momentum with other chapters in the trail states.

Spreading from Kansas, the idea of marking the trail took root in Missouri. Spearheading the drive were Elizabeth Gentry and Mrs. John Van Brunt, who lobbied the governor and legislature for backing. Support for this cause resulted in red granite markers, carved and ready for placement by 1909, but placement was not made until 1912. Concurrent with the trail-marker program was a movement to organize the trail association in Missouri, that in time gained national attention.

On 24 June, 1911, several prominent Lexington, Missouri, businessmen met to form the Santa Fe Trail & Boone's Lick Road Association. This attempt fit very closely with the promotion of good roads in the United States and the growing importance of the automobile. At the time, a number of individuals made pioneering treks across the nation to gain publicity for themselves, for the automobile as a mode of travel, and for the need to improve roads throughout the land. At Lexington the assembled group adopted bylaws that urged construction of a modern cross-state highway from St. Louis to Kansas City, and that in turn

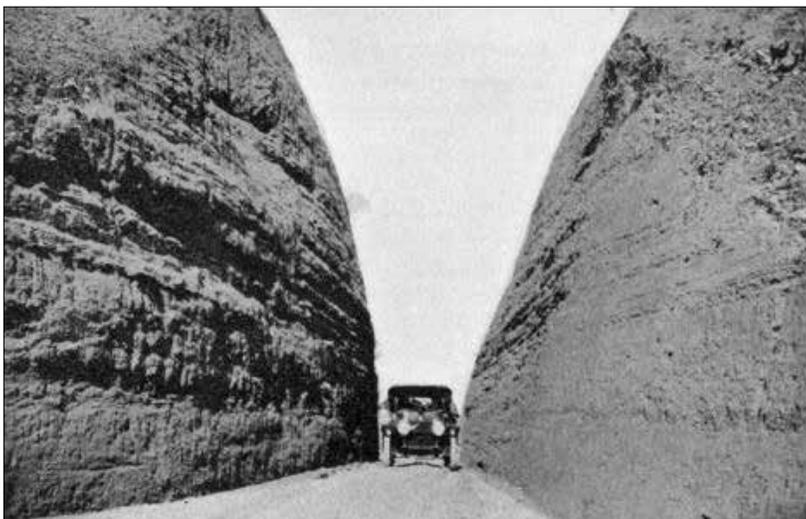
prompted other local groups to urge similar measures.<sup>3</sup> The grass-roots movement shaped efforts to call attention to the need for such a road, to promote the route, to develop uniform plans, and to place markers and tablets along the trail.

Persuaded by Dean Walter Williams of Columbia, Missouri, conferees chose a route that paralleled the Santa Fe and Boone's Lick trails; it received official designation on August 17, 1911, as the Old Trails Road. This regional organization spawned a larger group known as the Missouri Old Trails Road Association, and that in turn led to the formation of the National Old Trails Road Association in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1912. Judge J. M. Lowe of Kansas City (formerly of Lexington) was elected president. He worked closely with the DAR and paid tribute to them for inspiring the commemoration of historic trails in America.

These local road associations, and the national one, promoted roads throughout the country and indirectly contributed to the commemoration and preservation of the Santa Fe Trail across the several states. President Lowe especially sought to place monuments and statues to commemorate early pioneers. His successor in 1926 was Harry S. Truman, a judge of Jackson County, Missouri, who worked in tandem with the DAR in marking the road.

The National DAR, under the leadership of President General Mrs. Matthew T. Scott, appointed a roads committee in 1912, to call attention to the contribution of trailmakers. As a part of their agenda, utility poles were painted with red, white, and blue stripes to mark the routes of the National Old Trails Roads. With the national impetus, the Missouri DAR placed the markers on the Santa Fe Trail in 1912 and dedicated them in May of 1913.<sup>4</sup> In October of the same year they dedicated the markers on the Boone's Lick Trail. At one of the largest markers, near Fort Osage, the Jackson County Superintendent of Roads, Chester Cooke, was photographed by O. W. Childs, in September 1914.

Movements to commemorate the nation's past and the advent of the automobile combined at a propitious time for many historical sites. The combination permitted tourism at a local level that did not previously exist with the railroads, bound as they were by timetables and scheduled stops. An adventurous journey beckoned those with access to an automobile and a desire to confront nature through an active form of recreation. Predictably enough, opportunities to participate took many tourists close to sites along major trails such as the Santa Fe, and promotion of roads along existing trails salvaged a past on the verge of disappearing.



*The National Old Trails Road: car in cut in gravel hill between Santa Fe and Algodones (north of Albuquerque), New Mexico. Federal Highway Administration, Highway History. [www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/trgal43.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/trgal43.cfm)*

Driving a car allowed stopping at will to see places “off the beaten track . . . America at its best, and not through the maze of telegraph lines, billboards, and other accoutrements of industry and commerce that lined the railroads.”<sup>75</sup>

As Missouri residents began to advocate a cross-state highway, Kansas boosters became active in the good-roads movement. By March 1910, R. H. Faxon of Garden City had been elected president of an organization called “The New Santa Fe Trail.” Its ostensible purpose was to obtain support for improving roads across Kansas between Newton and the Colorado border, and to engender such support in Colorado, with Pueblo as the objective. The agenda called for financial support from the various counties, improving the road by surfacing, ditching, and marking it, and demonstrating the feasibility of travel along it with tours and endurance runs. Guided by economic motives, the route did not always parallel the SFT: it was routed through Hutchinson, Newton, and Peabody, on a southern route, although a northern

branch put it along the trail through Great Bend, Lyons, and Baldwin City.

Promoters like Faxon and others encouraged maintaining the road, offering advice from State Engineer W. S. Gearhart about plowing the ends of fields to ditch water away from the road surface, cutting weeds, and placing “blue and white enamel [sic] signs for the Trail.”<sup>76</sup> Through building name recognition of sites on the old trail, entrepreneurs capitalized on qualities that endured and in their way preserved the route. They also managed to utilize the DAR markers that had been placed earlier.

