

Wagon Tracks

Volume 11

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Santa Fe Trail Association

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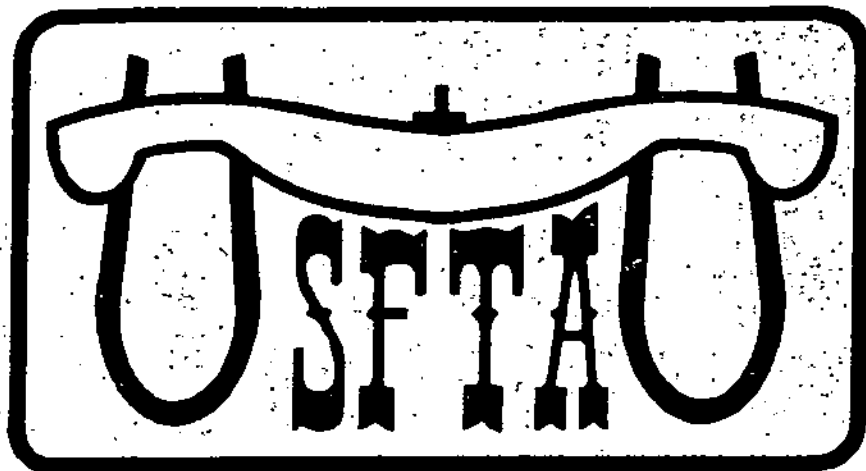


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WAGON TRACKS

SANTA FE TRAIL ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY

VOLUME 11

AUGUST 1997

NUMBER 4

SYMPOSIUM ALL SET

Everything is in place for the 1997 symposium, thanks to the hard work of many volunteers and Coordinator David Hutchison. All members were sent a program and preregistrataion materials. This symposium offers opportunities to visit historic sites not usually open to the public. If you have not preregistered, there is still time. You may register at the symposium, but it helps those in charge to have a count prior to the meetings. Preregistration is especially recommended for the tours.

Those concerned about accommodations will be pleased to know that a number of folks in Boise City, OK, will host overnight visitors in their homes during the symposium. Please contact Bonnie Heimann at the Good News Bookstore (405) 544-3453. A short questionnaire will be filled out, and she will match visitors to local homes.

ELECTION RESULTS

The ballots have been counted and the following officers and directors will assume their duties at the close of the symposium. Deanne Wright, head of the nominating committee, extends special thanks to those who agreed to run for office and to all who took the time to vote. Thanks too to the dedicated officers and directors who will be leaving the board in September.

These members will join six directors whose terms expire in 1999. The only incumbent is Sec-Treas Ruth Olson Peters. Congratulations to upcoming President Margaret Sears, Vice-President Sam Arnold, Sec-Treas Ruth Olson Peters, At-Large Director Jane Lenz Elder, Colorado Director Mary Gamble, Kansas Director Joanne VanCoevern, Missouri Director Louis Schumacher, New Mexico Director Stephen Whitmore, and Oklahoma Director Morris Alexander.

1997 BICYCLE TREK
SEPTEMBER 14-OCTOBER 3

1997 SYMPOSIUM
CIMARRON CUTOFF CHAPTER
SEPTEMBER 24- ELKHART
Board Meeting
Wagonbed Springs
SEPTEMBER 25 - ELKHART
Programs & Tours
SEPTEMBER 26 - BOISE CITY
Programs & Tours
SEPTEMBER 27-28 - CLAYTON
Programs & Tours

HISTORY AND INDEX AVAILABLE SOON

All SFTA members will receive a special publication as part of the commemoration of the founding and first decade of the Association. Marc Simmons, founder and first president, has written the history of SFTA during the first ten years. Bonita and Leo Oliva have compiled an index for the first ten volumes of *Wagon Tracks*. These two items are being printed together and should be available by the time of the symposium in September.

BEAR CREEK PASS AND THE SANTA FE TRAIL

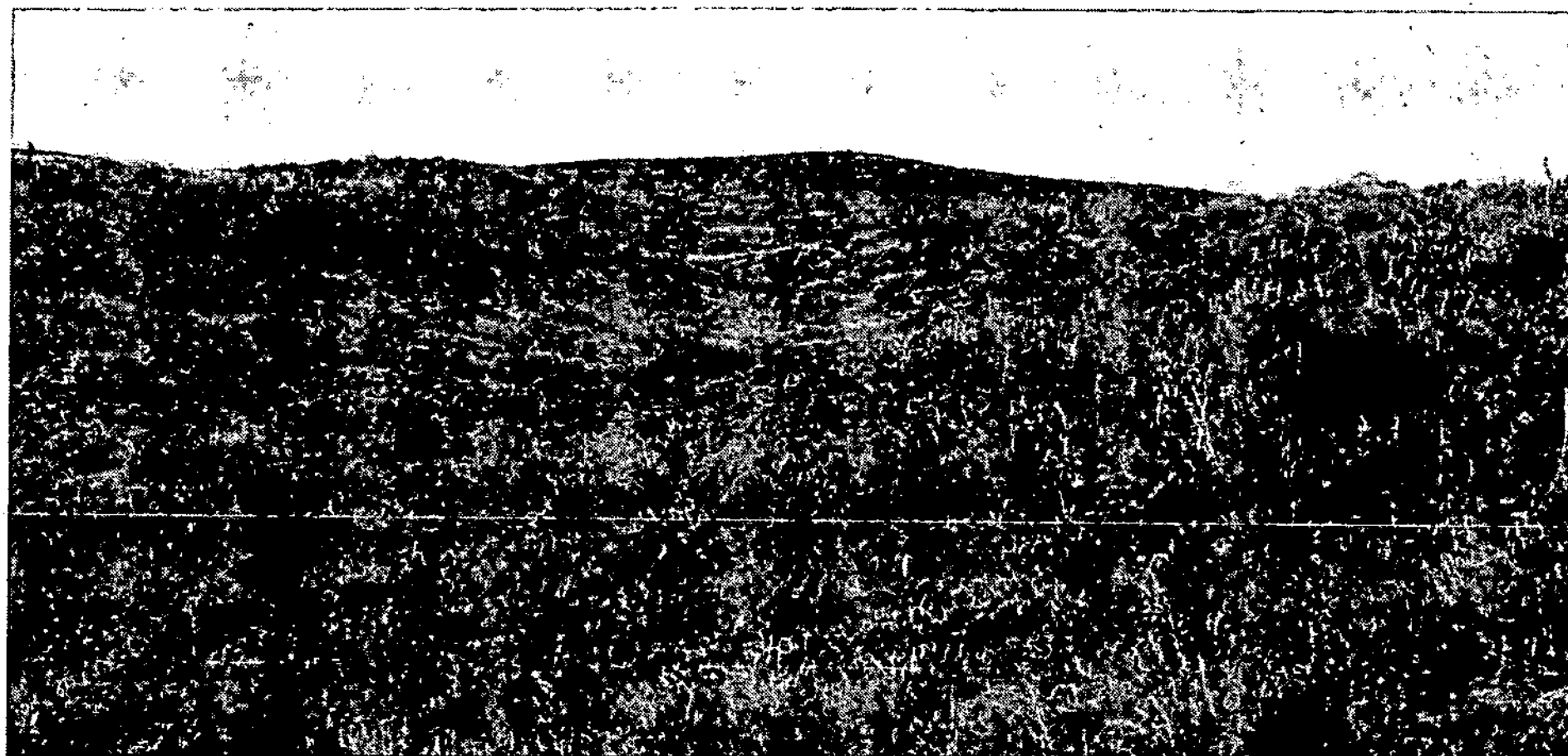
by Dorothy Morgan

(SFTA member Dorothy Morgan, Lakin, KS, is a freelance nonfiction writer whose interest in history goes back to Kansas Territory when her great-great-great-grandmother filed a claim of recovery in territorial court against border ruffians for the theft of her chestnut sorrel mare. She is especially interested in the history of the Trail in the Kearny County area.)

About 250,000 years before men of the Hutchinson (Kansas) Town Company came west to purchase a section of land from the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad at Hartland station, a slippage in the Cretaceous Formation predetermined the location of their planned townsite. The geologic fault changed more than the lay of the land. It created a pass through the nearly impenetrable dune sands south of the Arkansas River, a natural passage for one route of the Santa Fe Trail, and changed the social history of Kearny County, Kansas.¹

Joseph Dillon, editor of the *Lakin (Kansas) Herald*, was eager to help the change. In February 1886 he moved his newspaper seven miles

(continued on page 15)



A portion of Bear Creek Pass as it appears today.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

When Marc Simmons and Bill Pitts called me unexpectedly about three years ago to consider becoming the new vice-president and to consider being the next president, my first consideration was how much time would be necessary in order to do the kind of job they were asking me to do. From past experience I knew it would be time-consuming, but I had no idea!

Therefore, as I write my last president's column, there is a certain amount of liberation that I feel, but also a certain amount of regret. Even though much has been accomplished the past couple of years, a lot remains to be done for the Trail and within the organization.

I want to particularly thank the board of directors for rolling up their sleeves and responding to the call for an expanded agenda, more meeting time, and in many cases, additional assignments. The following are some of the results, most of it due to the board's efforts:

- List of 10 long-range goals for SFTA (previously published in *WT*).
- Workable marker policy and procedures for implementation.
- Trail-mapping committee involving all chapters.
- Chapter presidents' breakfast.
- Expanded awards program, involving educators and landowners.
- Joint meeting with the Santa Fe Trail Center Rendezvous, start in 1998.
- 175th anniversary celebrations, 42 nights on the Trail, wonderful Entrada, etc.
- 10th anniversary of SFTA; Marc Simmons's history and celebrations at the symposium.
- Expanded revenue sources to avoid budget deficits.
- Strengthened SFTA partnership with the National Park Service.

The above is not a complete list, but you get the idea. I hesitate to mention individual names, for fear of short-changing someone. It has been a group effort.

Some agenda items remain, including more effort devoted to preservation, an expanded role with the other 20 national historic and scenic

trails, chapter relations in the hands of an ongoing committee, some part-time headquarters staff, future leadership development, and some by-laws revisions.

The most refreshing thing about the Association is the enthusiastic interest and energy on the part of our chapters toward Trail and organization matters. We have several committee chairs who are not board members, but who have accepted specific assignments and are running with them.

Our purposes are sound, our chapters are strong, we have an outstanding *Wagon Tracks* publication, we have a busy future agenda in meeting the needs of the Trail, and the leadership at the board and officer level is poised to support the agenda. We should feel very proud of our Santa Fe Trail Association.

As you read this column, there will still be time to register for the symposium. If you haven't yet, I encourage you to do so, even if you are not able to attend all of it. Dave Hutchison and his committees have worked extremely hard to make this the best one ever. It will be outstanding.

On a personal note, I appreciate the countless times that many of you have inquired about Jana's health. She is doing extremely well. We have truly seen a miracle take place. We don't know what the future holds, but we know the Lord is in control. Thanks for all your prayers.

Thank you also for your support and enthusiasm. I have enjoyed so much the relationships that have developed over the past two or three years. I want especially to thank Ruth Olson Peters for all the help she has been to me personally. We have to remember that she is not paid staff, but a *volunteer* for the Association—like the rest of us.

Even though my term as president is nearing completion, I look forward to many years of being very active on the Santa Fe Trail and with the Association. I also look forward to supporting and working with the new board and officers, and I know each of you do as well.

I hope to see you at the symposium. With sincere appreciation, I thank you for supporting the SFTA.

—Ross Marshall

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Patron	\$100/year
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CLAYTON NM FLY-IN HIGHLIGHTS SFT ROUTE

by Kendyl K. Monroe

THE Clayton NM Airpark will host a Fly-In on October 25, 1997, 8 am to 5 pm, which is open to travelers by ground as well as air. Clayton's proximity to the Cimarron Route affords an opportunity for me, as both an organizer of the event and SFTA member, to highlight the Trail route and some of its prominent landmarks, such as the Rabbit Ear Mountains north of Clayton, and to promote due respect of all places along the Trail by the pilot community.

Fly-In events will emphasize the contemporary ranch and rodeo character of the area, but the Trail will be highlighted as an en route viewing opportunity. William W. White's new book, *The Santa Fe Trail by Air: A Pilot's Guide to the Santa Fe Trail*, will be recommended as the best guide for flying the Trail. The Cimarron Cutoff Chapter hopes to have an exhibit or presentation at the Fly-In as a follow-up to the symposium.

For general information, contact the Clayton CofC at (505) 374-9253; for participation information contact Kendyl Monroe at (505) 451-7454 after September 10.

1997 BICYCLE TREK

The itinerary of the eighth annual Santa Fe Trail Bicycle Trek, September 14 to October 3, follows. For more information contact Willard Chilcott at (505) 982-1282. SFTA members along the Trail are encouraged to welcome the cyclists to their area.

- 9/14 Santa Fe to Las Vegas
- 9/15 Las Vegas to Wagon Mound
- 9/16 Wagon Mound to Cimarron
- 9/17 Cimarron to Trinidad
- 9/18 Day off in Trinidad
- 9/19 Trinidad to La Junta
- 9/20 La Junta to Lamar
- 9/21 Lamar to Lakin
- 9/22 Lakin to Dodge City
- 9/23 Day off in Dodge City
- 9/24 Dodge City to Larned
- 9/25 Larned to Sterling
- 9/26 Sterling to Hillsboro
- 9/27 Hillsboro to Council Grove
- 9/28 Day off in Council Grove
- 9/29 Council Grove to Baldwin City
- 9/30 Baldwin City to Independence
- 10/1 Independence to Lexington
- 10/2 Lexington to Arrow Rock
- 10/3 Arrow Rock to New Franklin

A CORONADO CAMPSITE IN BLANCO CANYON, TEXAS

by Richard Flint

(Richard and Shirley Flint of Villanueva, NM, are archaeologists in pursuit of the route of Coronado from Mexico to Kansas. Their book, mentioned below, will be available soon.)

IN August 1992 a conference dealing with the route of the Coronado Expedition was held at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas. One of the papers, presented by Diane Rhodes, archaeologist with the National Park Service, was "Coronado Fought Here: Crossbow Boltheads as Possible Indicators of the 1540-1542 Expedition." Rhodes sketched what was then known about the morphology and material of crossbow boltheads (dart points) that are thought to be uniquely associated in the upper Southwest with the Coronado Expedition.

Also attending the conference was Nancy Marble, director of the Floyd County (Texas) Historical Museum. Through her efforts the museum had just acquired a chain-mail gauntlet that had been found on the edge of Blanco Canyon south of the county seat of Floydada in 1966. It had been suggested that the gauntlet might have been lost by the Coronado Expedition, so Nancy brought it to the conference. She was all eyes and ears for the two days of the meeting.

A year later, in August 1993, Jimmy Owens, a longtime avocational archaeologist, brought an unusual feruled iron projectile point into the museum in Floydada, and Marble remembered Rhodes's presentation about boltheads. There was something similar about the point Owens had found using his metal detector in an area of Blanco Canyon where he had been working for nearly 25 years.

By an incredible coincidence, Harry Myers from Fort Union National Monument and Mike Olsen, Bob Mishler, and myself (all from Highlands University) had decided to make a weekend trip to the Texas Panhandle, including a stop at Floydada, within days of Owens's find. Without knowing about the iron point, we called Marble when we arrived in Floydada a little after 5:00 on a Friday afternoon. Marble was electric with excitement on the other

end of the phone. She arranged for us to see the point, meet with Owens, and visit the place where he made the find.

While both the morphology of the point and its material were different than the other probable Coronado crossbow points with which I was familiar, there was a family resemblance. Owens's point seemed to be from the same tradition as the dozen or so points that had been recovered from Hawikuh, Santiago, Kuaua, and Pecos pueblos in New Mexico. But an isolated artifact (and that one not a surefire match) was a long way from confirming the presence of the Coronado Expedition in Blanco Canyon. Though it was an exciting piece, the four of us New Mexicans left Blanco Canyon in August 1993 with little expectation there would ever be anything more from there.

In April 1994 Marble called to say that Owens had just found two more points, copper this time. From her and Owens's descriptions these two points sounded more like the boltheads found in New Mexico. Because of pressure of school, my wife Shirley and I could do little more than promise to make a summer trip to Floydada to look at the latest finds.

In August 1994 we arranged to meet friends Jack and Beryl Hughes (archaeologists from Canyon, Texas) at Floydada to look at what Owens had found. It did not take but one look to know that he had two copper crossbow boltheads only slightly different than those from New Mexico. Clearly Blanco Canyon merited a full-scale professional archaeological survey.

Don Blakeslee, archaeologist from Wichita State University and then president of the Coronado Trail Association, agreed to bring a student crew to Blanco Canyon for Labor Day weekend 1995. During the eight field sessions that have now been conducted under Blakeslee's direction, a wealth of objects has been recovered from what has become known as the Jimmy Owens Site. They include scabbard tips, a knife blade, horse-shoes, more than three dozen copper crossbow boltheads, more than a

hundred nails (most of the distinctive sixteenth-century "caret-head" type), and a lump of lead. Also recovered archaeologically have been butchered bison bone and protohistoric native ceramics. The case can now be made with some assurance that the Jimmy Owens Site represents part of an encampment of the Coronado Expedition and that Blanco Canyon is one of the barrancas (canyons) visited by the expedition during the early summer of 1541.

There are three chapters dealing specifically with the Jimmy Owens Site and Blanco Canyon in *The Coronado Expedition to Tierra Nueva: The 1540-1542 Route Across the Southwest*, which Shirley and I have edited and which will be available from the University Press of Colorado in late August 1997. The 23 chapters cover the expedition route from Sonora to Kansas and include all the papers from the 1992 conference, plus a number of new ones, so that the reports on research are completely up to date. The 440-page book, with 48 illustrations, sells for \$45 plus \$3 shipping. Copies may be obtained from the University Press of Colorado, PO Box 849, Niwot CO 80544, (800) 268-6044.

POST OFFICE OAK

—LETTERS—

Editor:

The Wet/Dry Routes Chapter express appreciation to all Trail enthusiasts who made our Murder on the Santa Fe Trail Seminar a success. Notable among presenters were Bill Chalfant, SFTA board member; Leo E. Oliva, *Wagon Tracks* editor; Ray Schulz, member of our chapter; and Randy Thies, Kansas State Historical Society.

Other chapters represented were Dodge City/Fort Dodge, Quivira, End of the Trail, Cottonwood Crossing, and Wagonbed Springs. Again, thanks to all for helping make the seminar a meaningful experience for the 100-plus audience.

Plans are underway for another seminar on another topic in the fall of 1998.

David K. Clapsaddle
215 Mann
Larned KS 67550

PAWNEE ROCK: "many an ambush originated here"?

by Jesse Scott

(SFTA Ambassador Scott of Garden City, KS, is an authority on stage stations along the Trail and a frequent contributor to WT.)

The subtitle is a quotation from the recently published book, *Path to Glory*.¹ The image projected is an oft-repeated one. Because I could never recall reading of actual battles taking place at this well-known landmark, I decided this time I would not let the statement go unchallenged. The conclusion reached, based on the limited reference material in my office, is that the statement is more myth than fact. A search of additional material in archives may result in another conclusion.

Pawnee Rock "... apparently received its name when a party of Pawnees raiding southward was discovered and chased there by a war party from one of the southern Plains tribes. All of the Pawnees were killed but their enemy so admired their brave defense that Plains Indians thereafter referred to the projection as 'Pawnee Rock.'"²

As early as 1846 the site had its reputation. In that year Susan Shelby Magoffin was guarded against Indian attack by her husband with "gun and pistols" while she hurriedly carved her name.³

"Col. Henry Inman claimed that every square yard of sod below the Rock contained the grave of a SFT traveler."⁴ Come, come now, Colonel. That would be 4,840 per acre. And how many acres of sod were there below the Rock? A quarter section, 160 acres? A section, 640 acres? And even back at that time we did not bury our own in a fetal position as some Indians did. Even the dying cowboy begged not to be buried "in a narrow grave, just 6 by 3," double the area of a square yard.

There was one man buried in an excavation hollowed out of Pawnee Rock. Private Nehemiah Carson of Howard County, MO, who died non-violently, was buried July 14, 1846.⁵

Louise Barry, in her authoritative *Beginning of the West, Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West 1540-1854*, containing 1296 pages, noted only one Indian attack

originating at Pawnee Rock: "In mid-December [1853] the Independence-to-Santa Fe mail party, John Jones, conductor, was 'suddenly charged upon' at Pawnee Rock by a mounted band of 15 to 20 Osage Indians, who 'succeeded in purloining from the back of one of the wagons, by cutting through the canvas, some articles of clothing. . . .' Jones, alone, pursued them; caught up with 'the rascals'; drew a revolver and made them give up the stolen articles."⁶

This is not meant to destroy an icon nor denigrate the tumultuous historical importance of the area. This writer has documented dozens of hair-raising (literally) incidents occurring in the vicinity and believes the area between the Great Bend and the Cimarron Crossing to be the center of more hostile activity than any other on the Santa Fe Trail. But the evidence does not support the statement that "many an ambush originated" at Pawnee Rock.

NOTES

1. Jami Parkison, *Path to Glory, A Pictorial Celebration of the Santa Fe Trail* (Kansas City: Highwater Editions, 1996), 95.
2. William Y. Chalfant, *Dangerous Passage* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 29.
3. Susan Shelby Magoffin, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico; the Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), 40.
4. Marc Simmons, *Following the Santa Fe Trail* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1984), 98.
5. Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 618.
6. *Ibid.*, 1188.

FORT LEARNED

—TEACHERS' TRADING POST—

Patti Olsen, Editor

The following material is edited from a letter to me from Linda Decota, chairman of the Historic Trails City Committee. She describes a teacher exchange which has been taking place between teachers in Independence, MO, and Oregon City, OR, over the last ten years. The committee is looking for another community which might be interested in forming such an alliance along the Santa Fe Trail.

Linda DeCota

In 1988 we began a teacher exchange with Oregon City. Three teachers from Oregon came to Independence and taught special group classes (assemblies etc.) to Independence boys and girls and adults focusing on the end of the Oregon Trail. Later three teachers from Independence did the same thing in Oregon City. I was one of the first team to go to Oregon. My program was a slide presentation and artifact collection about the beginning of the western trails with Independence as an outfitting location. Over the years my program has grown to include the whole trail experience. I like to present women's roles on the Oregon Trail to women's groups. In Oregon the traveling team makes 3-5 presentations per day and touches 4,000 students.

The participating teachers are housed in private homes of other teachers. A stipend of \$75 is granted to prepare materials. The city has paid for plane tickets to Portland, OR. Banquets, etc., came out of our budget of \$2200. Our committee has also paid for the substitute teachers so the traveling team could be released from classroom duties. The Independence school district has been quite cooperative in this endeavor. To date we have had six exchanges. We try to do this every other year. We have become close friends with our counterparts in Oregon and have even visited on vacations, attended weddings, etc.

The exchange provides for about 21 1/2 teaching days and goes over a weekend. We try to arrange an adult program at the National Historic Trails Center on one of the evenings. Sometimes our guests make a presentation or gift to our city council if they are meeting.

Some other activities we have tried and found less successful are art and writing contests and exchanges, product exchanges, Pen Pals, etc.

We would like to find a community on the Santa Fe Trail to establish a similar program. Anyone interested should contact Linda DeCota, Chairman, Historic Trails City Committee, 15402 E 45th St, Independence MO 64055; e-mail address is LSDeCota@aol.com.

BLACK POOL: HISTORIC TRAIL SITE OR MODERN CONJECTURE?

by David K. Clapsaddle

(Clapsaddle, an SFTA Ambassador from Larned, KS, is a mover and shaker in the Wet/Dry Routes Chapter. He has helped mark several routes of the Trail and written extensively about routes and Trail sites in western Kansas. He is a frequent contributor to WT.)

THERE has been growing interest in a spring adjacent to the Wet Route of the Santa Fe Trail in Ford County, KS. The spring, known in local lore as Black Pool, is situated northeast of the town of Ford, about three and a quarter miles west of the point where the Arkansas River makes an abrupt turn to the northeast. The popular name is logical because the water in the pool basin appears to be black even though it is clear. Close by the spring is an outcropping of sandstone in which is carved the following inscription: "Black Pool Dis by E. Post 1843" underneath which appear the initials "EEP."

No other 19th-century reference has been found denoting this as the Black Pool. Greg Franzwa described the spring in his *Santa Fe Trail Revisited* and concluded: "The curious part is that so far not a single diary reference or reminiscence has come to light mentioning the Black Pool."¹

This inscription has been mistakenly identified, by Franzwa and others before him, as "Black Pool U.S. Post 1843." This may have seemed logical since Philip St. George Cooke's troops were in the vicinity when they captured Jacob Snively and his Texan freebooters in 1843. Naturally, a search of the records of the war department, conducted at the request of the area's congressional representative more than 30 years ago, turned up no such post.² It would be of interest to know if any soldier with the last name of Post was a member of Cooke's 1843 force.

There were reportedly many inscriptions on the rocks around this spring at one time, noted by at least two Trail travelers and, later, by a nearby resident in the 1890s. Most of these apparently were lost when stones crumbled or tumbled into the pool below. There remain many inscriptions from more recent times.

Photographs of the "Black Pool" inscription taken over 50 years ago show the markings were clearly visible but apparently somewhat worn. Photographs taken in the 1980s show the inscription to be considerably less clear and somewhat obscured by other scratchings (either defacement or recent graffiti).

A previous landowner scribed the inscription annually, and more recently someone as etched the characters to a pronounced depth and stained the inscription with some dark material. Resultantly, the inscription is well defined, especially in comparison to other faint inscriptions carved close by.

Search for an E. Post was fruitless, although there was a man named Post (no first name given) engaged in the Santa Fe trade in 1847.³ There was another Post who described a spring in the area.

In 1859 Charles Post, on his way to the gold fields, confided to his diary that he found a beautiful pool which he named Crescent Pool. On June 5 of that year he recorded:

"We concluded to travel until noon as we did not have large enough range for our cattle; quite cool, pleasant driving. Our road led up on the high land in consequence of the bluffs running down to the river, which is rarely the case on the north side of river, but on south side the sand hills for a great portion of the way lead into river. I was riding ahead of train and found a beautiful pool in a basin some thirty feet lower than the top of bluff with an outlet to the river. I have not yet seen anywhere an account of this pool so I named it Crescent Pool; it is about seventy-five miles from Pawnee Fork. I carved my name and address in the rocks, also the name of the pool; it is a beautiful spot. We encamped at eleven o'clock for a day and night at old Fort Atkinson, nothing of it remains except a bridge with four sides showing the outline of walls which were of sod."⁴

Post's estimate of the pool being 75 miles from Pawnee Fork was in error. Fort Atkinson, at which he camped west of the pool, was about

68 miles from Pawnee Fork. A comparison of the two sites is instructive. (1) The so-called Black Pool is located about 49 miles from Pawnee Fork. Crescent Pool was less than 68 miles from Pawnee Fork. (2) The Black Pool inscription is dated 1843. The Crescent Pool inscription was carved in 1859. (3) The Black Pool inscription is identified with E. Post. The Crescent Pool inscription was the work of Charles Post.

There is no apparent resolution to these conflicting accounts. The author suspects that the Black Pool inscription is bogus. Until further documentation is found, the author contends that the name of Black Pool is equally erroneous for the historic period. While 20th-century newspaper accounts speak often of Black Pool, no 19th-century sources have as yet been identified which refer to the site as Black Pool.

There are, however, two documents which describe the site, not by name, but by location and appearance. In 1850 William Quesenbury accompanied a group of Cherokees and Euro-Americans from Washington County, Arkansas, to the gold fields of California. He kept a diary of the trip. The route they pursued, which came to be called the Cherokee Trail,⁵ departed a point near present Saline, OK, entered southeast Kansas and, continued in a northwestward orientation to merge with the Santa Fe Trail at Running Turkey Creek in present McPherson County, Kansas. From that juncture, Quesenbury's party followed the Santa Fe Trail to Bent's Fort, westward to the Rocky Mountains, and then northward along the eastern slope to Wyoming. There the gold seekers pioneered a new wagon road westward.

Quesenbury's diary entries for May 23-25 follow:

"May 23 (Thursday)

"Owing to there being no grass at all at the creek, we left as soon as we could get breakfast. All day the wind has blown hard. It has been disagreeable to travel.

"Buffalo in sight all the time.

"No grass all day. Nooned near a stream where a wagon had been abandoned. Got some of the spokes for stakes.

"At Pawnee Fork the banks were

steep but the wagons got over without difficulty. Pawnee Fork is the largest stream we have crossed since we left the Verdigris. The course of the road has been almost due south for the last five or six hours. At night concluded I would finish a letter I had commenced. Wrote till ten, and then was kept awake till twelve by Jack Hildebrand and someone else talking just outside the tent. Buffalo dung! The little prairie dog is doing well.

"May 24 (Friday)

"This stream that we are camped on I think comes from a spring. It is twelve or fifteen feet wide on an average, and of the same depth all the way that I have been along. It can't be crossed but on horses without wading.

"Got off from the creek about nine. Road still S.

"Buffaloes constantly in sight. Buckner killed one but it was poor. Nooned at a pond close by the side of the road on the left hand. Ducks on it. Took a nap under the wagon. Made about twenty miles. I suppose, we have no way of measuring distance.

"Our encampment is now on the bank of the Arkansas for the first time. The water is not so dark as it is at Fort Smith, it about the same color as the Rio Grande. It is as warm however, as it has anywhere been. The range is still bad. We must be in the middle of the Great Buffalo Range. Dog towns continue. Buffalo dung for fuel.

"May 25 (Saturday)

"Permitted our animals to graze for sometime before we got off. Our road is as ever, but runs almost due south.

"Led Buckner's pack animals to give him a chance for a buffalo. Whilst we were nooning, he, Merrill and some others came in with a large supply of meat. Riley Buchanan and myself, after a hard chase caught a dog in the ----- of a city. But killed it in the taking. Our road ran closer to the river bank than it has heretofore. . . . Passed a large spring some forty yards to the left of the road. A great many names are carved on the rock. We learned from the inscriptions the ox team company had passed here on the 17th.

"A short distance after passing

the spring, two or three Indians came to us. They were on patrol. Left the road and camped about a quarter of mile from the river for the convenience of water. We still use buffalo dung. The Indians camped with us."⁶

It appears that, after leaving Pawnee Fork, the gold seekers followed the Santa Fe Trail to Coon Creek (11 miles) and continued on some 20 miles to camp on the Arkansas. On May 25, the party pressed on to the southwest where Quesenbury observed "A large spring some forty yards to the left of the road." A short distance later, the Arkansawyers went into camp. If the party traveled 20 miles on May 25, the same as Quesenbury estimated for the 24th, and add 11 miles for the distance between Pawnee Fork and Coon Creek, the estimated total is 51 miles. Deduct two miles for the distance between the spring and the campsite, and the remainder is 49 miles, the actual distance between Pawnee Fork and the so-called Black Pool.

In 1859 Samuel D. Raymond kept a journal of his trip from Michigan to the Colorado gold fields, following the Santa Fe Trail. His party was nearly one month ahead of that of Charles Post, described above. Excerpts from Raymond's account, May 7-9, include what the editor of the journal, Lloyd W. Gundy, identified as the Black Pool:

"Saturday May 7th. Left Pawnee Fork and jogged merrily along in a Southwest course, keeping the road near the River. From Pawnee Fork to 'Forks of Santa Fe Crossing' is five mls. Travelling on about 10 or 12 farther we encamped near the road side within a mile of the river & a half mile from a fine Creek of clear running water. . . . Saw a number of Prairie Dog villages.

"Sunday May 8th. Traveled about 15 mls and encamped on the river. . . .

"Monday May 9th. Left in the morning at 7 O'clock. found the road level but quite muddy. . . . In the afternoon passed by a large village of Prairie Dogs. . . . Buffalo chips quite numerous but damp owing to a heavy rain a day or two before. Had to cook our supper by them which took a good while to do it. . . . This day travelled about 17 mls. A little way from the road saw a large basin of water enclosed with sand rocks. In it saw a number of fish - on the rock

were a number of names cut out. I left the initials of my name on one of them, as an emigrant to the far west."⁷

According to Raymond's estimates, his party had traveled some 47 to 49 miles from Pawnee Fork. He, as had Quesenbury, most likely described what has become known as Black Pool, although neither used that term nor described the water in the basin as appearing to be dark or black. Both mentioned the presence of many inscriptions.

It will be interesting to see if any additional references to this spring in Trail documents may surface and if any 19th-century observer used the term "Black Pool." The spring was obviously utilized by travelers on the Trail, but its popular name appears to be a more recent fabrication.

There is also the unsolved mystery of Charles Post's "Crescent Pool." Has anyone identified its location or seen the inscription he claimed to have carved there in 1859?

One final note. The Wet/Dry Routes Chapter has three markers in the immediate area of Black Pool: (1) about three-fourths mile east which identifies the September 5 campsite of the 1825 Survey Team; (2) about one-half mile west which marks the ruts traversing the entire length of the pasture in which the spring is located; and (3) about one-fourth mile northwest where the ruts again make brief appearance.

NOTES

1. Gregory M. Franzwa, *The Santa Fe Trail Revisited* (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1989), 117.
2. Black Pool File, Kansas Heritage Center, Dodge City, KS.
3. Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540-1854* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 703.
4. "The Arkansas Route: The Diary of Charles C. Post," *Overland Routes to the Gold Fields, 1859, from Contemporary Diaries*, ed. by LeRoy R. Hafen, *The Southwest Historical Series*, Vol. II (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1942), 42.
5. Jack E. and Patricia K. A. Fletcher, "The Cherokee Trail," *Overland Journal*, 13 (1995).
6. "William Quesenbury's Diary," *Flashback*, 29 (February, May, August, and November of 1979), Washington County Arkansas Historical Society.
7. "The Journal of Samuel D. Raymond, 1859-1862," ed. by Lloyd W. Gundy, *Wagon Tracks*, 10 (November 1995): 15, 19n5.

CEDAR GROVE BLUFFS

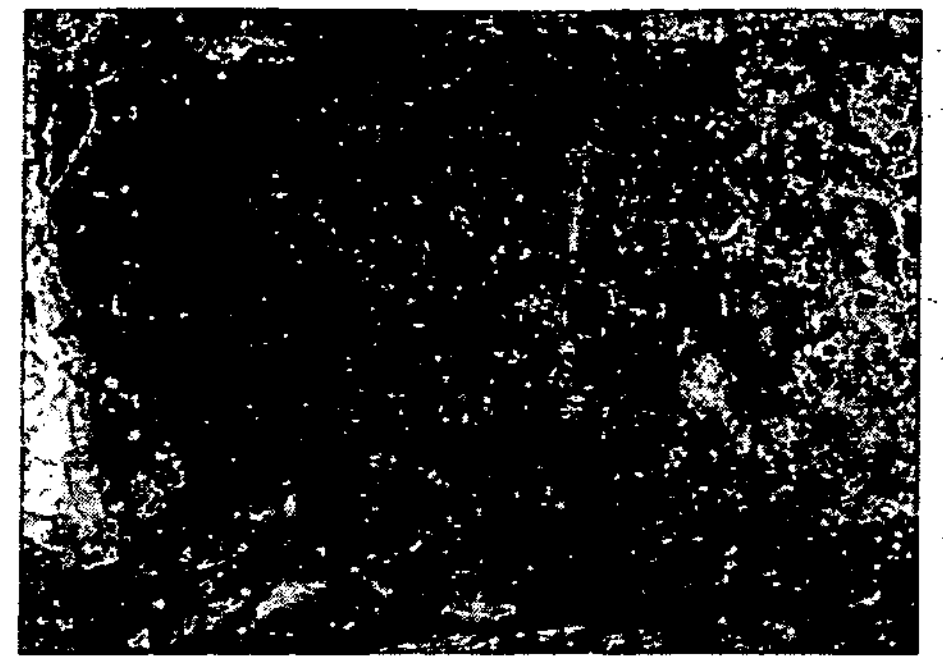
by Jesse Scott

Cedar Grove Bluffs does not appear in any of the numerous Santa Fe Trail mileage charts nor on any map of the historic route. But, if Second Lieutenant George Rutledge Gibson (Missouri Volunteers) and Captain Philip St. George Cooke (First Dragoons) stopped (a couple of days after leaving Bent's Fort) while accompanying Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny's Army of the West in the conquest of New Mexico in 1846, where was the location?