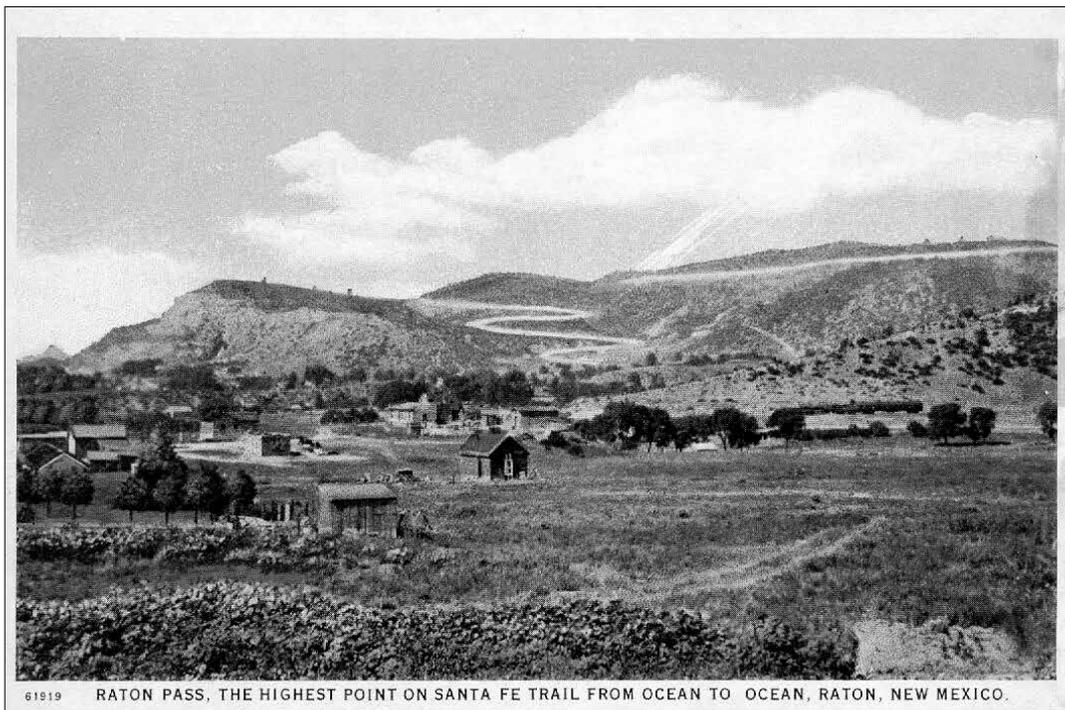
Faxon and others boasted of the work done in Colorado, but they deviated from the main historic route by proceeding west from La Junta to Pueblo. The latter town was chosen because the National Irrigation Congress was to be held there in September of 1910. It seemed a natural draw for road traffic across Kansas, and of course the nearby mountains also served as a lure to the infant tourism industry.

New Mexico, like its sister trail states,

had also placed several DAR markers by 1912 and tried to entice the adventuresome for auto tours along the historic route. Several photographic records document the route of the trail in New Mexico.

During 1906 the Colorado Chapter of the DAR made preparations to put up granite markers along the trail. Mrs. W. C. Ferrill and Mrs. John Campbell especially boosted the attempt, and Colorado lawmakers assisted with an appropriation of \$2,000 for the work in 1907. The money was to “pay expenses of a survey of the Santa Fe Trail and erecting suitable monuments to mark the same, and providing for a penalty for the defacement of such monuments or marks.”<sup>77</sup> Twenty-seven markers were placed along the Mountain Branch and the Cimarron Cutoff of the trail. Recently an inventory of all the markers has been completed by Mary B. Gamble and Leo E. Gamble of Springfield, Colorado.

The commemoration of the trail by the state chapters of the DAR, and the promotions for good roads by various associations, launched other



61919 RATON PASS, THE HIGHEST POINT ON SANTA FE TRAIL FROM OCEAN TO OCEAN, RATON, NEW MEXICO.

*"Raton Pass, the highest point on Santa Fe Trail from Ocean to Ocean, Raton, New Mexico" 1930s, [www.ebay.com/sch/i.html?\\_nkw=raton%20pass%20eName=GSTL](http://www.ebay.com/sch/i.html?_nkw=raton%20pass%20eName=GSTL)*

efforts to retain the heritage of the trail. Another project stemmed from the National Road Committee of the DAR during the 1920s. As a result of a drive spearheaded by Mrs. John Trigg Moss of St. Louis, a series of 12 monuments to the pioneer mother (sometimes referred to as “Madonna of the Trail”) were commissioned to be located across the entire United States. Sculpted by August Leimbach of St. Louis and made by the Algonite Stone Company, the monuments portrayed a mother and two children. The National Trails Road Association, under Harry S. Truman’s leadership, underwrote the cost of erecting the statue from Maryland to California; four were intended for the SFT. Placement was made during 1928 in Lexington, Missouri, Council Grove, Kansas, Lamar, Colorado, and Albuquerque, New Mexico. The latter was intended for Santa Fe but disagreement over the artistic merit of the statue prevented its erection there. The Santa Fe Trail thus achieved recognition through the combined efforts of the DAR and the National Old Trails Road Association, and more statues were placed along it than along other important trails.

From 1928 until 1948 historical markers were installed by the various states along the route. Little energy went into preserving the trail, although highway associations and localities



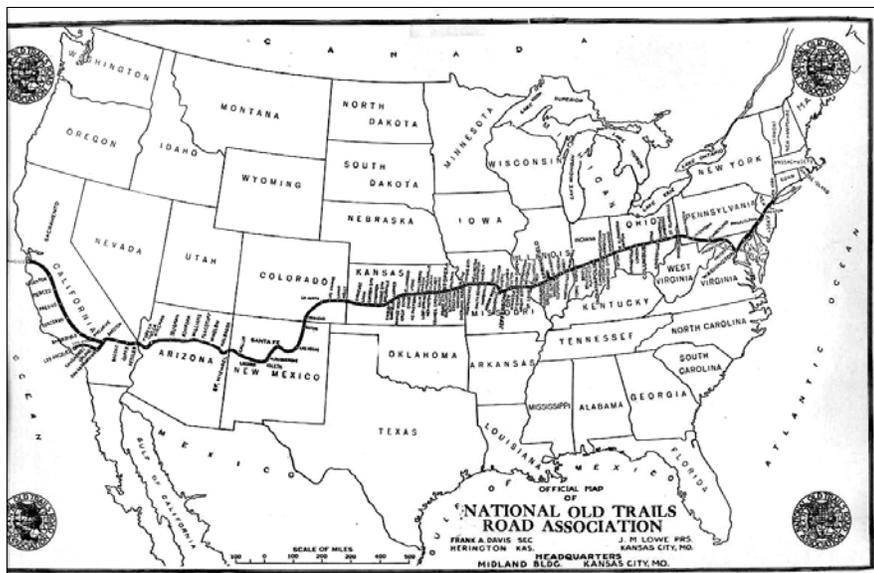
*Madonna of the Trail (Lamar) Library of Congress: [www.loc.gov/resource/highsm.32189/](http://www.loc.gov/resource/highsm.32189/). See also Wagon Tracks, August 2016 and February 2017.*

tried to maintain markers placed earlier in the century, and several individuals looked after local sites.

A successor to the early road associations, the American Pioneer Trail Association, began to place commemorative signs in 1948. The project called attention to the historic route and encouraged travelers to use it, thereby

gaining economic benefits for the communities along the way. This activity originated with the Kansas City chapter and resulted in the placing of oval-shaped metal signs, initially attached to schoolhouses along the route. The distinctive symbol of the wagon, mules, and driver can yet be seen in a few scattered locations such as at the Shawnee Mission in Johnson County, Kansas. Many signs have been stolen from the schoolhouses, and only a weathered oval mark remains.

A 1960s effort promoted travel on the trail in order to provide income for businesses across Kansas, along the Cimarron Cutoff in Oklahoma, and in New Mexico. Particularly active in this group were Grace Collier, then of Great Bend, Kansas, and former State Senator William C. Wheatley of Clayton, New Mexico, who diligently promoted the trail and the cutoff as an economic boost to local communities. Like its predecessors, the Santa Fe Trail Highway Association put up markers, rectangular signs of green and white with a wagon symbol, which can still be spotted along the trail. Most, however, like the oval signs, now rest in private collections. In keeping with the promotion, the Kansas legislature during 1961 designated portions of U.S. routes 50 and 56 as “the Santa Fe Trail Memorial Highway,” and the highway commis-



*Map of Old Trails Roads, Federal Highway Administration, [www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/trail10.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/trail10.cfm)*



*Above, oval Santa Fe Trail sign. Right, oval sign at the Waldeck-Wasmiller Dist 102-103 School in the early 1950s located in the SE corner of Steve Schmidt's land in Marion County, Kansas, less than 1/2 mile from the SFT swales. "No luck so far finding that oval: no one at the 2009 school reunion knew its whereabouts," says Steve.*

*Photo courtesy Vernon Heibert*



sions of New Mexico and Oklahoma also passed resolutions of designation.

After the lobbying energies of Collier and Wheatley, the National Park Service began a process of listing and assessing sites that led to a substantial report.<sup>8</sup> Originally started during the 1930s, suspended, and then resumed after World War II, the NPS Historic Sites Survey sought to identify sites of exceptional value to the national experience, including those on the Santa Fe Trail. In 1958 Ray H. Mattison began a field survey of the trail, assisted in due course by William E. Brown, Roy E. Appleman, and Robert M. Utley. Resulting from this survey was an extensive report written by Brown which gave an overall history of the trail, an inventory and assessment of significance for major sites, and recommendations for protecting several of the sites. This report has just recently been published by The Patrice Press.<sup>9</sup>

For those interested in the trail, the report assisted efforts to protect trail-related sites like the Clayton Complex (landforms and historic sites) in Wheatley's home district in New Mexico, which was named a National Historic Landmark in the spring of 1963. Many other locales along the trail achieved the same status: Wapiti (La Junta), Wagon Mound, Raton Pass, Santa Fe Plaza, Camp

Nichols, Council Grove Historic District, Wagon Bed Spring, Arrow Rock, and trail ruts west of Dodge City. This activity on the part of the NPS and interested local residents put the entire trail on the way to national designation, and state governments gave recognition to the trail as well.

Dozens of trail-related sites have gained entry to the National Register of Historic Places in the years since 1963. Other sites achieved status as National Park areas (Bent's Old Fort, Fort Larned), while others became state parks (Arrow Rock). Individuals all up and down the trail called attention to the SFT. Amelia J. Betts and Katharine B. Kelley of Douglas County, Kansas, went to considerable effort and expense to locate and clean up old markers and place new ones. Many others have contributed time and energy to preserve and obtain the desired national recognition for the trail.

Action to preserve a number of trails took shape when the National Trails System Act, Public Law 909-543, was enacted in 1968. According to the act, some 14 trails became eligible for study prior to nomination as National Scenic Trails. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the Department of the Interior issued a report in 1976 which declared the Santa Fe Trail ineligible for scenic trail status. It declared the trail historically significant, but its

"recreational qualities are neither sufficient nor varied enough to a nationwide audience. Furthermore the natural qualities of the trail have been significantly altered during the past century."<sup>10</sup> Several sites owned by different levels of government were recommended for recreational development and protection.