None of the Trail historians contacted could provide a clue. The only references reposed in a brief mention in Ralph P. Bieber's edition of Gibson's *Journal of a Soldier Under Kearny and Doniphan 1846-1847*.¹ Gibson wrote, "we came to the Cedar Grove Bluffs, where we found water in a deep canyon, its sides lined with massive sandstone. . . ." This was supplemented in the notes of Cooke who recorded on August 3: "But by taking a horse trail, and passing along a ridge, near noon, a good spring was found, and there we passed several hours under the shade of pinon trees, indulging in lunch, with claret wine and pinon nuts for dessert. . . ."

Perhaps someone familiar with the land could help. Bob Jones, La Junta, Colorado, is a native with extensive knowledge of the area. He suggested that the only possible location is what today is known as Sheep Canyon, located on private land in Section 26, T27S, R58W, Otero County. It was close enough to the main trail that the horse riders could stop there and still be at Hole-in-the-Rock when the infantry and wagons arrived.²

The watering hole at Cedar Grove Bluffs had been known by Indians



Pecked abstract petroglyphs at Cedar Grove Bluffs.

for centuries, evidenced by pecked abstract petroglyphs dated 2700 BC to 850 AD and later pecked pictorial petroglyphs dated 1350 BC to 1650 AD.³ At virtually every spring in southeast Colorado, where sandstone is adjacent, petroglyphs are present. Sophisticated procedures have been developed to date these rock markings.⁴

When first viewed from the west cliff face, the canyon appears awesome. Down below eighty to a hundred feet and an eighth of a mile distant is a water hole. The present owner confirmed it was one of two. As it was the better part of a mile closer to the trail and Hole-in-the-Rock than the other, it seems safe to speculate that it was the refreshment stop noted by Gibson. The adjacent sandstone cliffs and petroglyphs help to corroborate this conclusion.

NOTES

1. George Rutledge Gibson, *Journal of a Soldier Under Kearny and Doniphan, 1846-1847*, ed. by Ralph P. Bieber (1935; reprint, Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1974), 176-178.
2. Ibid.
3. William R. McGlone, Ted Barker, and Philip M. Leonard, *Petroglyphs of Southeast Colorado* (Kamas, UT: Mithras, Inc., 1994), 16.
4. Ibid., 15; William R. McGlone, et al., *Ancient American Inscriptions* (Sutton, MA: Early Sites Research Society, 1993), 243-244.



Native guide at Cedar Grove Bluffs after rediscovery of the site.

Trace Of The Blues: The Santa Fe Trail, the Blue River, and the True Nature of the Old Trace in Metropolitan Kansas City

by Craig Crease

Editor's note: The map accompanying this article is a loose insert.

(SFTA member Crease of Shawnee, KS, has been working on the routes of the Trail in the Kansas City area for several years. He serves on the board of directors of the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association. This article presents the results of some of his research. Portions of the following statements are responses to an article in the February 1997 issue of Wagon Tracks, pp. 8-10.)

Looking back over the years, it almost seems that the dust from the last freight wagon had barely settled before the debates over the location of the old Santa Fe Trail began. Surely it says something powerful about the compelling romance of this road and its place in our minds, that it could capture and fire the imagination of so many people for well over a century, and that so many still feel driven to seek out the exact places where the old trace ran.

Efforts to find the true location of the Santa Fe Trail in the Kansas City metropolitan area, especially its earliest routings, have met with mixed and limited results ever since the wagons stopped rolling. Conclusive results have been elusive due to several important factors, not the least of which is area's unique topography and large urban and suburban population. Also, metropolitan Kansas City has a frontier trail history spanning four and a half decades (1821-1865), plus many changes that occurred during almost 45 years of continual use. Further confusion has resulted from the fact that there were several trails passing through the region, including the Santa Fe Trail, Oregon Trail, California Trail, Fort Leavenworth Military Road, Harmony Mission Road, and a myriad of local frontier roads. The problem is compounded because, in some cases, several trails followed precisely the same route while, in other cases, they did not.

Possibly the single biggest impediment to finding where the early Santa Fe Trail ran in the Kansas

City area has been the tendency to give uncritical acceptance to the writings of trail historians who have tended to make the same mistakes as their predecessors, thus reinforcing the acceptance of misinformation, to be passed along and elaborated on by the next researcher and/or writer. This is readily characterized, for instance, by the misinformed advocates of the cherished myth (only recently corrected) that the Santa Fe Trail ran only out of Independence and never out of Westport.

Myths, especially time-honored and cherished ones, die hard. Any understanding of the true nature of the old trace in Kansas City requires deconstructing some of the more widespread misconceptions. Here are several that have contributed to obscuring the locations of the Trail in the area.

Myth: The Santa Fe Trail ran as one line only out of Independence, the route staying virtually the same for the full 45 years of the Trail's existence in Jackson County, running southwest out of Independence, generally following along present-day Blue Ridge, and exiting the Missouri state line into Kansas at the location of New Santa Fe.

Fact: Although the Santa Fe Trail from Independence as described above is well established as an important route of the Trail for a period of time, and the sources for this are common knowledge, it must share this distinction with the Santa Fe Trail from Westport, which also has legitimate claim to being an equally important route of the Trail, as has been documented in recent years. As will be made clear later in this paper, other important routes preceded the route from Independence before it was transformed into the popularly-accepted route described above.

Myth: The Independence to Westport Road was the main route for Santa Fe traders and Oregon emigrants to get from Independence to Westport.¹

Fact: This road was constructed in the late 1820s from Independence to the Shawnee Indian Agency at

about present 46th St. and State Line Road. By 1834 Westport had been founded at the extreme western end of this road, and it functioned as a route for local traffic between Independence and Westport. Local traffic was almost all it saw for a simple reason. Traders could avoid the rather difficult crossing of the Blue River at present 27th and Topping by unloading their goods from a boat at Westport Landing, if they were striking out on the Santa Fe Trail from Westport, thus avoiding the Blue River entirely.

Myth: Today's Wornall Road was actually a route of the Santa Fe Trail due south out of Westport, and it was the route that Santa Fe traders (as well as Oregon Trail emigrants) left Westport and followed to New Santa Fe.²

Fact: The route of the Santa Fe Trail south out of Westport meandered in the general vicinity of Wornall Road, but only as far south as about present-day 65th St., before turning southwest and crossing the state line at about present 69th St., crossing the state line into Kansas some seven miles north of New Santa Fe. This crossing of the state line at about 69th St. did not become popular until the late 1840s and early 1850s.

After eliminating these misconceptions, it is possible to get a better understanding of the genesis of the Santa Fe Trail in the Kansas City area. The following three key locations are critical to that understanding: (1) nine-mile-point on the state line south of the Kansas River, (2) lower crossing of the Santa Fe Trail from Fort Osage on the Blue River, and (3) upper crossing of the Trail from Blue Spring on the Blue River.

These three documented locations are the basis for understanding William Becknell's likely route,³ the Cooper expeditions,⁴ and the route of the Sibley surveys of 1825-1827⁵ in this area. These three locations are also the key for understanding how the Santa Fe Trail in the Kansas City area evolved from these base lines of the original routes into their ultimate form, from 1840 to the end

of the Civil War in 1865.

To understand the relationship of these three locations to the Santa Fe Trail in its earliest forms in the Kansas City area, it must be realized why this "bend in the river" was such a natural trailhead and jumping-off point. It is essential to comprehend the geography of this area in order to understand the logic of why the trails ran where they did.

During the first several decades of the 19th century, the easiest way to move goods, supplies, and people west was by water. The accepted waterway from the East to the frontier was by boat (flatboat, keelboat, canoe, steamboat, etc.) down the Ohio River, say from Cincinnati or Pittsburgh, past Louisville to the Mississippi, then upstream to St. Louis and the mouth of the Missouri River, then west across the State of Missouri to the location of Kansas City, where the Missouri River made its big bend after flowing south from the Dakota plains. From the earliest days of the frontier this big bend in the river proved to be the optimum point for river transport of commodities and people headed to the Southwest. Some local challenges that nature placed in the way complicated the flow of traffic to the Southwest, however, and there were several points of departure from the Missouri River to trails heading west and southwest.

Franklin, Missouri, is recognized as the birthplace of the Santa Fe Trail, and it earned that honor because it was the westernmost river port in the early 1820s, (excepting Fort Osage). Travelers leaving Franklin crossed the river at Arrow Rock and followed the route of the Osage Trace, which went to Fort Osage. Through the 1820s additional river ports were opened west of Franklin, at points such as Lexington, on past Fort Osage, and eventually at Independence Landing, some twelve miles east of the big bend in the Missouri. Vying with Independence Landing were two excellent rock steamboat landings farther upstream, Chouteau Landing⁶ and Westport Landing,⁷ respectively about ten and twelve miles west of Independence Landing. Just west of Westport Landing the Missouri made its big bend to the north. Another consideration for the route of

any trail was the mouth of the Kansas River, also just west of Westport Landing. But the geographic feature that really affected where the Santa Fe Trail would ultimately run in the Kansas City area was the Big Blue River, bisecting the upper two-thirds of Jackson County between Independence and Westport, with its flood-prone and fast-moving stream.

This steep-banked tributary of the Missouri was the main deterrent keeping Santa Fe traders (or anyone with loaded wagons) from simply taking their wagons due west, by or through Westport to the state line and beyond. A few good fords of the Blue were found in the earliest days of the Trail and put to use, especially by pack trains which were not burdened by a caravan of wagons to cross that river. Thus the Santa Fe traders had two major options in the earliest days of the old trace in this area.

(1) They could follow the route from Fort Osage to the southwest, passing southeast of the later location of Independence, to the lower crossing of the Blue River in present-day Swope Park at about 73rd St., then on about five miles to the Missouri state line, crossing it nine miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River, and then on past Round Grove to the junction with the other route.

(2) The route from Blue Spring,⁸ made popular by traders from counties east of Jackson County, started from Blue Spring on the Harmony Mission Road, a road running basically due south between Fort Osage and Harmony Mission for the Osage Indians, some eighty miles to the south. Blue Spring was located some twelve miles south of Fort Osage. From that point Santa Fe traders followed the Missionary Road several miles south, then turned southwest, following the high ground around the heads of the Little Blue River, finally crossing the Big Blue River (upper crossing) and the Missouri state line at almost the same place, eighteen miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River and almost four miles due south of the later location of New Santa Fe.

The two key points identifying the original Santa Fe Trail from Fort Osage are the lower crossing of the Blue River and about five miles farther

west the crossing of the state line nine miles south of the Kansas River. The lower crossing of the Blue River has been overlooked by Trail historians for decades or, when recognized, has been misperceived, depending on the historians' geographic perspective, to be the Red Bridge crossing (miles to the south and of a later period), the crossing of the Independence to Westport Road (miles to the north), or most recently as Byrams Ford just over one mile north of the lower crossing at present 73rd St.

Of all the compelling reasons supporting the fact that the original lower crossing of the Santa Fe Trail across the Blue River was at the 73rd St. location, and not at Byrams Ford for instance, the contemporary descriptions of the topography of the crossing speak most clearly. Jacob Fowler, whose English was fractured but his meaning was always clear, offered testimony just ten months after Becknell's inaugural foray and barely a month after Becknell's second trip (with wagons). Fowler and his party were returning east to Fort Osage in the summer of 1822. His comments for the days leading up to the crossing of the Blue River are also interesting because they are among the earliest written observations of the nascent Santa Fe Trail.⁹

"monday 1st July 1822

"the last night Raised the Cricks so that We Have to leave the Waggon [road] We fell into two days back Which Road was maid by Becknal and His party on their Way to the Spanish Settlement. . . .

"thursday [Wednesday] 3rd July 1822

"... We moved on In the Evening and Soon fell on the Waggon Road we had left at the osage River this We followed ten miles and Camped on a Crick [Cedar Creek, most likely, at Round Grove] Runing north West—and We Sopose to the Caw River—...

"thursday 4th July 1822

"We Set out Early to follow the Waggon Road but Heare the Pirarie Has Been Burned In the Spring and the grass So gron up that We Cannot find it—and after Winding about for about two Hours Steered N 45 East Six miles and Fell on a Road Runing nearly East and West—along Which We took [to] the East Eand

Where we found the Waggon tracks—a large Bodey of timber on our left and is Shorly the mesurey or the Caw River and at about Six miles Stopped for dinner— . . .

“the general Corse of this Road is north Eighty East—

“Friday 5th July 1822

“Sot out Early and at five miles Crossing a large Crick [the Blue River] 50 yds Wide Runs north the Bottoms and Hill Sides are Well Covered With timber—We Heare Went up a High Steep Hill over some Rocks and Continu over High Ro-leing ground. . . .”

Fowler took care to remark on the steep and rugged hill east of the crossing. Thomas Mather, at the same location as Fowler three years later while on the way west with the Sibley survey, provided a similar description on Wednesday, July 20, 1825.¹⁰

“We Pursued our route to the big Blue a distance of $5\frac{1}{4}$ miles. The bluff which we were compelled to descend is steep and verry rocky- The wag-gons got down safe. The ford is a good one 20 miles (supposed) above the mouth- The country here is broken, sterile, and rocky. . . . From the Big Blue to the State line the distance is $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles—”

Note that Mather, as did Fowler, made a point of the steep and rocky hill east of the crossing. Additional observations were made on the scene by Benjamin Reeves and Joseph Davis, returning east to Fort Osage in October 1825 as members of the Sibley survey.

It is reasonable to assume that Reeves considered himself on the path of the Santa Fe traders when he entered in his diary on October 23, 1825, “Came over high prairies on the Divide between Kaw & Blue, without timber or water untill we came to Big Blue. Distance 18 or 19 miles—within a mile or two to either hand, timber & water. Encamped. Some of our Company found a Mule and a Horse supposed to belong to the St Fee traders who returned this fall. . . .” The following day he wrote, “Crossed Big Blue & rose the Hill which was Steep and rocky in safety. . . . ‘Big Blue’ is from 45 to 60 feet wide—rocky bottom.”¹¹

The following passages from Joseph Davis's diary for the same days,



Bluffs near 73rd St., location of lower crossing of the Blue River.

as he was traveling with Reeves, corroborate Reeves's perceptions at the crossing of the Blue River: “On Sunday the 23rd we set out early, passed ours of the 21st and 20; after which we encamped on the big Blue. . . . On this day got plenty of honey, and found one horse and one mule, which we supposed were lost by our United State merchants, in consequence of our red neighbors showing symptoms of hostility to them about that place.” Davis continued: “On Monday the 24 we pursued our travel again, crossed big Blue and with some less difficulty than we expected got up the bluff. . . .”¹²

Not only do these quotations confirm the observations of the steep and rocky hill east of the crossing, they also establish this location quite definitely as a point on the road where Santa Fe traders would be expected to cross the Blue River, thus placing the survey team on the same route, the Santa Fe Trail, and not some other hypothetical and irrelevant route developed separately by Sibley, which has been suggested by some Trail historians. Also, likely traveling with Reeves and Davis were Stephen Cooper, William Becknell, Joseph R. Walker, and other stalwarts of the Missouri frontier, all of whom would have been intimately familiar with the location of the Santa Fe Trail.¹³

The topography of the land at the lower crossing of the Blue River, at the point where 73rd St. would cross if extended, is today as it was in the earliest days of the old trace, with steep and rocky bluffs very much in evidence just east of the river crossing.¹⁴ The elevation of the Blue River at this point is 730 feet above sea level. The eastern bank and the slope beyond terminate several hundred feet east of the river at the foot of this

steep hill at 790 feet elevation. Then this bluff rises quickly to a plateau at 910 feet, accomplishing this steep rise in just 300 feet of grade. These bluffs are also readily evident near the river south of the lower Trail crossing, for over a mile, and they continue north but begin to pull back from the river, and at the Byrams Ford location about one mile north the steep bluffs are not in evidence.

Byrams Ford has been misperceived as the original Santa Fe Trail crossing. The topography of the land at Byrams Ford does not fit the early descriptions of the crossing. The elevation of the river, as at 73rd street to the south, is 730 feet at Byrams Ford. The grade east from Byrams Ford is a gradual slope, taking almost 1,000 feet of grade to attain a 150-foot rise, finally reaching the plateau at 880 feet elevation, certainly not the steep and rocky hill that so impressed Fowler, Mather, and members of the Sibley survey.

Finally, confirming beyond doubt that Byrams Ford and the early Santa Fe Trail crossing of the Blue River were two different places, is the following Jackson County road order as reviewed and issued by the county court in April 1869:¹⁵

“To the Honorable County Court of Jackson County

“The undersigned Road Commissioner by order proceeded to view a proposed public road in Township 48 of Range 32 and 33 as follows, to-wit:

“Beginning in the Santa Fe and Independence public road on the quarter line E. & W. through the centre of Section 18, of Township 48 of Range 32 and running thence West on review 200 poles to the quarter section corner in the Range line on the West line of Section 18, thence N.68° W. down the hill side the val-

ley of a branch 212 poles, thence down said branch N.47°W. 57 poles, N.20° W. 30 poles, N.71° W. 80 poles, N. 45° W. 19 poles N. 19° W. 50 poles, N. 35° W. 32 poles to Big Blue River, which at this point is 6 poles wide [99 feet] 18 inches deep gravel bottom and runs N.E.; this crossing is known as the old Santa Fe Crossing and has fallen nearly into disuse, the bank on the East is low but the West bank will require excavation, thence from the crossing of Blue in a Westwardly direction about 280 poles to the corner of Myers Field in the section line, thence South 36.36 poles to the N. E. corner of S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 10, Township 48, Range 33, thence West 80 poles to N. W. corner of said quarter quarter thence South 80 poles to the South line of said section, thence West on the section line about 370 poles to the intersection with a public road leading to Byrons Ford and West past near the former residence of James Yeager, Esq."