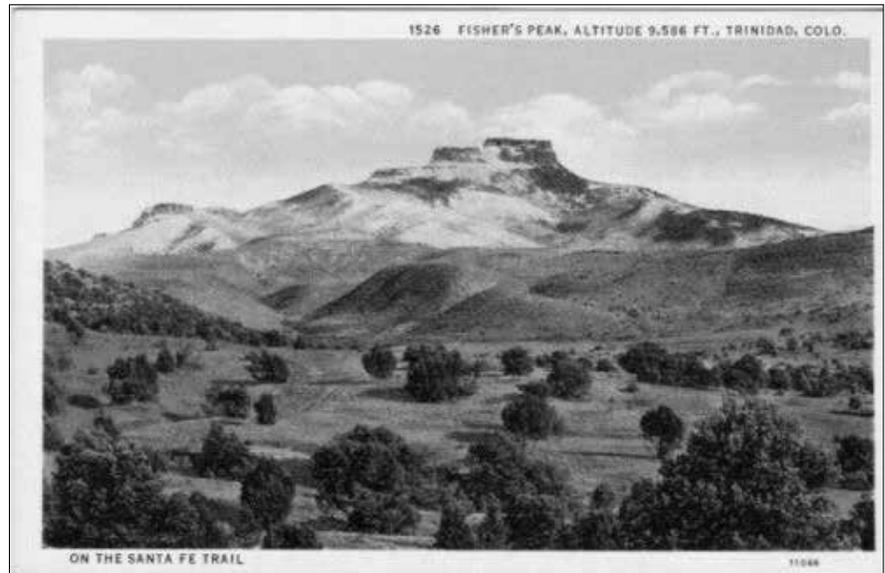
The National Trails System Act was amended in 1978, and several trails received designation, including the Oregon Trail, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, and the Lewis and Clark Trail. Support mounted for the inclusion of the Santa Fe Trail. In an attempt to gain historic trail status, Gregory M. Franzwa and the Oregon-California Trails Association led a delegation to Washington in 1986 to lobby for legislation. In early 1986 Franzwa prepared a draft of the bill ultimately sponsored by Congressman Bruce Vento and Senator Nancy Kassebaum (later joined by numerous co-sponsors from the five trail states). Meanwhile, plans had been laid by the Colorado Historical Society for the first Santa Fe Trail Symposium, to be held in Trinidad during September 1986. At that meeting the conferees organized the Santa Fe Trail Council (later changed to Association), which urged passage of pending legislation, and continued to promote and preserve the Santa Fe Trail.

On May 15, 1987, President Ronald Reagan signed the bill designating the Santa Fe Trail as a National Historic Trail. The National Park Service has been given the responsibility to prepare a comprehensive management and use plan for the trail, and a full-scale mapping project for the entire trail is in progress, as is an inventory of sites and segments of the trail. Another part of the plan will provide assistance to mark the trail and to work out cooperative agreements between the NPS and private landowners in order to permit access to sites along the route, and among government groups whose landholdings include portions of the trail. Other projects will consist of interpreting the trail to visitors, assessing its economic impact on the communities along it, and promoting it as a part of our heritage.

What the Kansas chapter of the DAR began in marking the trail early in this century has spread to other states and ultimately to the formalization of marking, preserving, protecting, and interpreting the trail to the American people. The designation of the Santa Fe Trail as a National Historic Trail is both an ending and a beginning, for it signals the culmination of many undertakings to boost the trail, and it also signals the launching of cooperative efforts to present the story of the route in a dignified and orderly manner befitting its history. To rest on the laurels of a National Trail designation would be to fail those who used it, and those who have labored to preserve it.

### Endnotes

1. Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Presence of the Past: A History of The Preservation Movement in The United States before Williamsburg* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1965), 132.
2. See Allie Peckham Cordry, *The Story of the Marking of The Santa Fe Trail by the Daughters of the American Revolution in Kansas and the State of Kansas* (Topeka: Crane & Company, 1915).
3. See B. M. Little, "The National Old Trails Road and the Part Played by



*Fisher's Peak, near Trinidad, Colorado, 1926. Postcard, ebay. [https://www.ebay.com/sch/i.html?\\_from=R40&\\_trksid=p2499334.m570.l1312&\\_nkw=fisher%27s+peak&\\_sacat=20225](https://www.ebay.com/sch/i.html?_from=R40&_trksid=p2499334.m570.l1312&_nkw=fisher%27s+peak&_sacat=20225)*

Lexington in the Westward Movement" (Lexington, Missouri, n.d.).

4. Nancy Short, Louise Taraba, and Rolfe Teague, "Milestones in Missouri's Past." (St. Louis: Missouri State Soc. DAR, 1976).
5. John A. Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1985), 104.
6. John C. Nicholson to Department of Agriculture, 9 Aug. 1910, National Archives, Record Group 30, Box 57. Nicholson was a Newton attorney and chairman of the Harvey County Division of The New Santa Fe Trail.
7. *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the State Engineer to the Governor of Colorado for the Years 1907 and 1908* (1908), 76.
8. Telephone conversation with William C. Wheatley, 31 Aug. 1988.
9. William E. Brown, National Park Service, *1963 Historic Sites Survey: The Santa Fe Trail* (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1988).
10. U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, "The Santa Fe Trail: A National Scenic Trail Study" (Washington, D.C.: July 1976), 4. ✦

*Special thanks to Mike Olsen, who researched and found many of the photos in Krakow's original article.*

Jere Krakow, who died in November 2017, was named Superintendent of National Trails for the Intermountain Region in 1995, serving in that capacity until 1997 when he retired and began two decades of volunteering with various trail organizations. Prior to joining the National Park Service, Jere was a professor of history at Missouri State University in Springfield where he taught courses in American History, American Indians, and the west.



Hear his presentation about National Parks at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPLKK1Q1FXs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPLKK1Q1FXs)



## BOOKS

### Lifelines:

#### The Bowen Love Letters

Compiled by Susan Lee Ward

Dorrance Publishing Co., Inc,  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

ISBN 978-1-6461-0643-1.

918 pages, paper. Available at the  
Last Chance Store for \$45 postpaid,  
[www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org).

#### Reviewed by Ruth Friesen

This collection comprises the most valuable and informative collection of letters written prior to the Civil War by an army officer's wife who spent time in the American West, according to historian Dr. Leo Oliva.

The Bowen letters begin on January 1, 1846, and continue through December 23, 1858. During this time, Katie and Isaac Bowen endure frequent separations and living apart from their extended families. The Bowens maintain their correspondence through the Mexican War, time in Philadelphia, traveling along the Santa Fe Trail and living in New Mexico, and finally as he is posted in New Orleans prior to the Civil War.

The book is not annotated, which would help the reader understand the larger context of world events and experiences shared by the couple. As it is, the book stands alone as a series of letters between a military man and his wife, and their families. It provides insight into the yearning and deprivations inherent in their relationships, as well as day-to-day living during the time period. Isaac comments on military movements and deaths of his compatriots, and she writes of news on the home front. Both express exasperation at sporadic mail delivery. The universal impact of

their experience carries through the ages, even though communication for today's military cadre is infinitely swifter.

The publisher's press release included with my copy of the book mentions the Bowens's interaction with such historical luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Zachary Taylor, Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Millard Fillmore, and Santa Fe Trail well-knowns such as Kit Carson and Susan Magoffin. However, the book has no index, and finding these Easter eggs hidden in a 918-page text severely tested my patience.

Having an index might help the reader/researcher discover previously unknown correlations among contemporaries of the time. For example, Jane Elder and David Weber edited John Kingsbury's Correspondence with James J. Webb, 1853-1861, published as *Trading in Santa Fe*. They found information in the correspondence that Kate (Messervy) Kingsbury gave birth to a son, George, in February 1855 in Santa Fe, who had a serious birth defect. Kate informed her brother of the defect and asked him to tell no one and to destroy the letter so no one else would know the details. His letter back to Kate informed her the letter was received, noted sorrow for the situation, and declared Kate's letter destroyed as requested. Little George lived for 18 months before he died.

What was that birth defect? Dr. Oliva discovered that Katie Bowen provided the answer in her correspondence. Katie wrote the following to her mother from Santa Fe on February 28, 1855: "A shocking thing occurred here on the first day of February. Mrs. Kingsbury, a sweet pretty woman from Old Salem and only one year married, gave birth to a boy without show of arms or legs and what is much worse, it bids fair to live in spite of everything." (p. 687) Thus, reading even without an index sometimes brings a sweet, or bitter-sweet, surprise.

Oliva and his wife Bonita traveled to the US Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, and transcribed approximately half of the correspondence between Isaac and Katie Bowen. Letters dated March 29, 1851, through September 2, 1851, from Fort Leavenworth, journeying along the Santa Fe Trail, and their first days at Fort Union, New Mexico Territory, were published in *Wagon Tracks* issues from 2002-2005, and can be found online at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org) under the publications tab. They also appear in Ward's book from pages 480-557.

The original letters were donated to the US Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, by Gwladys Bowen, the granddaughter of Isaac and Katie Bowen, and remain there available for researchers. This book, *Lifelines: The Bowen Love Letters*, compiled by Susan Lee Ward, the great-great-granddaughter of Isaac and Katie, makes the letters available to everyone.

The letters written on the Santa Fe Trail and in New Mexico, 1851-1855, provide another woman's viewpoint on the trail and life in the frontier army prior to the Civil War. Katie Bowen belongs in the pantheon of women writers on the SFT, including Susan Shelby Magoffin, Marion Sloan Russell, Julia Archibald Holmes, Lydia Spencer Lane, and others. ✦

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### New Release

*America's National Historic Trails: Walking the Footsteps of History*, written by Karen Berger and photographed by Bart Smith. Foreward by Ken Burns and screenwriter Dayton Duncan, who collaborated on PBS's epic 12-hour series on America's national parks in 2009. Buy online: [www.rizzoliusa.com/buy-online/9780847868858/](http://www.rizzoliusa.com/buy-online/9780847868858/). Hardcover, 320 pages, \$55.

## 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](mailto:info@santafetrail.org).

#### Missouri River Outfitters

Independence, MO  
President Anne Mallinson

Plans continue for 2021 events. MRO President Anne Mallinson met with members of the Arrow Rock Trading Company in preparation for both the September 1, 2021, events in Arrow Rock and the living history demonstrations at Fort Osage on September 4-5, 2021. Details will be posted on [www.santafetrail200.org](http://www.santafetrail200.org) and [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org)

In conjunction with Friends of the National Frontier Trails Museum, Sarah Tucker Poff plans a virtual wagon train in 2021. If you wish to join in the fun, pick your identity and pack your wagon with trade goods in preparation for leaving Franklin. Sarah will choose a year later than 1821 in order to involve more people and wagons.

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. The NPS will review information submitted and the new/replacement wayside exhibits should be ready for installation in early 2021.

Of special interest are developments for the 200th anniversary of the Sibley Survey in 2025. The commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail in 2021 will provide momentum as we move forward to these future commemorations.

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

An MRO Zoom meeting is planned for November. The annual December meeting of trail organizations in western Missouri and eastern Kansas has been cancelled. We will keep in touch with one another via electronic media and newsletters.

#### Douglas County

Baldwin City, KS  
President Roger Boyd

Our annual meeting which had been scheduled for Sunday February 21 has been postponed. The program was to be by Baker University Archivist, Sara Decaro, and her topic was "History of the Baldwin City, KS, Area." 2020 is the Sesqui-centennial for Baldwin City, but the celebration has been postponed to 2021. We will determine a date for this presentation once the pandemic is under control.

This spring and summer we have been able to construct a new footpath at the Black Jack Ruts. Five prominent wagon ruts on the Ivan L. Boyd Memorial Prairie Preserve, owned by Douglas County, are up to four feet deep as they come down a hill. After the prairie is burned at least five other wagon tracks can be located. The site is 18 acres, of which half is still unplowed native prairie. Dr. Roger Boyd has documented over 250 species of native plants on the site during his tenure at Baker University.