This review of the proposed road continued in general terms, and concluded with "The undersigned recommends the adoption of the road" and was signed by Martin O. Jones, Commissioner. The county court road review also contained a digested description of the route that reconfirmed that the crossing of the Santa Fe Trail was at the 73rd St. location and not at Byrams Ford.

"We, the undersigned hereby grant the right of way to the County of Jackson in the State of Missouri for a public road forty feet wide said road begins in the Independence and Santa Fe public road at Mrs. Sechrests and runs thence West to the Range line, thence in a North-westwardly direction down the valley of a branch to the old Santa Fe Crossing of Big Blue, thence in a Westwardly direction to the corner of Myers field, thence south about 200 yards, thence West 80 poles thence South 80 poles to the Section line, thence West on the section line to the intersection with the Byron Ford public road near the former residence of Jas. Yager"

The course noted as "the old Santa Fe Crossing of Big Blue," when transposed onto any modern map, as well as older maps, leads specifically and precisely to the present 73rd St. location in Swope Park as the old Santa Fe crossing. Also of interest

from this road review is the similarity of its physical description of the crossing "6 poles wide [99 feet] . . . 18 inches deep . . . gravel bottom" compared with the description of the crossing decades earlier from Joseph Brown's field notes of the Sibley survey of 1825-1827 "100 links wide . . . Ford shallow . . . and gravelly."¹⁶

While on the subject of crossings of the Blue River, it was recently theorized that Byrams Ford was originally known as "Aikman's Fish Trap Ford" or the "Fish Dam Ford," the stated assumption being that Alexander Aikman operated the fish trap here in the 1820s and 1830s. Also stated was that the road that crossed there was a road in the 1820s and 1830s known as the "Upper Agency Road" and that it led west to the Shawnee Indian Agency at present day 59th St. and State Line.

A careful review of the road records for Jackson County from 1827 to 1833¹⁷ (the same source used by the proponents of the above concepts) reveals, first of all, that Aikman's Fish Trap Ford was a different location than the Fish Dam Ford. The Fish Dam Ford, also appearing in the road records as "Fish Trap Ford" and "Fish Trap on Blue," was located at or near the mouth of Brush Creek, as specifically indicated in the road records of 1827-1833. This location today is where 47th St. would cross the Blue River, about 2 miles north of Byrams Ford (61st St.); and about 2½ miles south of the crossing of the Independence to Westport Road (27th St.). There were no mentions of an "Upper Agency Road" in the road records of 1827-1833. The closest comparison was a single mention of a crossing of an unnamed "upper road," and the records indicate that it also was located near the mouth of Brush Creek.

Further analysis of these same road records indicates that "Aikman's Fish Trap Ford," actually referred to in the records as "Aikmans Fish Trap," "Aikmans Old Fish Trap," and "Aikmans Ford," was actually located at the crossing of the road that later became known as the Independence to Westport Road, near present 27th St. It is not surprising that Alexander Aikman appeared in the road records only through 1833, as one of the few facts known about Aikman is that he was

a Mormon who was driven from Jackson County in the Mormon exodus of 1833.¹⁷

It was also theorized recently, along with the misperception that Byrams Ford was the Santa Fe Trail crossing, that two roads emanated at this ford and continued west, one supposed to be the Santa Fe Trail, the other supposed to be a road to the Shawnee Indian Agency, described as being at 59th and State Line. The road records, however, support a different conclusion. While there was a crossing on the Blue from which two separate roads apparently ran west, it appears most likely to have been the 27th St. crossing far north of Byrams Ford, and neither of the roads was or could have been the Santa Fe Trail.

The Shawnee Indian Agency was located from about 1828 to 1834 or perhaps a few years later at the present location of about 46th St. and State Line, in buildings built by and for the sub-agent, John Campbell. This location sometimes appeared in early maps and records as "Shanes and Wells." Anthony Shane (or Chaine) and Jonathan B. Wells served as "interpreters" and "liaisons" with the Shawnee Indians and others.¹⁸

This is where Philip St George Cooke wrote in 1829, "was delightfully situated . . . the house . . . of the sub-agent of the Delawares the hospitable old Major C. . . with ready joke and julep, did his best to make our long farewell to the settlements, a lively one."²⁰

This Shawnee Agency was located five miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River. The later location, almost two miles farther south down the State Line near present 59th St., was started in 1834 or later. The original location at 46th and State Line, continued as the sub-agency buildings through the late 1830s.²¹

The next point to consider is the crossing of the state line nine miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River. In September 1823 Joseph Brown surveyed the western boundary of the State of Missouri. Brown and his eight assistants erected mounds and markers at one-mile intervals along this surveyed line. Two years later Brown became the official surveyor of the 1825-1827 George C.

Sibley survey of the road to New Mexico.

On September 3, 1823, Brown entered in his field notes:²² "Having first by several observations with the Theodolite ascertained the Magnetical Variation to be 11° 8" East- I proceeded to run the West boundary of the State of Missouri - from the middle of the mouth of the Kansas River, at its confluence with the Missouri - due South.-Missouri bears South about 20° East." The heading of his measurements read, "South along the west boundary of the State of Missouri." Measurement entries continued along the state line, with the following entry at nine miles: "At end of 9 miles, raised a mound- Land lies well, and is good clean prairie." At nine miles and ten chains (ten chains equal 660 feet), Brown wrote, "To a trace leading from Fort Osage toward Santa Fe- Mound on the edge about midway, bears to bottoms leading to the South, they come together." Today this point where a "trace leading from Fort Osage to Santa Fe" crossed the state line is about 79th St.

As important as this first specific notation of the Santa Fe Trail was, even more revealing was the fact that there was no mention of any other road bisecting the state line as the Brown survey continued south in 1823, even for many miles past the later site of New Santa Fe which has been the traditionally-accepted point of entry of the Trail from Missouri into Kansas. The present location of New Santa Fe is about 122nd St. and State Line Road.²³

This nine-mile-point south of the mouth of the Kansas River is the key to the location of the Santa Fe Trail as Brown found it in 1823, as Sibley and Brown noted it in 1825-1827, and as other surveyors of note found it as late as 1839. George Sibley's field notes of 1827 confirmed the nine-mile-point and the continuation of the route across the state line into present Johnson County, Kansas.²⁴ He wrote:

"The following Notes are the results of the Surveys made by G. Sibley in May, June & July 1827 to correct the old survey, and straighten, and complete the marking of the Road to N. Mexico. They commence at the Western boundary of the State of Missouri."

The headings of the columns in Sibley's notes were Courses, Distances, and Remarks. The first entry at the State Line stated: "So. 86 W. 1 Mile, to a very large mound, No. 1, on the State Line, and exactly *Nine* miles South of the Missouri R. From the Mound No. 1, the corrected Survey proceeds as follows So. 84° W.-2 Miles, 7 Chains, 50 Links To a large mound No. 2 with a Post in it, on a high ridge. The Road *winds* a little."

The entries continued southwesterly, with notations of distance and bearing, to the next pertinent entry (the 15th): "So. 56° W. - 2 Miles, 75 Links To a very Large Mound No. 15 near the old road- From 'Caravan Creek' to this Md. The road is good- Prairie generally very rich, and pretty- At this point the Road by way of 'The Blue Spring' and that by Independence meet- That by Independence is the best way and is the *nearest* by 7 miles as ascertained Satisfactorily by G.c.S."²⁵

In the summer of 1827, when Sibley made these notes, Westport did not exist (not till 1834). Independence was chosen to serve as the county seat in 1827, and the first public sale of lots was held on July 9 of that year, six years since the road to Santa Fe had been opened in 1821.²⁶

When Sibley referred to the road "by Independence," he meant the route which crossed the Blue River at present 73rd St. and continued past the state line at 79th St. at the nine-mile-point. When he referred to the road "by way of The Blue Spring," he described the route that crossed the state line in 1827 at the same place the Blue River crossed the state line, about present 151st St. This route, the Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring, worked its way north and west as it evolved over the years, and by 1840 crossed the state line at about present 122nd St., where New Santa Fe would be located about a decade later).

The key point, as stated, identifying the original Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring was the upper crossing of the Blue River. This route also crossed the Missouri state line at virtually the same point, just east of present 151st St. and the state line. Sibley described the trail east from the Round Grove to this crossing of the Blue River on July 4, 1827.²⁷

"Fine Morning. Started early; chained and coursed the Road to the ford of Big Blue, which I find to be 13 m[ile]s & 22 ch[ain]s from the Round Grove. The Road passes over Some Rough ground & Some Rather bad places.

"The ford of the Blue is a very excellent one, the bed of the Creek being on Smooth flat Rock, & the banks good. There is considerable timber along here in Strips; Some very pretty groves, & excellent land. Camped at the ford."

When Sibley commented so favorably on this crossing of the Blue in the summer of 1827, he was surveying, almost as an afterthought, the Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring. Having surveyed the Trail from Fort Osage in 1825, and resurveyed it again in 1827 through Jackson County out west past nine-mile-point on the state line as far as Diamond Spring in present Kansas, Sibley decided in late June of that year to survey the Blue Spring route even though it obviously was not on his original agenda.

He wrote on June 26, 1827, "The Mules and Horses are already the worse of these torments [heat and flies] and will I fear be greatly Reduced before I get through with my Work - which may yet employ me ten or twelve days probably, as I propose to Survey the Route round by the Blue Spring."²⁸

By the time Sibley made these notes in 1827, he was surveying a route well established as a southern alternative through Jackson County, its trace marked out largely by Santa Fe traders originating from the Missouri River towns east of Jackson County. Using the Blue Spring, located about twelve miles south of Fort Osage on the road to Harmony Mission, as a rendezvous point, the traders followed the Missionary Road due south for a few miles, then turned west to pursue the high ground near the heads of the Little Blue River and to make their crossing of the Big Blue at the idyllic spot that Sibley described at present 151st and State Line.

Stephen Cooper, one of the legendary figures that forged the Santa Fe Trail in its seminal decade, wrote many years later about this route.²⁹ After describing a trip to Texas in 1823, where he and his brother Jo-

seph had been sent to recover runaway slaves, he wrote:

"We struck through a wilderness [north from Texas], saw no settlements except Fort Smith, Arkansas, and the Harmony Mission on the American. At this point I left my brother, as I had promised some Santa Fe traders to be back by the 5th of May. On reaching the Missouri settlement in Lafayette County, I met the Santa Fe traders, thirty in number. I informed them that I would be with them in eight days; I was then within a day's ride of my home, in Howard County. The party waited at the Blue Springs, in Jackson County; when I came back to them, I unceremoniously took charge of the party. We reached Little Arkansas the 31st of May."

The enigmatic Alexander Le-Grand led a group from the Blue Spring rendezvous in 1824 that included Meridith M. Marmaduke, Thomas L. "Pegleg" Smith, and Augustus Storrs.³⁰ It was on this trip that Storrs developed and wrote his "Answers of Augustus Storrs, of Missouri, to Certain Queries upon the Origin, Present State, and the Future Prospect, of Trade and Inter-course between Missouri and the Internal Provinces of Mexico, Propounded by the Hon. Mr. Benton." This was included in the widely-promoted Congressional document that Benton stage-managed to provide impetus and gain a popular mandate to pursue his desire to have the road to New Mexico surveyed.

The route of that important 1824 caravan was described in a letter to the *Missouri Intelligencer*, headed "Camp on the Missionary Trace, 10 miles south of Fort Osage." The group would "follow the missionary trace one day's journey, for the purpose of heading the Blues and shall strike our course between the dividing waters to the Arkansas."³¹

The following year found the Sibley survey expedition charting the route, chain by chain, from Fort Osage in Jackson County, Missouri, and west into present Johnson County, Kansas. Thomas Mather, a commissioner on the survey, made the following entries his diary for the two days after leaving nine-mile-point on the state line:³²

"Thursday [July] 21 Our route today is through an extensive prairie



Location of the upper crossing of the Blue River near present 151st St. and State Line.

generally upon the dividing ridge of the Big Blue and Kansas. . . . Genl course S.70 W."

"Friday 22 Set out early and travelled 9 miles- the flies continuing to annoy us very much. Breakfasted and remained during the day- This morning we intersected the waggon road of the Santa Fe traders who went out in the spring- They had gone round the head of the Blue-

The last half of the decade of the 1820s saw the creation of Independence and the early use of its river landing in 1827, an event that caused the old route to change and evolve up to the late 1830s. However, the Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring continued its original course through the 1820s.

Alphonso Wetmore led a group in May 1828 that started from "the Blue Spring, the rendezvous of the Mexican traders."³³ In 1829 another group left Blue Spring for Santa Fe, "a company of traders from Fever River, on the 25th August next."³⁴ At least one more caravan for Santa Fe used Blue Spring as their rendezvous. The spring of 1830 found a group, including Ceran St. Vrain and, likely, Charles Bent, on the Trail from Blue Spring.³⁵ By the early 1830s Independence had gained favor with the traders, effectively cutting off Blue Spring as a viable "jumping off point."

Another factor contributing to the discontinuation of the original route from Blue Spring was the difficulty of the terrain. As described by

George Sibley on July 6, 1827, "Thus far this Route is decidedly worse than the other however [the other being the route from Fort Osage] the country is more broken, camping grounds not so good or convenient, and the Road necessarily more circuitous."³⁶ The excellent ford of the Blue River at the upper crossing (present 151st St. and State Line Road) continued to draw the traders, at least through the late 1830s.

Verifying the exact location of this upper ford of the Blue River, along with Sibley's precise field notes, is a map of 1828 vintage by surveyor Angus Langham, a noted frontier surveyor in the 1820s. This map delineates Indian boundaries in present Johnson, Wyandotte, Douglas, and Miami counties in Kansas. It shows mile marks, at one-mile intervals for 43 miles south, starting at the mouth of the Kansas River and running along the Missouri state line. Noted on this manuscript map are both routes of the Santa Fe Trail in 1828, specifically the "Santa Fee road" at nine-mile-point and the "Upper Santa Fee road" at the 18-mile-point. This crossing at 18-mile-point is today at 151st and State Line. This was almost four miles south of the later site of New Santa Fe (about 1/2 mile south of the 14-mile mark) that Langham passed with no indication of the trail that would exit Missouri at that point over a decade later.³⁷

That the Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring evolved into the popularly-accepted route of the Trail from In-

dependence by 1839 is shown by the map of another trained and experienced surveyor, Captain Washington Hood, of the Corps of Topographical Engineers. He surveyed the eastern line of Shawnee Indian lands. Just as Brown and Langham before him, Hood started at the mouth of the Kansas River and ran south about 28 miles, thus duplicating, as Hood himself pointed out, the western line of the State of Missouri as established by Joseph Brown in 1823.

The results of this survey were recorded by Hood, chain by chain, mile by mile, in both his field notes and detailed maps. Having run his line six miles south from the northeast corner of the Shawnee lands (which was three miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River, making Hood actually at the nine-mile-point), his notes stated: "Six mile Shawnee lands 6M 2Ch. Offset 12 links to West to Browns nine mile mound 22 Ch. Cross Sta Fe road- mound (old) on edge of do [ditto]. 160 Ch. Seven mile Shawnee line. 7M 3 Ch. 8 Lks. Offset 51 links to West to Browns 10 mile mound."³⁸

Hood's map for this entry shows the Santa Fe road labeled and positioned as described above. His notes continued south down the state line and reveal the first documented evidence for the crossing of the state line by the Santa Fe Trail from Independence at the site of what became New Santa Fe. After recording mile 11 of the Shawnee land (the 14th mile from the mouth of the Kansas River), he continued another eight chains and 38 links, where he noted "Offset to East 40 links to a flat rock in road," then another few chains to where he noted "Offset to East 46 links to broader rock in road." Although his notes did not indicate it, Hood's corresponding map labeled this road as "St. f road," thus providing the earliest primary evidence of this routing of the Trail through the site of later New Santa Fe.³⁹

In the same way that the Brown survey of 1823, the Sibley survey of 1825-27, and the Langham survey of 1828, all negated the existence of this (New Santa Fe location) crossing of the state line by the Santa Fe Trail at those times by its glaring absence from their notes and observations; the Hood survey indicated that

the crossing farther south at present 151st St. was likely out of general use by 1839. He made no mention of it as he continued south on the state line past its location.⁴⁰

Both the Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring and the Trail from Fort Osage evolved up to 1840. Traffic was bypassing Blue Spring by 1828 for a rendezvous out of Independence, but the traders still followed the south part of the original route to the upper crossing of the Blue at present 151st St. and State Line. From then to about 1835 the route followed portions of what later came to be known as the Independence to Harrisonville Road.⁴¹ By 1839 the "Red Bridge" crossing of the Blue River had gained favor with traders.⁴² The route crossed the Blue there and crossed the state line at the later location of New Santa Fe, as reflected in Hood's 1839 survey, thereby essentially cutting off the old crossing of the Blue at 151st St., and the Trail evolved into the route now commonly known as the Santa Fe Trail from Independence.

The route from Fort Osage continued into the late 1820s. Then, like its counterpart, this trail became used by Santa Fe traders out of Independence. Following the Santa Fe Trail south out of Independence to the crossing of the Blue at present 73rd St. in Swope Park, they continued west to the state line and crossed at nine-mile-point, at least through 1839 as verified by Hood's 1839 map and notes.

By 1839 Westport and its landing near the mouth of the Kansas River were gaining favor. The traders could avoid the Blue River by landing their goods twelve miles west of Independence Landing at Westport Landing, and they had their choice of two routes after outfitting in Westport. They could head southwest out of Westport, following the road to the old Shawnee Agency at present 46th St. and State Line and continue on southwest through Johnson County, Kansas, to Round Grove, or they could head south out of Westport to intersect the Santa Fe Trail coming off the Blue River at 73rd street and cross the state line at nine-mile-point, about present 79th St.