The trail construction has been a collaborative effort organized by Dr. Boyd with the Douglas County Chapter of SFTA. Funding, advice, labor, or materials have been provided by Douglas County Department of Public Works, Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas State Historical Preservation Office, Douglas County Heritage Conservation Council (HCC), Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA), Santa Fe Trail Association, and Cory Donnelly of the National Park Service office in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Douglas County Chapter has received a \$17,800 grant from HHC, a \$3,000 grant from FFHA, and a \$5,000 grant from a private donor. Over 600 hours of volunteer labor have been contributed by over 60 volunteers on the project.

The first portion of the trail, constructed of compacted asphalt millings, is 6 feet wide, 350 feet long, and ends with a 25-foot-diameter circle located at the first major rut. From there a 1,250-foot-long gravel-topped trail three feet wide loops around and through the other major ruts. A stone pathway has been constructed through the ruts. Both portions have been completed.

The National Park Service staff members are designing three interpretative signs that will be completed next spring. A dedication ceremony will be held on June 5, 2021, beginning at 2:00 p.m. Details will be developed soon. We look forward to many visitors to this highly visible trail.

#### Heart of the Flint Hills

Council Grove, KS  
President Sharon Haun

Like everyone else, COVID-19 has slowed things down in the Flint Hills. But the grass and weeds keep growing. Thanks to three of our chapter members, the Rock Creek Crossing trail has been mowed and trimmed all this growing season. The gentleman who has been hauling his mower out there to mow the rail tells me he is hoping he has mowed it for the last time this year. These three gentlemen have been taking care of this wonderful site the whole spring/summer season.

Planning for SFT 200 continues with many special events on the calendar. The committee has moved the first events back to May, the first event to be held outside. Again COVID-19 continues to be the "problem on the shoulder," as we work on the schedule and variety of events. Hopefully, by the next *Wagon Tracks* we will have a better understanding of what, if any, limitations we may have for our big spring, summer, and fall events. Stay safe, and wear your mask.

**SFTA Annual Membership January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021**

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  
 \_\_\_\_\_  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](http://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. **TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_  
**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](http://www.santafetrail.org)**

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

## Chapter Reports

### **Cottonwood Crossing**

Hillsboro, KS  
President Doug Sharp

Unfortunately, due to our country's response to COVID-19, our chapter has essentially gone dormant with fear. I'm sorry this is so. Other than my contact with Rich Giblin and John Kliewer flying and videoing the trail, we have had no activity.

### **Quivira**

McPherson, KS  
President Linda Colle

COVID-19 has not stopped Trail activities from taking place. We are still planning for the 200th Anniversary for 2021. Rack cards describing the Quivira Chapter activities commemorating the Santa Fe Trail 200th anniversary have been distributed to our area communities. In addition, the Quivira 200th Anniversary website is active. It is a work in progress but it will list Quivira Chapter events and will also include participating community events and activities, as well as places to eat, go, see, and stay. The Quivira Chapter website is [santafetrail2021.com](http://santafetrail2021.com). The chapter Facebook page for the 200th anniversary is also active at [www.facebook.com/200thSantafetrailKansas/](http://www.facebook.com/200thSantafetrailKansas/).

For the first time in its history, the Kansas State Fair was cancelled. The Quivira Chapter was planning to have a booth for both weekends at the Fair. It is disappointing that we were not able to showcase the Quivira Chapter and SFTA to people at the Fair, but safety first.

The Ralph's Rut interpretive sign has been installed and it looks great. Britt Colle installed it on August 2, with help from Linda

Colle, Carolyn Kern, and Carolyn's son Joseph and his three children. The proposal for this sign was submitted in the fall of 2016, and we are so happy to have the sign finally in place. New signs marking the trail have been installed by Barton County near Great Bend. The city of Ellinwood should also be installing signs in the town of Ellinwood soon, if they have not already. Installation of these signs will help to further mark the Santa Fe Trail in the Quivira Chapter area.

### **Wet/Dry Routes**

Great Bend, KS  
President George Elmore

Returning to regular meetings during a pandemic would be like rolling the dice, considering the high risk because of age and health of several members. The Wet/Dry chapter has not had a meeting since the March shutdown. There is no choice, even with masks and distancing; the risk is too great.

Without holding meetings, the preservation work to help save Santa Fe Trail Ruts has been taking place. Several Wet/Dry members have been assisting the Santa Fe Trail Center with the Sharp Ruts just south of Chase. The five-acre parcel has beautifully preserved deep sets of main line trail ruts along with a few buffalo wallows. A sign for the area has been written and is ready to be installed. The site is not open yet, as an entrance road and parking area are being developed. The Sharp Ruts and Ralph's Ruts are only a few miles apart, and with the Little Arkansas River Crossing, Santa Fe Trail enthusiasts will have great trail viewing.

During this challenging time, we can still help save the 200-year-old critically important resource of trail ruts by help-

ing to save five more acres. Protecting the Santa Fe Trail ruts is a significant contribution to the 200th Santa Fe Trail anniversary.

### **Dodge City/Fort Dodge/Cimarron**

Dodge City, KS  
President Bill Bunyan

We had thought about trying to have a chapter meeting at the end of September, but after talking it over with all involved, we decided to cancel. Hopefully things will get better soon and we can meet again in the spring.

The chapter lost one of its first members recently. Don Wiles helped start the chapter, serving as one of the first chapter presidents. Our condolences to his family, as he will surely be missed.

The Kansas DAR is planning to re-dedicate one of its monuments here in the spring. Patty Winger, DAR historian, is planning the event for May 22 for the Wet-Dry marker just east of Fort Dodge.