As Westport gained in favor in the 1840s as the starting point for traders, the crossing of the Blue at 73rd

St. fell into disuse. There was no reason for the traders to cross the Blue if they did not have to. Also, gradually, the crossing of the state line worked its way north, so that by the early 1850s the route that ran south out of Westport crossed over a mile north at about present 69th St., thus cutting off the old crossings of the Blue and the state line at nine-mile-point, and this route became commonly known as the Santa Fe Trail from Westport.

Thus it is now possible to perceive the true nature of the old trace in metropolitan Kansas City. The Santa Fe Trail did not achieve its commonly-accepted routes there until about 1840, leaving almost two decades of its hidden legacy (trace of the Blues) to be rediscovered a century and a half later, its course to be recognized, its landmarks to be located, and its stories of life on the Trail to capture our collective imaginations yet one more time.

NOTES

1. First marked by the D.A.R. in 1926 as "Westport Independence Road - Link in the Santa Fe Trail," this route, like all crossings of the Blue River, may have received incidental traffic that was ultimately destined for Santa Fe. The original plat of Westport referred to the road simply as the road to Independence. There is but one documented instance of a sizable wagon caravan possibly crossing the Blue at this point (Richard Wilson and company in 1841).
2. This was first proposed in the 1950s by Dean Earl Wood in his important work, *The Old Santa Fe Trail From The Missouri River* (Kansas City, MO: E. L. Mendenhall, 1955). Wood used a road record of 1846 to support his theory (since found to be incorrect) that Watts Mill and Fitzhugh Mill were the same place, and that Wornall Road was the road south, through Watts Mill and on to New Santa Fe, that was used by traders and emigrants. The logic of the road order compels a very different location and conclusion. See Craig Crease, "Analysis of Watts Mill," Report for the National Park Service, 4-8-97.)
3. This must remain a point of conjecture until new primary documentation reveals the true specifics of Becknell's route.
4. Led by Benjamin Cooper in 1822, and by Stephen Cooper and Joel Walker in 1823. See Kenneth Holmes, "The Benjamin Cooper Expeditions to Santa Fe in 1822 and 1823," *New Mexico Historical Review*, 38 (April 1963): 139-150.
5. The Sibley surveys are most accessible in Kate L. Gregg, ed., *The Road to Santa Fe* (1952; reprint, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995). The Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis also has substantial holdings of papers and field-

notes from the Sibley survey.

6. Destroyed in the flood of 1844, this landing was primarily developed for the Chouteau fur-trading interests (aka the American Fur Company).
7. John C. McCoy recollected in 1879 that the steamboat *John Hancock* put ashore goods at the location described as Westport Landing, for his store about four miles south (the site of future Westport) in the spring of 1834.
8. The present location of the rendezvous at Blue Spring was in or near the present Old Mill Park, off Woods Chapel Road in the city of Blue Springs, Missouri.
9. Elliott Coues, ed., *The Journal of Jacob Fowler* (1898; reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), 131-134.
10. Diary of Thomas Mather, 1825, unpublished manuscript, Mather Papers, Graff #2707, Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois.
11. Quoted in Gregg, *Road to Santa Fe*, 174.
12. Quoted in *ibid.*, 168.
13. Although Reeves and Davis did not say so specifically, it appears obvious from a careful reconstruction of the movements of Becknell, Cooper, and Walker, as described in the diaries of Reeves, Davis, and Sibley that they were indeed with Reeves and Davis returning eastward up to and beyond this crossing of the Blue River. See Gregg, *Road to Santa Fe*, 163-165, 167, 170, 173, 177.
14. USGS 7.5° Topographic Maps: Grandview Quadrangle, Missouri-Kansas, S11 & S12/T48N/R33W; Kansas City Quadrangle, Missouri-Kansas, S2, S34, & S36/T48N/R33W.
15. County Court Records, Jackson County, Missouri, April Term, 1869, Record 15, p. 128, Martin Jones, Comm.
16. Joseph C. Brown, "Field Notes United States Surveying Expedition, 1825-1827," *Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Historical Society* (1911-1912): 117.
17. The original Jackson County Court records are located at the County Clerk's office at the county offices in downtown Kansas City, MO.
18. Alexander Aikman (appearing in much later records as "Akeman") owned land east of the Blue River in Section 17, T49, R32, during most of 1833. He appears in the records almost 50 years later in an LDS Ms. (#4680), "Names of those who were driven from Jackson County Missouri and who are still living and are in the Church. Dated March 24, 1882."
19. Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, National Archives Microfilm Publication M234, Fort Leavenworth Agency, rolls 300 & 301.
20. Senate Doc. 72, 20th Congress, 2nd Session, Serial 181, p. 607; Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 156.
21. LR, OIA, NA, M234, Fort Leavenworth Agency, rolls 300-302. The Kansas Territorial survey maps done 1854-1856, establishing section, township, and range lines in eastern Kansas in preparation for statehood, show the Shawnee Agency in its later location surrounding the 59th St. and State Line description.
22. Field Notes of Joseph C. Brown, Survey of

the Western Boundary of the State of Missouri, 1823, originals located in Missouri State Dept. of Natural Resources in Rolla, MO, and copies at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, MO.

23. There are many misconceptions concerning New Santa Fe and its relation to the Santa Fe Trail. Most stem from the statements made in a book, *The History of Jackson County* (1881), which concluded all Trail history in southwestern Jackson County occurred at the New Santa Fe location. The fact is that the Trail exited Missouri at this location as early as 1839, but New Santa Fe as such did not exist till it was platted by one Dabney Lipscomb in 1851.
24. George Sibley, Summary of Field Notes of 1827 Resurvey, unpublished manuscript, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO.
25. The location of this intersection of the Santa Fe Trail from Fort Osage with the Trail from Blue Spring is just north of present Gardner, KS.
26. Jackson County Court Records, Kansas City, MO.
27. Gregg, *Road to Santa Fe*, 190.
28. *Ibid.*, 188.
29. "Autobiography of Stephen Cooper," *Colusa County [Calif.]: Its History* (1888), 351-361.
30. "Santa Fe Trail: M. M. Marmaduke Journal," ed. by Francis A. Sampson, *Missouri Historical Review*, 6 (Oct 1911): 1-10.
31. *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 5, 1824.
32. Diary of Thomas Mather, 1825.
33. "Major Alphonso Wetmore's Diary of a Journey to Santa Fe, 1828," *Missouri Historical Review*, 8 (July 1914): 177-197.
34. *Missouri Intelligencer*, June 26, 1829.
35. *Ibid.*, May 22, 1830; *Western Monitor* (Fayette), March 31 & April 7, 1830.
36. Gregg, *Road to Santa Fe*, 191.
37. Angus Langham, Map #827, 1828, Kansas State Historical Society, Maps Division, Catalogue #P4, Locater #F.3.
38. Capt. Washington Hood, Survey of the Eastern Line of Shawnee Lands, July 1839, unpublished manuscript, Kansas State Historical Society, Manuscript Division.
39. *Ibid.*
40. The history of this old route after the 1830s was intertwined with the life of John Bartleson. He was one-half the leadership of the Bidwell-Bartleson caravan of 1841 that is credited with the being the first emigrant wagon train to California. He was also one of three commissioners charged with choosing the site for the Jackson County seat, Independence, in 1827.

By the late 1830s Bartleson had located in the extreme southwest corner of the county, very near the 151st St. crossing. His name appeared frequently in the road records of the 1840s, sometimes as a petitioner to the court, sometimes his property simply mentioned as a descriptive landmark. An example dated Nov. 7, 1839: "... have marked and staked out the road ... leaving from the boundary line in the southwest corner of Jackson County crossing the Big Blue at the Old Santa Fee ford running

near north of Col. Bartlesons by David Kennedy's field. ..."

John Bartleson died in 1848 and was buried in a small plot near the old Santa Fe Trail from Blue Spring near his old homestead.

41. Modern-day Arrington Road, east of Grandview, MO, is most likely a paved remnant of this old road.
42. The crossing of the Blue River known as the Red Bridge Crossing is located near the present Red Bridge Road crossed the river in southern Kansas City, MO.

BEAR CREEK PASS

(continued from page 1)

west, named it the *Hartland Herald*, and claimed that the six-month-old town was "flourishing like a green bay tree." Doubters and naysayers could read on and learn from Dillon's common-sense prose, lightened by just a bit of fantasy, that this outpost on the mostly unpopulated plains could in no way escape its manifest destiny:

"Hartland holds the key to the great southwest for one hundred miles, and as some of our readers may not be acquainted with the geographical lay of the country, we shall endeavor to explain why we hold the key to one of the finest farming countries the sun ever shone upon. Hartland is situated on the banks of the Arkansas river, on the main line of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad, directly opposite the Hartland Pass. By looking at the map [map] of Kansas, the reader will see there is a range of sand hills extending through the State. On the south side of the Arkansas river, this range of sand hills varies in width from one to twelve miles and is almost an insurmountable barrier, and no sane teamster would think of going through the sand hills with an empty wagon, much less take a load through it, as it would be an utter impossibility, only where this pass is, opposite Hartland. Hence we hold the (key to the trade) of the great southwest. The Town Company has built one of the finest bridges that spans the Arkansas river, at the cost of several thousand dollars which is open to the public free of charge and only one mile from Hartland Pass."

Dillon, a native of Huron, Michigan, had been enticed by a land promoter's hyperbole and smooth rhetoric to move his family to the Kansas high plains. He effectively used the same tools to promote the mush-

rooming growth of the new boom town.

By summer 1866 Dillon had dropped the promotional title of Hartland Pass, perhaps out of respect for tradition, more likely to insure the good will of Lakin. Lakin depended on the pass for its trade from the south but was at a disadvantage because it was farther from the mouth of the pass than Hartland. By May 1866 Hartland had five lumberyards and a claim of fifty businesses. The new town enjoyed brisk trade with the residents of Lakin. In subsequent editorials Dillon discreetly referred to the wagon road as the "natural pass."²

Dillon devoted two columns of space in the June 26 issue of the *Herald* to a long paean of praise for the new town on the Arkansas, written by a reporter from the *Topeka Daily Capital*. The writer declared that "Nature did much for her [Hartland] in making a fine pass through the sand hills to the south. It is locally known as Bear Creek Pass."

The Bear Creek Fault curves through present Stanton, Grant, and Kearny counties. A recent event in earth time, it marks the southern boundary of a broad east-west rise in the land called the Syracuse Uplift. Rarely seen on the surface, faults can displace once continuous rocks by upward or downward movement. The Bear Creek Fault occurred in shales and limestone formed by the sediments of ancient seas that covered the interior of the present United States for millions of years.³

The uplift may have brought Cretaceous Era bedrock to the surface south of the Arkansas River, but blowing dune sand would have soon obliterated the fault line. It took the fortuitous flow of a small creek to give the fault a permanent place in history.⁴

Usually bone dry, Bear Creek reincarnated in present Baca County, Colorado, after heavy rains and sent a roaring flow of water eastward that cut a channel west of present Johnson City, Kansas, that would accommodate a fair-sized river. The creek found the cleft of the fault in Stanton County and followed it northeast into Grant County. A rapid drop in elevation from 5,050 feet in Colorado to 3,000 feet in Kansas accounted for its awesome sound and ravaging

speed.⁵

At one time the creek likely continued beyond the Kearny County sand hills and emptied into the Arkansas. In Hartland's heyday the creek still sent intermittent but repetitive flows through the dunes. Water trickled down through its sandy bed and formed a packed-down, dried-up, waterway. Today land leveling and construction of numerous county roads have diverted Bear Creek's natural northward flow. The old creek, forced out of its channel, rushes down road ditches, spreads over cultivated fields, and stands in low depressions that are havens for wild ducks.⁶

The "natural pass" was first used by plains animals. John McPhee, in *Rising from the Plains*, declared the bison to be "as good as the best civil engineers" when it came to finding good routes over difficult terrain. Bison probably discovered the easy path through the rolling dunes and used it to reach grasslands on either side of the river. Later they were followed by mobile Plains Indians. Twentieth-century arrowhead hunters have gleaned hundreds of these artifacts from the shifting sands along the pass.

Bison and Indians were joined in 1825 by a surveying group officially charged with the task of marking a road from Missouri to the international boundary between the United States and Mexico. The difficulty of that assignment had been noted nearly three centuries before when Coronado's chronicler, Casteñada, wrote in 1541 of his dismay at any attempt to mark the short-grass prairie:

"For these things were remarkable and something not seen in other parts. I dare to write of them because I am writing at a time when many men are still living who saw them and who will vouch for my account. Who could believe that 1000 horses and 500 of our cows and more than 5000 rams and ewes and more than 1500 friendly Indians and servants, in traveling over those plains, would leave no more trace where they had passed than if nothing had been there—nothing—so that it was necessary to make piles of bones and cow dung now and then, so that the rear guard could follow the army. The grass never failed to become erect af-

ter it had been trodden down, and, although it was short, it was as fresh and straight as before."⁷

President James Monroe opposed federal road building, not only on the short-grass prairie but anywhere in the country, because he was convinced that only an amendment to the Constitution could grant Congress that authority. Congress continued to introduce bills, and in 1824 Monroe finally signed the Survey Act, a bill that would "plan improvements in the future." In 1825 he signed the bill to survey and mark a road to Mexico to the 100th Meridian and on into Mexico if permission were granted.⁸

The bill provided \$10,000 for marking the road and \$20,000 for implementing treaties with Plains Indians along the route. Although commercial trade between Missouri and New Mexico was only four years old, it was already of significant benefit to both Mexico and the United States. Plains Indians found the livestock of Trail travelers to be irresistible targets for theft, and the Indians threatened to become a serious impediment to the trade. The governor of New Mexico sent his representative, Manuel Simon Escudero, with a caravan returning to Missouri in 1825 to confer with the Mexican minister in Washington regarding the Indian predations.⁹

Joseph C. Brown, surveyor, three appointed road commissioners, and their party left Fort Osage, Missouri, July 17, 1825. At the 100th Meridian (that invisible line that passes through present Dodge City, Kansas), Brown made an important calculation. Unfortunately it was wrong. His starting point at Fort Osage had been assigned an incorrect longitude and he was about 15 miles west of the true meridian. His party had been traveling for 15 miles across the river from the sovereign Republic of Mexico, whose boundary began at the 100th Meridian on the south bank of the Arkansas.¹⁰

Brown's meridian had plentiful grass and fuel, and camp was made there until September 20 while they waited for permission to enter Mexico. When no word came, Brown, road commissioner George Sibley, and 10 others agreed to go to Taos and Santa Fe and seek authority to survey the road into Mexico. The rest

of the party returned to Fort Osage.¹¹

Brown's party crossed the river into Mexico on September 25 near present Holcomb, Kansas. They traveled along the south bank until they reached big, wooded Chouteau Island where Brown observed in his notes, "the road leaves the river altogether."¹²

Brown was in the vicinity of what would become known as the Upper Crossing of the Santa Fe Trail. Notes on his 1827 map, which was never published, stated that an earlier crossing of the river "is a very good way when the weather is not too dry." Indeed, the Lower Crossing near present Ford and the Middle Crossing near Cimarron were favored because of some 30 miles of travel distance saved.¹³

The field notes continued: "After leaving the river the road leads southward, leaving the two cottonwood trees on the right, which stand perhaps a mile from the river. From the brow of the hill, which is low, and is the border of the sand hills, the road leads a little east of south to a place which sometimes [is] a very large pond and continues along the western margin, and after passing some trees standing at the south end, reaches a very slight valley, through which in wet weather flows a small creek, coming from the plains beyond the sand hills. From this place the traveler will see some trees in a southwest direction, which he will leave on his right, and will continue along the valley in the bed of the creek (which he can hardly recognize as such) very nearly due south for about four miles to the southern edge of the sand hills, where generally he will find a large pond of water in the bed of the small creek, which is now more apparent. But this pond is sometimes dry; due south from it for about two miles distant are several ponds of standing water, where the grass is fine and abundant. The distance through the sand hills here is about five miles, and the road is not bad. These hills are from thirty to fifty feet high and generally covered with grass and herbage. From this place a due south course will strike the lower spring [Wagon Bed Spring in present Grant County] on the Semaron creek, and as that creek then is the guide for about eighty miles, and wagons can

in one day drive across the level, firm plain from the ponds to the spring, the road was so laid out."¹⁴

On Map No. 2 Brown recorded the sand hills, the squiggly line of Bear Creek flowing into the Arkansas (this may have been conjecture, as his route is shown east of the creek until he entered the sand hills) and his path along the creek bed. At the southern edge of the dunes he drew a straight road to the "Lower Semaron Spring," 26 miles away.¹⁵

Commissioner George C. Sibley made note of the route through the sand hills in his diary on September 27: "being only 5½ Miles, Our Wagons found no difficulty whatever in getting thro' this pass, as the road is generally hard and level." The party reached Taos October 30, but it was August 1826 before the survey was allowed to examine the road, without marking it, in Mexico.¹⁶

The overall survey produced few successes. While treaties had been signed with the Osage and Kansa Indians, none had been negotiated with the other Plains tribes. The impermanent mound markers that had been placed on the American leg of the Trail were generally ignored by later wagonmasters who preferred to choose their own routes—usually those that had been cut by other wagon trains.¹⁷

Brown's field notes, dated October 27, 1827, were filed, unpublished, in the Topographical Division of the War Department in Washington. The Kansas State Historical Society published them in its 1911-1912 *Eighteenth Biennial Report*, long after the dust had settled on the "highway between Nations."¹⁸

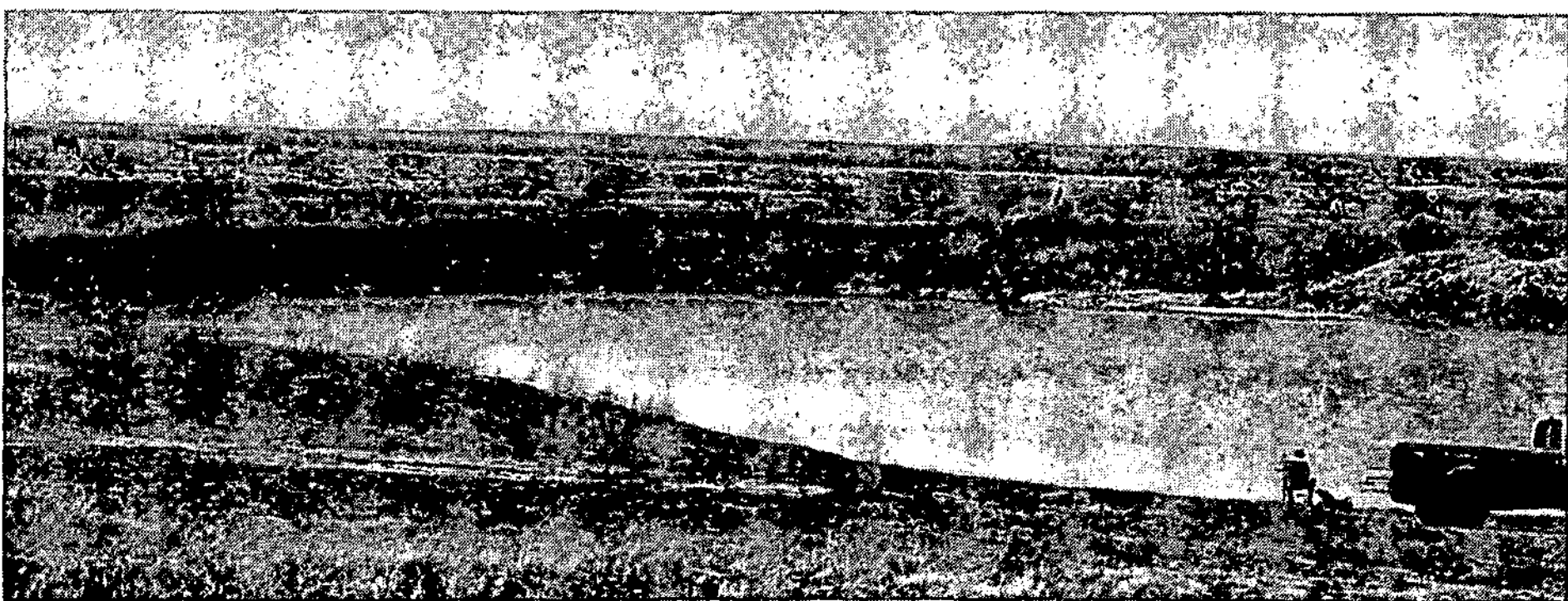


Wade Berlier, local rancher and Bear Creek Trail buff, reads the grasses and terrain and points out the location of old Bear Creek's bed.

Within two years the isolated pass south of the Arkansas River figured in another government report, that of the 1829 military escort, when traders and soldiers traversed the sandsage dunes. This was the first army escort on the Trail.

The year 1828 was dangerous and unprofitable for some American merchants on the Santa Fe Trail. Three men were killed by Indians who also stole property valued at more than \$40,000. On the other hand, 26 New Mexican traders had fared better, selling serapes, sombreros, mules, and furs in Missouri for a good profit—but obviously not without risk.¹⁹

Missouri's governor and legislature looked to Congress for help. Senator Thomas Hart Benton from Missouri was chairman of the military affairs committee. On February 26, 1829, a bill was passed by the Senate "To provide for the better defence of the Western Frontier of the United States, and for the better security of the inland trade with Mexico." The army would escort the trade



A lone angler tries his luck at Clear Lake, a sinkhole in the vicinity of Bear Creek Fault. This was surveyor Brown's "very large pond" south of the Arkansas River. The west edge of the pond, at the left, marked the route to the sand hills and the beginning of Bear Creek Pass.

caravan to the international border. The bill became bogged down in controversy in the House, and Congress adjourned in March without taking action. A direct appeal by the hard-pressed traders to the old Indian fighter in the White House, President Andrew Jackson, resulted in an order to the War Department to provide protection for the merchant caravans.²⁰

Brevet Major Bennet Riley, veteran of the War of 1812, a man destined to become provisional governor of California, and who was honored after his death with the renaming of Camp Center to Fort Riley, led four companies of Sixth Infantry from Cantonment Leavenworth to accompany the 1829 caravan of 37 wagons as far as the Upper Crossing and Bear Creek Pass. He later reported to his superiors on November 22, 1829, after returning to Leavenworth: "On the 9th of July we arrived at Chouteau's island where the trader's determined to cross the river."²¹

Charles Bent, St. Louis trader, was captain of the caravan. His enterprises later included Bent's Fort, with his brother William and Ceran St. Vrain, near present La Junta, Colorado, and in 1846 he was named governor of newly-acquired New Mexico. Bent led the 1829 caravan through Bear Creek Pass. Ignoring Riley's admonition to "stick together," three men rode some distance ahead of the caravan in the pass and were attacked by Kiowas. Two of the men managed to flee to the wagons, but a prominent merchant, Samuel C. Lamme, was slain and scalped.²²

When riders brought Riley the devastating news, Riley crossed the river into Mexico with his troops, despite orders to remain on American soil and the possibility of an international incident and personal disgrace. The soldiers reached the caravan late the same day. At bugle call the next morning the Indians were observed moving away. Riley accompanied the caravan through the dunes and continued two more days into Mexico (perhaps going as far as Lower Spring) before turning back. The soldiers spent the summer on the north bank of the Arkansas, fighting Indians and boredom and hunting bison until the caravan re-

turned in the fall.²³

In response to a letter from Riley requesting that the New Mexican government send a return escort as far as the Arkansas River, Colonel José Antonio Vizcarra, celebrated Indian fighter, exceptional horseman, and former governor of the province of New Mexico, arrived with 200 regular army troops and Indian militia on October 12, 1829. They also came through Bear Creek Pass. Warm exchanges at military dinners and contests among the soldiers marked the unusual international meeting on the banks of the Arkansas.²⁴

For a quarter century the old crossings and trails deepened their marks on the land. Then a man in a hurry for adventure and profit made use of the southern springs along Bear Creek for yet another important route of the Santa Fe Trail.

Canadian-born Francis X. Aubry challenged the distance between Santa Fe and Independence through a series of record-setting horseback rides, and he succeeded in taking early spring and late winter trade caravans over the Trail. Naturally he kept an eye out for shortcuts and better routes for wagons. In 1851 he found one 15 miles west of Chouteau Island. The Aubry Route, as it became known, crossed the Arkansas and headed south to present Stanton County, where it paralleled Bear Creek for several miles before it crossed the stream bed. The Aubry Route was used by traders, travelers, and military men for 20 years.²⁵

Intermittent use of Bear Creek Pass by Trail travelers continued after 1829, and regular use began after the United States acquired the Southwest through conquest and purchase. After the Civil War more people were ready to move west, even to settle the desolate short-grass frontiers. The High Plains of western Kansas, devoid of trees except for the soft cottonwoods that grew sporadically at streams' edges and with a basement of washed-down mountain rubble rock thickly overlaid with wind-blown loess, offered scant building material.

Ingenious homesteaders made do with dugouts and sod houses, but even these needed doors and hinges. Town companies and promoters needed lumber to establish busi-

nesses and build homes. Hartland, with its railroad and five lumber yards, stood close to Bear Creek Pass, ready to supply all of southwest Kansas and the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas.

The Arkansas Valley Lumber Company of Hartland dealt in lumber, shingles, lath, sash, doors, blinds, and windows. Editor Dillon noted seven wagons loaded with lumber on the street, February 26, 1886. By April 3 he reported that over 200 teams had gone south within a week.

There were mixed reports about the condition of Bear Creek Pass. The May 1 issue of the *Hartland Herald* mentioned some improvements: "Twenty teams are now to work on the road through the sand hills leading into Hartland. By the time they get through the road will be in first class order for freighters to haul as heavy a load as they want to put on." It was claimed that a single team could pull over one ton through the pass.

Apparently not everyone was satisfied with the May road improvements. Dillon wrote on July 17 that "The citizens held a meeting at Handy's Hall Thursday evening for the purpose of considering the question of planing the road through the sand hills." Even though "most every businessman was present," practicality or frugality must have won the day for no further mention was made of the proposed wooden road in Dillon's weekly newspaper.

By February 1887 Hartland had three hotels, a bank, numerous businesses, and about a thousand residents. Dillon reported that now "fifty or sixty wagon loads of lumber start out of Hartland in the early morning." But Hartland's destiny and the destiny of Bear Creek Pass were suddenly changed on county election day, June 23, 1894, when Lakin won the county seat from Hartland. Immediately Hartland businesses began moving east to the new mecca.²⁶ The road through Bear Creek Pass continued.

"It wasn't really a road," admitted Edith Whitaker Spencer, age 84. She traveled the two-track Bear Creek Pass to teach in southern Kearny County's rural schools in the 1930s. Her father's Model A Ford had hard going through the blowing and



Remnant of the two-track Bear Creek Road. When the creek was flowing or the stream bed was muddy, adjacent tracks were broken out. The Santa Fe Trail probably followed along this same path.

drifted sand of the drought years. In 1938 Edith married Harry Spencer and moved to a farm and ranch a few miles west of Bear Creek, the same year that a plan for a "modern" road through the sand hills was on the drawing board.²⁷

Today Highway K-25 glides east of old Bear Creek Pass, uses no part of its track through the dunes, and keeps the creek's bed in sight for only a half-mile above the southern terminus of the pass at Menno Road. Here prairie dogs have claimed the creek bed and, like urban sprawl anywhere, their town-building is altering the terrain.

Bud Jennings, local rancher and rodeo clown extraordinaire, has ridden horseback through the pass in recent years. Hired to check cattle in isolated dune pastures, Jennings searched out valley after valley of hummocky sand until, at some point, he let his horse pick its way out of the looser sand onto the firmer ground of Bear Creek Pass. He said, "you could definitely tell that something had been there. The sand was flattened, the hills a little lower."

In 1986 Jennings and other people in the area were startled by the sound and shake of a 3.5 Richter-scale earthquake. With its epicenter a few miles north of the location of old Hartland, the rare occurrence served as a reminder that aban-

doned Bear Creek Pass, once an important route of Santa Fe Trail traffic, just might still be tended by the ancient forces that created it.²⁸

NOTES

1. James McCauley, Kansas Geological Survey, Lawrence, KS, letter to author; Kearny County Historical Society, *History of Kearny County*, I, 152.
2. *Ibid.*, I, 323.
3. Rex C. Buchanan and James R. McCauley, *Roadside Geology of Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987), 20-22.
4. McCauley letter to author.
5. Verlin Hopkins, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Springfield, CO, letter to author.
6. McCauley letter to author; interview with Lyle Waechter, rural Kearny County.
7. Quoted in Walter P. Webb, *The Great Plains* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1931), 104.
8. Kate L. Gregg, *The Road to Santa Fe* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968), 5-7.
9. Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 118; Max Moorhead, *New Mexico's Royal Road* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 66.
10. Barry, *Beginning of the West*, 80, 118.
11. *Ibid.*, 123; Joseph Brown, "Field Notes United States Surveying Expedition, 1825-1827," *Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Historical Society* (1911-1912): 121.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*, 120.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Gregg, *Road to Santa Fe*, 88.
16. *Ibid.*, 42-44, 87.
17. Moorhead, *New Mexico's Royal Road*, 68; Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 30.
18. Gregg, *Road to Santa Fe*, 19.
19. Moorhead, *New Mexico's Royal Road*, 18-19; Sterling Evans, "Eastward Ho," *Kansas History, A Journal of the Central Plains* (Winter 1996-1997): 249.
20. Otis E. Young, *The First Military Escort on the Santa Fe Trail, 1829* (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1952), 34-39.
21. Fred S. Perrine, "Military Escorts on the Santa Fe Trail," *New Mexico Historical Review*, II (April 1927): 180.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Philip St. George Cooke, *Scenes and Adventures in the Army* (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1857), 47; Fred S. Perrine, "Military Escorts on the Santa Fe Trail," *New Mexico Historical Review*, III (July 1928): 281.
24. *Ibid.*, 293-294; Cooke, *Scenes and Adventures*, 86.
25. Leo E. Oliva, "The Aubry Route of the Santa Fe Trail," *Kansas Quarterly*, V (Spring 1973): 18-27.
26. *History of Kearny County*, I, 103, 147.
27. *Ibid.*, II, 152.
28. McCauley letter to author.

TRAIL TROUBADOUR

—TRAFFIC IN VERSE—

Sandra M. Doe, Editor

Remember, if you are attending the 1997 symposium, this editor is accepting "found poems" from Autograph and Signature rocks (see last issue of *WT* for an example). Please submit them at your earliest convenience to Sandra M. Doe, English Dept., Campus Box 32, Metropolitan State College of Denver, PO Box 173362, Denver CO 80217-3362. This editor seeks "found poems," and quality poetry which addresses the history, realism, romance, and diversity of the Trail, poetry that demonstrates authentic emotion, original images, and skill in craftsmanship.

Simpson's Rest:

Gateway to the Southwest

Travelers following the Mountain Route of the Santa Fe Trail will come to Fisher's Peak and Simpson's Peak, called by some the gateway to the Southwest, and they will see impressive sights from Trinidad, Colorado, before the climb up Raton Pass.

Ralph C. Taylor, writing in *Colorado: South of the Border* (Denver: Sage Books, 1963), 292, stated that Fisher's Peak was named after Captain Waldemar Fischer, a commanding officer during the Mexican War of 1846. The captain and his company camped nearby and Fischer explored the peak. His men named the peak after him when he returned to duty on August 6, 1846, leaving out the "c" in Fischer.

Simpson's Peak was originally called Simpson's Rest to honor George Simpson. Sister Blandina Segale told one version of the story of Simpson's Rest in her journal meant only for the eyes of her sister, also a Sister of Charity of Cincinnati, which has been published as *At the End of the Santa Fe Trail* (Columbus, Ohio: Columbian Press, 1932).

To read this book is to discover how life was in Trinidad in 1872 when Sister Blandina was sent there to teach in the convent school. Jack D. Rittenhouse, Trail bibliographer, said Sister Blandina presented "minor but colorful items about the Trail." She wrote of the area: "Here, if you have a largeness of vision, you find the opportunity to exercise it; if a cramped one, the immense ex-

panse of the plains, the solid Rockies, the purity of the atmosphere, the faultlessness of the canopy above will stretch the mind toward the Good" (29).

Sister Blandina escorted her school-girl charges to Simpson's Rest as an outing one day. This gave her the opportunity to retell Simpson's story as "Mr. Simpson himself had told me" (48), and she described him:

"George Simpson was a young man from the East. He came West as an adventurer, and became a pioneer hunter and trapper. He married a beautiful Mexican girl, Juanita, and made his home near Trinidad."

Sister Blandina told in Simpson's words how he drew off raiding Indians to protect the citizens of Trinidad and hid up in a "spur of the Rockies" (48). The citizens of Trinidad had enough food for a siege, but Simpson had little food and he grew thirsty "when suddenly I recalled a natural cut on the left of the spur where the snow never disappears" (48-49). Simpson was able to replenish himself with the snow water and believed he could "hold out indefinitely" (49). He stayed up there on the spur for a week, then two weeks. Finally, "The watchers in Trinidad saw them [Indians] depart and knew I was alive, because the Indians gave no war whoop, nor showed any scalp. So they dispatched three runners to bring me something to eat and some strong coffee" (49).

Sister Blandina explained, "The following poem written by himself some time after this adventure with the Indians, refers to her [his wife, Juanita] as 'one mourner'" (49):

Simpson's Rest

by George Simpson

Lay me to rest on yon towering height,
Where the silent cloud-shadows
glide,
Where solitude holds its slumberous
reign,
Far away from the human tide.
I fain would sleep near the old pine
tree,
That looks down on the valley be-
low,
Like a soldier guarding a comrade's
grave,
Or a sentinel watching a foe.
'Twas a refuge once in the bygone
time,
When a pitiful fate was near,

When my days were young and full of
love
For a life I held too dear.

Thro' all the long years that have
passed away
Since those night of storm and
dread,
I've prayed that the boughs that shel-
tered me then
Might wave o'er my breast when
dead.

Delve deep my grave in the stern gray
rock
In its rigid embrace let me rest,
With naught but my name on the
stone
And the symbol of Faith on my
breast.

One mourner perhaps may remember
where sleeps
In the rock-ribbed tomb, the lone
dead,
May breathe for the loved one to
Heaven, a prayer,
A tear in his memory shed.

While modern readers would consider some of the diction of "Simpson's Rest" archaic, such as "fain" and "breast," the poem is interesting because of its fresh use of words, such as "cloud-shadow" and "rock-ribbed." It uses alliteration well, and the "s" repetition contributes a sort of sighing to the sound, or perhaps like the wind in a pine tree.

The form of the poem is Common Measure or Hymnal Stanza: it is a four-line stanza rhyming abcb. The first and third lines are iambic tetrameter (four units of iambs), and the second and fourth iambic trimeter (three units of iambs); to test for Hymnal Stanza, try humming the tune of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" over the text of the poem under consideration. You'll hear where the poet made variations.

The poem expresses the general and usually universal hope that someone will shed a tear and remember the speaker when he is gone. However the rhyme drives the poet to say some silly things: in stanza three, the poet rhymes "near" and "dear," and in order to get the meter to come out right he has to say he held his life "too dear." Who doesn't hold life dear? Or perhaps the poet is being humble.

Ralph Taylor provided more information on Simpson. He was the son of a physician born in St. Louis on May 7, 1818. He was formally edu-

cated and "attained some prominence as a writer and poet. Generally he was regarded as the most scholarly gentleman on the frontier" (293). Rather than become a doctor, as his father wished, Simpson went westward to accommodate his "wild and adventurous spirit" (294).

He intended to settle Oregon in 1840, but he met Kit Carson and Rochelle Pierre in Wyoming. "He already knew these men as noted hunters and trappers and when they accepted him as a companion he readily abandoned plans for the Northwest and accompanied them south" (294).