Our chapter's project for the 200th anniversary is to spotlight all of our Santa Fe Trail sites in our two-county chapter area of Ford and Gray counties. Vice President Deb Calhoun, my wife Susan, and I took photos of all the Gray County sites, and we will have a caption with each telling where it is located. The editor of the *Dodge City Globe* has agreed to run one per week starting the first of the year. Hopefully this will encourage people to visit the sites as we commemorate the 200th anniversary. Once we have Ford County done we should have around 50 sites, good for one a week in 2021.

### **Wagon Bed Spring**

Lakin, KS  
President Linda Peters

We have not had a meeting this year. The chapter does hope 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

Our chapter will pay for the wayside exhibit sign to be replaced at Autograph Rock. The Morton County Historical Society Museum has ordered Santa Fe Trail interpretive signs to be placed on the museum grounds. SFT signs for Union County, New Mexico, will be installed in the next few weeks by the County Road Department and NMDOT.

The Cimarron Heritage Center in Boise City, Oklahoma, has tentative plans June 4, 2021, to have a Santa Fe Trail tour, starting in the morning east of Boise City, going toward Willow Bar Crossing, Trujillo Springs, and teepee rings. After lunch at the museum, the tour will depart for Signature Rock, Autograph Rock, Camp Nichols, and McNees crossing, ending back at Boise City. Please plan to attend and bring a friend. These are great sites to see along the trail.

### **Bent's Fort**

Lamar, CO  
President Kevin Lindahl

The Bent's Fort Chapter has always and continues to hold true the saying, "The Santa Fe Trail Lives On." While some of our planned events didn't come off as planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Bent's Fort Chapter has been able to carry on and find innovative ways to still attend trail and history related events while following all local, county, and state health protocols.

In August, chapter members and guests attended a presentation by John W. Anderson on "Native American Prayer Trees of Colorado" at the historic Grand Theater in Rocky Ford. Mr. Anderson shared some of his personal relationship with the Santa Fe Trail and how it influenced his family in settling in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Some of the trees that are in his book and presentation are along the Cherokee Trail, which utilized the Santa Fe Trail to Bent's Old Fort and then broke off the trail to go to Fountain Creek then north, eventually ending up at Fort Bridger.

In 2019 the Bent's Fort Chapter board of directors voted to invest in a camera capable of taking pictures and also video. The idea behind this was to preserve the talks, presentations, and other events along the trail that the chapter has the privilege to see and may not be able to see or hear about again. It seems that many of the wonderful speakers and trek guides are dying. Little did we know that a "pandemic" would occur and limit folks to get out and attend events. With author permission, these photos and videos are now available to watch on our Bent's Fort Chapter YouTube channel, "Bent's Fort Chapter Santa Fe Trail." The chapter also has our own Facebook page, "Bent's Fort Chapter," where photos and information are posted as well. These are fantastic mediums to preserve some of the history that we experience while out on the Trail or hearing a presentation. We are hoping that not only our members can enjoy the photos and videos, but that the general public can check them out as well. We invite all of you to take a look.

Until Friday, September 25th, all plans for our Bent's Fort Chapter Las Vegas Trek were still on; however, unfortunately, it was announced that the NM governor placed travelers from Colorado on a very restricted protocol. As it stands today, any traveler from Colorado into New Mexico who stays overnight must quarantine themselves for 14 days. Due to these restrictions, it was unfortunately decided that this trek will be postponed until 2021. Personally, I am just heartbroken! Lots of planning has taken place: tour guides were ready for us, the Castaneda and Plaza Hotels were anxious for us to be there, and restaurants were making special arrangements to accommodate our group. It is my hope that these plans can be carried over to next year.

Of course, many of our chapter members are involved in planning the 2021 Symposium to be held at Bent's Old Fort next September, 2021. It has been interesting having our planning meetings via Zoom and conference call. It is always fun to see committee members on the screen. We are very thankful the Symposium was not planned for this September. Just a reminder that you can register for the 2021 Symposium on the SFTA website via The Last Chance Store.

### **Corazon de los Caminos**

Cimarron, NM  
President Doyle Daves

Our chapter has been in hibernation since our February meeting owing to the virus pandemic and our New Mexico governor's guidelines. The guidelines, which remain in effect, have effectively banned meetings; as a result we have canceled seven planned monthly meetings and postponed impressive programs. We hope it will be possible to resume meetings in October or November. It is imperative that we finalize plans for SFT 200th anniversary events during the next few months. If it is not possible to resume chapter meetings during the fall, we will find other ways to move the planning process forward.

The chapter, in cooperation with the Las Vegas Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation, is committed to hosting events during the weekend of November 12-14, 2021, to note the meeting that occurred on November 13, 1821, just three miles south of Las Vegas between William Becknell and his five companions from Missouri and Mexican military Captain Pedro Gallego and his troops that marked the opening of the Santa Fe Trail.

### End of the Trail

Santa Fe, NM  
President Joy Poole

Due to COVID-19, our chapter lectures have been postponed indefinitely. The End of the Trail Chapter Board members have continued to meet virtually.

Long time EoT board member Gail Bryant resigned from the End of the Trail Chapter board. Her services over the years were invaluable. She provided first-hand knowledge of trail sites located on the eastern section of Santa Fe County. She was always ready to fill-in on a variety of tasks from Santa Fe Trail placemat distribution, to substituting as a secretary, filling out the annual volunteer hours for our chapter. We very much appreciate her contribution over the years to our chapter and the Santa Fe Trail.

Noel Marie Fletcher, journalist and photographer, was appointed to fill the term of Gale Bryant. Noel is a descendant of Santa Fe Trail traders, the Perea and Chaves families. Her Hispanic maternal relatives include the Perea family, whose members were among the earliest Hispanics in Congress (Francisco Perea, Jose Francisco Chaves, and Pedro Perea). The Pereas were also important community leaders under three flags (Spain, Mexico, and the U.S.) in New Mexico and leading Hispanic business entrepreneurs of the Santa Fe Trail.