In 1842 Simpson married Miss Juana M. Suazo in Taos. As a trader and one of the founders of Fort Pueblo, he influenced many events on the frontier, including the Gold Rush of 1858-1859 in Colorado.

Taylor's version of what happened at Simpson's Rest, however, differs a bit from Sister Blandina's account:

"In 1866 the residents of Trinidad and Las Animas County were harassed continually by the marauding Utes under the leadership of Kane-ha-che. He was the one chief who could not be controlled by peace-loving Ouray. The Trinidad settlers were preparing to abandon their homes when Captain [Andrew Jonathan] Alexander and a military force from Cantonment Stevens on the Santa Clara started after Kane-ha-che and his warriors.

"The troops inflicted heavy losses on the Utes and drove them back into the mountains. It was during this campaign that Simpson and others fled to the peak that now bears his name. Simpson secreted himself and little Isabel [his daughter] behind an old pine tree. In the darkness they escaped the wrath of the Indians" (290).

When the soldiers were able to rescue Simpson and his party, he expressed a desire to be buried on the peak where he and his daughter had been saved. "One of the best-loved and respected of Colorado's pioneers," Simpson died on September 7, 1885 (297). When his executors read his will, they found this poem which he dedicated to them, and he reminded them of his wish to be buried where he "escaped" the Utes. As Taylor put it:

"The old pine tree was rotted, but in its place Simpson's friends and family erected a stone monument and on the north side of it—looking toward the gateway to the Southwest, was carved Simpson's poem" (297).

As for the "silly" rhyme of "near" and "dear," perhaps this editor came to judgment too quickly. During his life, Simpson once returned home to St. Louis, "homesick," and during his journey on the upper Mississippi, he was caught on a river boat where there was an outbreak of cholera. According to Taylor, the captain of the boat said to Simpson, "Look out Stranger, you may be next," and, indeed, Simpson was taken ill. He did not want to be buried on a sandbar, so he gave the captain a bag of gold to pack him in ice until he could reach St. Louis, where his father would pay any remaining costs. Because Simpson's father was Dr. Robert Simpson, also the physician of the captain, his arrival in St. Louis, albeit as a corpse, was assured (296). Taylor told the end of the story well:

"The frontiersman was given excellent care, but finally was declared dead. His body was placed in a box and packed with ice for the rest of the journey down the river.

"After a time a member of the crew noticed pieces of ice falling over the side of the box at intervals. He investigated and found Simpson was stirring.

"The captain had the corpse placed in bed. The ice pack had been beneficial and by the time the ship docked at St. Louis Simpson was able to walk ashore. He had a reunion with his family and friends and hastened back to Colorado" (296).

Perhaps the word "dear" is being used ironically here, as in the sense of "casual," a reversal of the idea of valued or highly esteemed. "A life I valued too little."



HOOF PRINTS

—TRAIL TIDBITS—

In June a Wichita TV station featured three wagons from the Kearny

County Historical Museum at Lakin: the 1831 Conestoga wagon, the survey wagon, and the hunting carriage. These wagons are from the collection of George Pappas.

The Boggsville Historic Site was the scene for a historical archaeology field school in June. A later project will be the search for the remains of Kit Carson's house along the west bank of the Purgatoire River.

SFTA Vice-President-elect Sam Arnold recently hosted some distinguished guests at his famous Colorado restaurant, The Fort (patterned after Bent's Fort). President Bill Clinton and the heads of seven other industrialized nations dined there during the Denver Summit in June. Such delicacies as buffalo tongue and rattlesnake cakes were on the menu.

SFTA member Alice A. Thompson, relative of Sister Mary Alphonsa Thompson who died on the Trail in 1867 while traveling to New Mexico and was buried near the road in present Finney County, KS, has begun a renewed search for the grave and remains. For more information or to help, contact her at 12836 Portulaca Apt J, St Louis MO 63146.

On May 24 the new interpretive marker at Sibley's Camp in Larned was unveiled. A glass-fronted display constructed by Mildon Yeager, it contains commentary, historic photographs, and artifacts related to the site. Visitors may view it anytime at 502 W 2nd, Larned, KS.

The Historical Society of New Mexico has issued a call for papers for its annual conference in Santa Fe, April 1-4, 1998. Deadline for proposals is Dec. 31, 1997. Send to John O. Baxter, Historical Society of New Mexico, PO Box 1912, Santa Fe NM 87504 (505) 983-5836.

The Trail is on the Internet. The Interactive Santa Fe Trail is located at <raven.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/research/sft/> and the Santa Fe Trail Net is at <www.nmhu.edu/research/sftail/>. Arrow Rock, MO, has a web page at <www.arrowrock.org>.

SFTA Ambassador Paul Bentrup reports a busy tourist season at

Charlie's Ruts west of Deerfield, KS. He keeps the place clean and well-stocked with Trail brochures. The register book shows visitors from all over.

About 80 riders from Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico participated in the 175th anniversary Santa Fe Trail Ride held at Point of Rocks, NM, June 7. About 160 attended the chuck wagon dinner the night before.

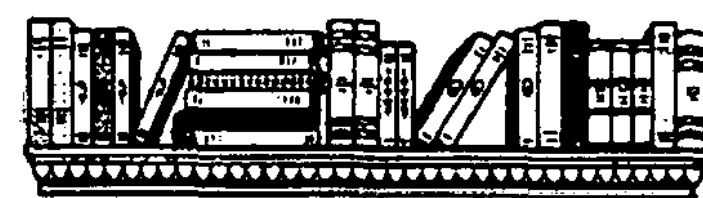
The Las Vegas, NM, Museum and Rough Rider Memorial has a Santa Fe Trail exhibit on display for the summer. Melanie LeBorwit is the new director at the museum.

Lloyd Rivera, director of bilingual education program for the Mora, NM, schools has received a grant to study the cultural heritage of Mora and adjacent counties. Students will research trade relations between culturally diverse peoples on the Camino Real (starting in 1598) and the Santa Fe Trail (beginning 1821).

Jack Urban has published the second edition of the *Santa Fe Trail Wagon Master*. It is a treasury of Trail information, 48 pages of Trail materials.

Nancy Robertson, Raton, NM, will talk about the Trail at 8:00 p.m., August 16, at Sugarite Canyon State Park near Raton. This is a beautiful site and great place to camp.

The 51st National Preservation Conference, sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, will be held in Santa Fe, Oct. 14-19. About 2000 people are expected. There will be many field trips, including a day on the Santa Fe Trail.



CONVERSE OF THE PRAIRIES

—BOOK NOTICES—

Curtiss Frank, *Re-Riding History, Horseback Over the Santa Fe Trail*. Sunstone Press, 239 Johnson Street, Santa Fe NM 87504-2321, 1997. Pp. 253. Photos, including 50 in color

plus historical images, maps, notes. Pictorial boards, \$30.

In 1978 I met Jack Underhill on the Santa Fe plaza and he related to me the details of a horseback trip over the Cimarron Route, starting at Ulysses, KS, made six years earlier with his friend Curtiss Frank. He mentioned that Frank hoped someday to publish a book on their adventures. At long last the volume has appeared, an intensely personal memoir threaded throughout with extensive quotations from early-day Trail accounts to give the reader a sense of what the authentic experience is all about.

The chapter headings give some idea of the structure of the work and also convey a notion of what the latter-day trail-trekkers encountered: Outfitting, Kansas, A Never-Ending Thirst, The High Lonesome, Living in Two Worlds, The Path to the Present, and Rio Pecos. Danger (including a terrible lightning storm on the open plains), hardship, and self-discovery figure in the telling. This is a different sort of Trail book, with a few rough edges, but serious collectors and historians ought not to overlook it. It's probably no longer possible to make this kind of ride. Note especially two color plates showing SFTA member Pete Gaines at New Mexico's Point of Rocks.

—Marc Simmons

William Y. Chalfant, *Cheyennes at Dark Water Creek: The Last Fight of the Red River War*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), Pp. xix + 232. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, appendices, index. Cloth, \$27.95.

SFTA board member Bill Chalfant has done it again, produced an outstanding history of a battle between soldiers and Indians. His first book was about the 1857 Battle of Solomon Fork, *Cheyennes and Horse Soldiers* (1989). Between that and the present volume he produced *Without Quarter: The Wichita Expedition and the Fight on Crooked Creek* (1991) and *Dangerous Passage: The Santa Fe Trail and the Mexican War* (1994). Each volume has filled a gap in frontier military history.

One of the most tragic battles of the Indian wars in Kansas occurred on the Middle Fork of Sappa Creek

(known by the Indians as Dark Water Creek) in present Rawlins County, April 23, 1875. There a small band of Southern Cheyennes was surprised by troops operating out of Fort Wallace, and in the ensuing fight twenty-seven Cheyennes and two soldiers were killed. It was the last important battle between U.S. troops and the Southern Cheyennes.

Chalfant has done his usual job of thorough research and objective writing, showing uncommon understanding of the Indian side of the story. After summarizing the background for the episode at Sappa Creek, Chalfant traces in detail the escape of several small bands of Southern Cheyennes from their reservation in present Oklahoma in the spring of 1875, all hoping to reach the Northern Cheyennes and continue the old ways. The efforts of several military units to overtake the Cheyennes are chronicled.

One group of Cheyennes led by Little Bull was later caught by 40 troopers under command of Second Lieutenant Austin Henely, Sixth Cavalry, at Sappa Creek. The Indians were virtually ensnared in their camp in a horseshoe bend of the creek overlooked by bluffs. The disastrous destruction of Cheyennes is attributed to a combination of elements in favor of the soldiers, including surprise, position, and firepower. It was almost like shooting fish in a barrel.

After the battle the Indian camp was looted and burned by the victors. Chalfant explains what followed for the survivors and addresses the issue of whether or not the fight at Sappa Creek was a massacre. He assesses this battle in the overall devastation of Cheyenne culture.

Carla Waal and Barbara Oliver Korner, eds., *Hardship and Hope: Missouri Women Writing about Their Lives, 1820-1920*. University of Missouri Press, 2910 LeMone Blvd, Columbia MO 65201, 1997. Paper, \$19.95 plus \$4.00 shipping.

Notice of this publication by SFTA member Carla Waal was just received, and the announcement sounds good. The anthology includes journals, letters, diaries, and memoirs of myriad Missouri women, some of whom were of families en-

gaged in the Santa Fe trade. There are also famous women, such as Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carry Nation.

Douglas C. Comer, *Ritual Ground: Bent's Old Fort, World Formation, and the Annexation of the Southwest*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996. Pp. xiii + 321. Maps, photographs, notes, index.

Comer, archaeologist with the National Park Service, offers unique interpretations about the relationships of Anglo, Hispanic, and Indian Americans at Bent's Fort on the north bank of the Arkansas River in southeastern Colorado (1830s and 1840s). Long on theory and short on fact, much of this volume is developed from speculation rather than solid evidence. It is more about the importance of ritual than the history of Bent's Fort.

Comer argues that various rituals, including those traditional to the cultures involved and those developed to enhance their trade relations, help explain the economic success of Bent & St. Vrain Co. This seems plausible even though evidence offered is meager. Rituals develop to govern most human relationships, but examples presented to support this claim are drawn from other cultures and eras with little or no relevance to Bent's Fort.

Comer concludes that Bent's Fort introduced capitalism and inspired other changes that made Anglo conquest of the Indians and the Hispanic Southwest easier than it otherwise would have been. A stronger case could be made that the commerce that passed over the Santa Fe Trail played a more significant part in that transformation.

Some theories and speculations stretch the credulity of serious scholars. It requires an enormous stretch to see ceremonial similarities between the rituals at Bent's Fort and the symbolism of English gardens in 18th-century Annapolis, Maryland (pp. 186-189). The history presented of Bent's Fort and environs, based largely on secondary sources, contains errors of fact and interpretation. Some of the premises are false.

No evidence is cited to support the conjecture that Bent's Fort "encouraged raids" by Indians on New Mexi-

can settlements, resulting in "destabilization" of that province which "helped pave the way" for U.S. conquest in 1846 (p. 11). The same is true of the contention that Indian resistance to Anglo traders "peaked in the 1820s" and "diminished" in the 1830s because of Bent's Fort (p. 13).

The Sand Creek Massacre was in 1864, not 1869 (p. 8). The Santa Fe trade was not "almost entirely connected with Bent's Old Fort" (p. 18), nor was the fort the "agency by which all this [trade and conquest] was accomplished" (p. 128). It is doubtful that William Bent had a trading stockade on the Arkansas River as early as 1829 (p. 206). John James Audubon is identified as Charles Audubon (p. 47). The Santa Fe Trail is confused with the Oregon Trail in Wyoming (p. 228).

Anyone who has visited Bent's Old Fort NHS will question how Comer could conclude that "the layout of the fort resembled in some ways the medicine lodge or tepee with sacred associations to the Plains Indians" (p. 207). The final chapter looks at rituals at the reconstructed fort. This volume contains some intriguing theories, but the proof is mostly inadequate or inaccurate. Not recommended.

Jill Mocho, *Murder and Justice in Frontier New Mexico, 1821-1846*. University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd NE, Albuquerque NM 87131, 1997. Pp. xiv + 245. Map, illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$50; paper, \$19.95, plus \$3.00 shipping.

This fascinating volume, which recounts details of 11 homicides in New Mexico during the Mexican period, sheds much light on society and culture at the western end of the Santa Fe Trail during its first 25 years as a commercial route. It is curious why New Mexico was much less violent during this era than the western United States.

Mocho provides a case summary at the beginning of each chapter, and examines motives, trials, and results of each case. The testimony of ordinary people provides insight into life in New Mexico. Santa Fe traders and the Trail are mentioned many times. Recommended to anyone interested in a better understanding of New Mexico's intriguing culture.

CAMP TALES

—CHAPTER REPORTS—

Cimarron Cutoff

President Helen C. Brown
PO Box 1400
Elkhart KS 67950
(316) 697-4597

The chapter continues with preparations for the September symposium. We hope everyone is planning to attend.

Texas Panhandle

President Kathy Revett
3505 Cinderella
Amarillo TX 79121-1607
(806) 358-7320

No report.

Wagonbed Springs

President Jeff Trotman
727 N Cheyenne
Ulysses KS 67880
(316) 356-1854

During the quarterly meeting held July 10 discussion of a workday at the Spring, Trail crossing signs, and the symposium program and committees made up the agenda.

Heart of the Flint Hills

President Donald B. Cress
RR 1 Box 66
Council Grove KS 66846
(316) 767-5826

No report.

End of the Trail

President John Barnes
2213 Calle Cacique
Santa Fe NM 87505
(505) 983-5553

Our late spring and summer meetings customarily consist of field trips to nearby Trail sites, preceded by very short business sessions. So far this season we have had two such outings.

On May 17 we met at Fort Union National Monument and were treated to a tour of the monument grounds by Supt. Harry Myers, an EoT member and one of our most entertaining and learned Trail historians. After the tour we had a picnic and our business session, then took off for Ocate Crossing, northwest of Wagon Mound. We stopped at several spots along the road for Harry to point out Trail ruts on the route from the crossing to Fort Union.

At Ocate Crossing, once the site of a large stage station, hotel and trading post, we spent an enjoyable time

looking for and then poking around building foundations and reading the headstones in the old cemetery. All of this is now on private land, and we are grateful to our Alcaldesa Segunda Marilyn Earp for arranging for us to visit and for a very informative talk on members of the Calhoun family, who in 1876 settled the area and operated the station, and who are buried in the small cemetery.

On July 19 our meeting convened high atop Rowe Mesa, about thirty miles southeast of Santa Fe. The view from that vantage point is truly wondrous to behold. We then proceeded toward Las Vegas approximately 10 miles to a RV campground, the Pecos River Camp/Store, now owned by Chicago transplant and prospective EoT member Glenn Post. He has on the grounds some very nice ruts of the Trail, and has become quite interested in Trail lore. The ruts extend into the property of his neighbor, Ann McGrath, who also was most gracious in showing us around. An interesting feature here is the very steep cliff where the Trail apparently descended into the valley of the Pecos. There are scratches on the rock that could well have been produced by a wagon axle.

We concluded our outing with a conducted tour of the Forked Lightning Ranch, starting from the Pecos National Monument headquarters. The National Park Service now owns the large residence that was until a few years before her death the part-time home of actress Greer Garson.

Between these two meetings several of our members attended the June 14 seminar on "Murder on the Santa Fe Trail" presented by the Wet/Dry Routes Chapter in Larned. They are to be congratulated for a very interesting day.

The chapter winds up its 175th Anniversary Celebration at the Palace of the Governors' Mountain Man Rendezvous August 14-15. Marc Simmons, the featured speaker, will speak about "Heroes and Villains on the Santa Fe Trail." At this event a new book, *The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliott*, edited by Simmons and Mark Gardner, will be unveiled. A book signing of this and other Simmons's works will follow the lecture.

A film festival is also scheduled during the Rendezvous. The tenta-

tive list of films includes Warner Brothers' *Santa Fe Trail, With Each Turn of the Wheel* (DNME-TV5), *Destiny Road: The Santa Fe Trail* (KOB-TV4), EoT's *175th Anniversary Entrada*, and *Adventure on the Santa Fe Trail* (the late John Candelario, photographer).

Corazon de los Caminos

President LeRoy LeDoux
PO Box 94
Wagon Mound NM 87752
(505) 666-2262

About 40 members and guests gathered in Springer on May 18 to hear Mike Olsen and Harry Myers speak on the history and route of the Taos Trail, a pack trail over the Sangre de Cristos joining Taos with the great plains. It was an important route for travel and trade from pre-historic times until the middle of the nineteenth century. (Their excellent article on the Taos Trail published in *The Prairie Scout* will be deposited in our archives in the Las Vegas Carnegie Library.) After the presentations we drove north and east from Springer to see narrow remnants of the Trail at two locations on the plains, one on the Circle Dot Ranch of Corazon member Becky Sauble. The vivid history, the Trail, its clear views from the mountains to Point of Rocks, the abundant spring wildflowers, the sky and wonderful clouds—all contributed to a fine afternoon.