Joy Poole has completed her research made possible by an SFTA Scholarly Research Grant on the William Baskerville diary, Wagon Boss for Frances Xavier Aubry. Her article will appear in a future issue of *Wagon Tracks*.

Dave Kendall, from Kansas, was in New Mexico and Santa Fe over the 2020 Labor Day weekend, filming and interviewing people for a SF Trail film funded by the Kansas Humanities Council.

Our EoT chapter board work has centered primarily on protecting local monuments which have become the topic of controversy resulting from the Black Lives Matter movement. Margaret Sears, former Santa Fe Trail Association President and current End of the Trail Board member, has written letters objecting to the removal of these obelisks in Santa Fe. In

addition, she galvanized the End of the Trail Chapter board to discuss the monument situation and issue a written statement to various officials. For potential guidance, the End of the Trail Chapter board members inquired whether the Santa Fe Trail Association had an official position on the removal of monuments. SFTA does not.

The two monuments the End of the Trail Chapter members are addressing are two obelisks. The first obelisk is the Soldiers Monument, funded by the NM Territorial Legislatures (1865-1868) erected on the plaza to recognize the Union soldiers and subsequently during the second appropriation to the soldiers who fought during the Indian Wars, which spanned some 25 years in New Mexico. [Editor's note: this obelisk was pulled down by protestors on October 12, 2020.]

In 1865, veterans began placing monuments around the nation, commemorating the Civil War and its fallen heroes. This growing movement inspired Slough, a former colonel of the 1st Colorado Infantry Regiment, the volunteers that participated in the Battle at Glorieta Pass, dubbed the "Gettysburg of the West," one of two battles fought in New Mexico as a part of the Trans-Mississippi Theater of the Civil War. He secured \$1,500 for the monument. Later, when it was not finished by the architects John and M. McGee, another legislative amount of \$1,800 was appropriated by the NM Territorial Legislature with an added provision requiring commemoration of those individuals fallen in the Indian Wars. Seizing the narrative, members actually drafted into law the precise words to be engraved onto the four marble tablets.

The second obelisk was dedicated during an 1884 ceremony attended by about 5,000 people, whereby a sandstone obelisk erected by the Grand Army of the Republic was unveiled at the main entrance of the Santiago E. Campos U.S. Courthouse. The monument honors Christopher "Kit" Carson (1809-1868), a veteran of the Mexican-American War and the Civil War.

Doyle Daves and members of the Corazon Chapter discussed their commemorative plans for the 200th anniversary with some of the End of the Trail Chapter members. The End of the Trail Chapter board members will continue to collaborate with the Corazon Chapter. The End of the Trail Chapter events include a re-enactment of William Becknell and his men riding into the plaza of Santa Fe, organized by Jeff Hengesbach. In addition, there will be a lecture or two and a dinner featuring recipes from Sam Arnold's cookbook *Eating up the Santa Fe Trail* at La Fonda in the ballroom.

Santa Fe Trail Poetry Book – The State of New Mexico established a Poet Laureate program in 2019 with the Department of Cultural Affairs. During the FY 2020 year there was a sum of money not spent by the NM State Library and NM Arts. Joy Poole was able to secure state funds to publish a poetry book to be edited by Sandra Doe, Ph.D. of English at Metropolitan University – Denver. The introduction will feature Marc Simmon's keynote address "Poetry of the Santa Fe Trail" from the first Santa Fe Trail Symposium held in Trinidad. This will be followed by poems previously published in *Wagon Tracks* and other noteworthy trail poems. It is estimated 2,000 copies will be published and available by 2021. ✦

Santa Fe Trail Association  
1046 Red Oaks NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87122  
www.santafetrail.org



## CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

### Calendar of Events

**December 1:** Deadline for SFTA Scholarly Research Grant applications.

**January 30, 2021: McPherson, KS.** Quivira chapter, film festival.

**January 10, 2021:** Wagon Tracks submission deadline for February issue.

**February 9: McPherson, KS.** "Chief Lucy" presentation by Pauline Sharp.

**March 13: Wallace, KS.** "Taking the Smoky Hill Trail to Santa Fe," Fort Wallace Museum.

**March 25-24: Santa Fe, NM.** New Mexico History Conference.

**April 22-23: Larned, KS.** SFTA /NPS Workshop and SFTA board meeting.

**April 24-25: Larned, KS.** Wet/Dry Chapter meeting.

**May 14-15: Council Grove, KS.** Santa Fe Trail Bluegrass Festival.

**May 22: Fort Dodge, KS.** DAR marker dedication.

**June 5: Baldwin City, KS.** NPS sign dedication.

**June 11: near Council Grove, KS.** Symposium in coordination with Symphony

in the Flint Hills on the Santa Fe Trail.

**June 12: near Council Grove, KS.** Symphony in the Flint Hills on the Santa Fe Trail.

**June 30: Lindsborg, KS.** Mountain Men on the Santa Fe Trail.

**July 10: McPherson, KS.** Quivira Chapter bus tour

**July 16-18: Council Grove, KS.** Gunfight on the Santa Fe Trail.

**July 23-24: McPherson, KS.** Eastern McPherson County and Marion County Santa Fe Trail Days.

**August 22: Galva, KS.** Empire Days.

**September 1: Arrow Rock, MO.** MRO chapter 200th activity.

**September 4-5: Fort Osage, MO.** MRO chapter 200th activity.

**September 6: Flint Hills, KS.** Madonna Run.

**September 8: Prairie Village, MO.** MRO chapter 200th activity.

**September 17-19: Council Grove, KS.** Rendezvous, Voices of the Wind People

**September 22-26: Bent's Old Fort, CO.** SFTA Symposium.

*Due to the impact of COVID-19, please check locally for any delays or cancellations. Check [www.2021sfts.com](http://www.2021sfts.com) and <https://santafetrail200.org> for additional dates and activities. Also check the Forts's websites before planning an excursion.*