The work day at Fort Union, held June 15, was attended by a small but enthusiastic corps. Those present were Tami, Gary, Faye, and Pete Gaines, Mary and Stephen Whitmore, Sally Ludi, and Richard Greene. Under the direction of Supt. Harry Myers and Chief Foreman of Maintenance Albert Dominguez, the crew measured foundations of the four large warehouses, the Mechanics' Corral, the four Enlisted Men's Barracks, and the Hospital. Myer's explained "These measurements provide a better accounting of the resources that need to be cared for at the Fort, and better documentation when requesting funds for preservation work. I thank the Chapter, and in particular those who did the measuring, for their assistance. It would have taken away from the regular preservation work if the Monument staff were to make these measurements." It was a beautiful

day, with useful work, intimate views of the Fort, and good company. Lunch was provided by Harry.

Mike Olsen has accepted the position of Corazon Archivist and Librarian, replacing Diana Stein who resigned to care for her ailing husband Joe.

The Trail Mapping Project in our region using GPS technology has new Trail bosses, Pat and Michael Macklin, chapter members from Las Vegas. To help, call them at 505-454-6758.

The July 19 meeting was held jointly with the Bent's Fort Chapter along the Mountain Route from Raton to Rayado. About 90 people from three states and four SFTA chapters attended the meeting organized by the Bent's Fort Chapter, principally Theresa and Dale Kesterson and Nancy Robertson who are also members of the Corazon Chapter. Nancy led a splendid tour of Raton, Cimarron, and Rayado. A highlight was the tour of Villa Philmonte, Waite Philip's summer home of grand style. Les Davis of CS Ranch hosted a ranch barbecue and tour of the Aztec Mill Museum. During a special festivity sponsored by the CS Ranch, descendants of Santa Fe Trail travelers were recognized.

The board of directors met July 29. Highlights of business transacted are as follows:

Treasurer reported that the chapter had \$600 committed for Trail markers. The board approved expenditures for new membership brochures and for costs to frame our Paul Logsdon color photographs of the Trail with protective glass. The photographs are now on display at the Las Vegas City Museum and will be available for other sites.

Nancy Robertson reported that the Marker Committee has identified about sixty potential sites for Trail markers, and is seeking funding for them from the Santa Fe Trail Scenic Byway Project. She also reported results from the Santa Fe Trail Family History Project, sponsored by the Corazon for the 175th Anniversary Celebration. New materials were collected from twenty contributors from nine different States. Copies of these materials, together with some previously published references and information already collected locally, have been deposited in

the Santa Fe Trail Archives at the Carnegie Public Library in Las Vegas and in the Special Collections Branch of the Albuquerque Public Library.

The chapter will sponsor a Santa Fe Trail Exhibit and store for Bean Day at Wagon Mound on Labor Day, September 1. LeRoy and Elsie LeDoux and Dorothy Valdez will make the arrangements.

The board was informed of the death earlier this year of Audrey Alpers, a charter member and authority on the history of her beloved town of Cimarron. She will be missed.

Chapter members also extend their sympathy to Sally Ludi on the loss of her father, Dr. G. E. Wickham, a resident of Montezuma, who died unexpectedly in June.

The next meeting is August 17 at the Ojo Feliz Ranch located west of Santa Clara (Wagon Mound). This ranch, known for many years as the Diamond A, has a fascinating history. In its early years Captain Burton Mossman of the Arizona Rangers operated the Diamond A and Turkey Track ranches. Later the brothers Thatcher, and Frank Bloom, owned the Diamond A, which was then acquired in turn by Leon Williams, Dartmouth College, and Robert Anderson. Since 1983 it has been the property of Yates Petroleum Co. and known as the Ojo Feliz Ranch.

The Mountain Route of the Trail and the Military Road from Granada both wind through the property close to the Turkey Mountains and head toward Fort Union. There is a deserted settlement near the mountains, five miles west of Santa Clara, that prospered in the 1870s with workers cutting ties for the railroad, and there were former camps, now homesites, at Gallinas and Jarosa.

Because of the symposium there will be no chapter meeting nor a newsletter in September. Watch for a newsletter in early October and a meeting on October 19.

Wet/Dry Routes

President Janice Klein
3008 Anna Ave
Dodge City KS 67801

The spring meeting was at St. Joseph's Hall in Offerle on April 13. Included in the reports were an update on the marking project; the dedica-

tion of Henry Booth Boulevard historic street in Larned on May 24; the Talking Tombstone program at the Larned Cemetery on May 26; the May 3-4 traveling seminar of the Santa Fe Trail in Pawnee, Edwards, and Ford counties, Kansas; the Murder on the Santa Fe Trail Seminar, June 14; the introduction of literature to be presented to new members; and the symposium. Richard Ford presented a report of the mapping project being undertaken by SFTA. The chapter voted to purchase two additional plaques for the markers in Pawnee and Ford counties, also four plaques for the Fort Hays-Fort Dodge Road. A work day was scheduled for May 10, 1997.

The summer meeting was scheduled for August 3 at the Clapsaddle Rancho for a picnic dinner. The program was the viewing of the recently completed video of Larned and the surrounding area by the Larned Chamber of Commerce. Sibley's Camp and the chapter's SFT markers were featured in the video.

Chapter officers wish to thank all who made the Murder on the Santa Fe Trail Seminar a success. A special thank you goes to Rusti Gardner and her crew for the delicious meal. Among those helping Rusti were: Clara Goodrich, Thelmarie Wilhite, Clara Lowrey, Barbara German, Lon Palmer, Lee and Dorothy Kroh, Kathy Jadwin, Janice Klein, Shirley Stein, Carolyn Rein, and Galen and Rosetta Graff, and numerous others who donated bread, desserts, and condiments. Bob Rein and Mildon Yeager are recognized for their logistical support. And, last but not least, a big hand of applause for Ida Yeager's invaluable secretarial work.

The second edition of the *Self-Guided Auto Tour* is hot off the press. It includes 15 new locations featuring campsites used by the 1825-1827 Survey Team and other locations west of Fort Dodge, four of which were placed in cooperation with the Dodge City/Fort Dodge Chapter. A special thanks goes to Joanne Van Coevern who prepared the copy for print. A copy may be received by sending two 32 cent stamps to Ida Yeager, 416 Wichita, Larned KS 67550.

Five more markers were placed on the Fort Hays-Fort Dodge Road on May 10. All five were set in rut loca-

tions recently discovered in Hodge-man County by Richard Ford, one of the chapter's most enthusiastic members. Included in the work crew were Richard and Mary Ford, Chester Smith, and David Clapsaddle. To date, 26 markers have been placed on the Fort Hays-Fort Dodge Road.

Another marker has been placed on the Dry Route at a set of ruts on the Carlson property adjacent to the Zedren ruts as described in the self-guided auto tour. Gary Carlson and Clapsaddle installed the marker.

Dodge City/Fort Dodge

President A. Ted Mueller
508 Annette
Dodge City KS 67801
(316) 225-2371

July 5, 1997, was a full day celebration at the Fort Dodge Kansas Soldiers Home, featuring crafts, games, demonstrations, horse and buggy rides, and music. The chapter was pleased to sponsor the highlight event, a living-history presentation from last year's 175th program: "Westward Expansion - The School Teacher and the Scout." Mike and Belinda Adams again utilized first-person interpretation to reenact the life and experiences of Victoria Westman and Charles Taggart during the 1840s and 1850s Trail life.

Chapter members are looking forward to our August 22 noon luncheon meeting at the Dodge House Restaurant. Helen C. Brown, president of the Cimarron Cutoff Chapter, Elkhart, KS, will bring us up to date on the 1997 symposium.

Improvements at the Trail ruts west of Dodge City are progressing. Paved walk ways and well-constructed bridges over the ruts are completed. (*Editor's note:* During warm weather rattlesnakes seek out the shade provided by the bridges. This should discourage people from walking in the ruts.) Signs remain to be installed. If you travel US Highway 50 to the 1997 symposium, stop at the site eight miles west of Dodge City.

Missouri River Outfitters

President Anne Mallinson
964 NW 600
Centerview MO 64019
(816) 230-7228

The chapter will meet August 17 for a tour of Fort Leavenworth. New members Barbara and John Atkin-

son have volunteered to act as tour guides, so this should be a great opportunity to learn about another aspect of the Santa Fe Trail. The tour is open to all interested parties. Call 816-230-7228 for more information.

Roger Slusher has been appointed chairman of the Marking Committee and is working closely with both the Mapping and the Site Certification committees.

The brochure "Frontier Trail Sites of Independence, Missouri" is now available. As part of the 175th anniversary celebration, the pamphlet, was prepared by a committee consisting of John Mark Lambertson from the National Frontier Trail Center and Missouri River Outfitters members Riva Jacobs, Jane Mallinson, and Pauline Fowler. Congratulations on the completion of this important project. It describes 17 historic sites, many connected with the history of the Santa Fe Trail, and includes a map with locations. To obtain a copy, contact the National Frontier Trails Center, 318 W Pacific, Independence MO 64050 (816) 325-7575.

Quivira

President Wayne Smith
1635 2nd Rd
Raymond KS 67573-9624
(316) 534-2821

The next meeting will be August 17 at the Coronado Quivira Museum in Lyons, KS. The main topic of discussion will be marking the Trail and the available types of signs. We want to locate and mark Sibley's campsites in our chapter area.

Several members of our chapter attended the seminar "Murder on the Santa Fe Trail" which was held June 14.

Cottonwood Crossing

President Vernon Lohrentz
205 Beverly
Newton KS 67114
(316) 284-2095

No report.

Bent's Fort Chapter

President Lolly Ming
1841 County Rd DD
Pritchett CO 81064
(719) 523-6968

Bent's Fort and Corazon de los Caminos chapters held a joint meeting in July. See Corazon report for details.

HELP WANTED

I am looking for information about Christiana Polk McCoy (1787-1851). She came to the Westport area with her missionary husband, Isaac McCoy, in December 1831. He was a government Indian agent as well as missionary.

They led a large group of Indians from the East for resettlement. She helped build one of the first Indian missions in the area. Her son, John Calvin McCoy, was a surveyor and platted Westport. He later was one of the founders of Kansas City. His store in Westport supplied many Santa Fe travelers.

Christiana was the daughter of Rev. Soldier Charles Polk and Patriot Lady Delilah Tyler Polk and related to both Presidents Tyler and Polk.

I can find but little about the personal life of this missionary wife who had a positive influence on many others. She devoted her life to her own family and to the education and care of Indian children. Does anyone have papers that mention her work or a suggestion to help me in my research about her? Thank you.

Jane Short Mallinson

PO Box 8604

Sugar Creek MO 64054

George L. Brown, my great-grandfather, was paroled from the 77th Regiment, enrolled Missouri Militia in March 1863. In the spring of that year he traveled to Santa Fe, driving an ox team and serving as a carpenter repairing wagons with a freighting firm reported to be Russell, Majors & Waddell. That firm went bust in 1862, however, so it may have been a successor. He stayed in New Mexico until the spring of 1866 when he returned to Kansas City.

It is possible Brown worked for the quartermaster department in New Mexico, and he may have helped construct or worked at the quartermaster depot at Fort Union.

I am seeking sources regarding George L. Brown in the 77th Regiment enrolled Missouri Militia, contract freight wagon trains carrying army supplies from Kansas City to Fort Union in the spring of 1863 (size, cargo, route, employees, and notable occurrences), and Fort Union employment records, spring of 1863 to spring of 1866. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Donald D. Munro

235 Hartland Hollow Rd

Granville MA 01034

I am a new member of SFTA. I am raising my own oxen (Dave and Buck). They are one year old and weigh over 1,000 pounds each. I am looking for a good oxen trainer who can teach them to drive and pull a covered wagon. If you know of anyone, please contact me. Thank you.

Ron Greenbaum

7745 Westview Dr

Lakewood CO 80215

(303) 237-1726

COUNCIL TROVE

—DOCUMENTS—

A BRIDGE ACROSS THE ARKANSAS RIVER AT DODGE CITY

River crossings were almost always an impediment to wagon travel. Bridges, even toll bridges, were welcome additions. On July 22, 1872, Major Richard I. Dodge, Third Infantry, commanding Fort Dodge, Kansas, reported on the need for a bridge across the Arkansas River at or near that post. He explained the difficulties in crossing that river and attempts to utilize a ferry..

At that time, the railroad was building to the area, and Dodge City would soon be organized. The army shipped supplies south of the river in large quantities, to Camp Supply and other points. A bridge would benefit all freighters and travelers. Dodge's letter to Asst Adjutant General, Department of the Missouri, at Fort Leavenworth, is in the Letters Sent files of Fort Dodge at the National Archives (available on microfilm). It is printed below as written.

Dave Webb at the Kansas Heritage Center in Dodge City kindly checked the newspapers for information about the first bridge across the river. His report follows Dodge's letter, which read:

I have the honor to make the following report in reference to the best mode of crossing the Arkansas River at this post:

I am informed that the river is practically impassible for loaded teams for near five months of every year—three in summer from high water, two in winter

from ice.

A great deal of money has been spent in trying to establish a ferry. Lying in the Qr. Mr. Store-house is a wire cable, which must have cost to get here at least two thousand dollars (\$2000).

Huge frames of timber have been put up at great expense to support the cable. One large flat boat was completed, and has been for a year past, Stuck where it was launched. Another is on the bank near by partially completed. I am informed that about three years ago at least ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) was expended in efforts to establish a ferry, all of which failed utterly.

No ferry can be made to work here.

The river is impassible during high water, not so much from the depth of the water itself, as from the quick sands. It is about a half mile wide, has been since I have been at this post (Six weeks) very high, and yet at no time has it been swimming for a horse except in two or three narrow channels of from twenty (20) to fifty (50) feet in width. The remainder of the wide expanse varying from one inch to two feet in depth of water, and an unknown depth of quicksand. These channels vary daily, even hourly and the sands shift in the most unaccountable way. Except in the narrow channels spoken of the depth of water is not sufficient to float a flat boat. A loaded flat boat would have to be forcibly dragged over sand bars for at least four-fifths of the whole distance across the river. Even could a way be discovered to-day by which a boat might be floated, by to-morrow the same way might have but an inch or two of water for two-thirds the whole distance.

In winter a flat boat cannot be used at all. The river freezes but not strong enough to bear teams, and every passage has to be made by cutting through the ice. No ferry can be established here which can possible be of any practicable benefit to the Government. I recommend that a bridge be built.

The water never rises over four or five feet above its bed.

No drift wood comes down the river and the ice breaks up gradually.

An ordinary pile bridge can easily be constructed, and at a cost (as roughly estimated by Mr. Robinson, Engineer A.T. and S.F.R.R.) of less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

The railroad has established its depot for Fort Dodge just off the reservation, westward of this post. The river is there much narrower, and there are also numerous islands to lessen the work of bridge building. I believe a good substantial bridge can be put up here for ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

and I also believe that in diminished freights, in gain of time, in absolute less loss and damage to mules and other property, the Government will save the cost of the bridge yearly.

Dave Webb gleaned the following from Dodge City newspapers: "According to newspaper accounts in the 1920s and 1930s, the first bridge over the Arkansas at Dodge City was built in 1873. Robert Wright, G. M. Hoover, A. G. Anthony, Charles Rath, F. C. Zimmerman, R. W. Evans, and others organized a company and built a wooden toll bridge near the location of today's 2nd Ave bridge. John Riney was tollkeeper and charged a dollar for two-horse team, \$2.50 for six- or eight-horse and mule teams, a quarter for a saddle horse, and a dime for pedestrians.

"George Reighard was said to have been the first freighter to cross the bridge. In 1873 he was headed from Camp Supply to Fort Dodge with a 36-mule outfit when Bob Rath met him along Bluff Creek. Rath persuaded him to head northwest and use the new bridge instead of using what the *Dodge City Globe*, February 8, 1935, called 'the old Indian ford below Fort Dodge, the Coronado crossing.' The same article continued."

That first bridge would be an oddity today. Barely wide enough for one large freight wagon to cross, its side railings were of four-by-four uprights, connected with two-by-six timbers. The railings were to make it a safe crossing for those whose eyesight was impeded or who were otherwise afflicted. There was a wide approach to it from the south, but from the north the approach was narrow and at an angle that made it difficult at times for those leaving Dodge City for the cow camps to get between the railings. The railings too were the bane of the existence of the half wild mules on merchandise trains, also the stoic oxen did not pay a great deal of attention. A mule team finally persuaded to get on the bridge would crowd both ways from the railings, and frequently those on the stronger side crowded the whole team and freight wagon over the side and into the river. There were many accidents, some of them fatal, to both man and beast, on the old bridge.

Webb concluded: "In the fall of 1886 Ford County purchased the bridge, widened it, and dropped the tolls. It survived until a steel bridge was put up in 1907."

LIST OF TRADERS, 1827

Harry Myers located the following document in the records of the Office of Indian Affairs, dated at St. Louis, Missouri, and signed by William Clark, July 23, 1827:

William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, To all whom it may Concern: Under Authority vested in me by the President of the United States to grant permission to citizens or other persons to pass into and through the Indian country, &c., permission is hereby granted to Michael S. Cerre, Paul Baillis, Thomas H. Boggs, Louis Robidoux, Vincent Guian, Francois Guervis, Manuel Alvares, Gervais Nolin, John Tharp, Lewis Howard, Manuel Leale, Juan Parras, Juan Mestas, José Garcia, Phillippe Nerio, José Nerio, Blass Griego, Juan Belarde, Miguelle Sena, Theodore Guerrero, Juan Fresquet, Manuel Estevan, Francisco, Becente Baca, Mattes Garcia, Antonio Frésquet, Antonio Lucéro, José Reyes, Victor Sanches, Juan Sanches, Mattéo Paséna, Juan Romero y Pedro Romero to pass through the Indian country to the Province of Mexico.

NEW SFTA MEMBERS

This list includes new memberships received since the last issue. Those received after this printing will appear in the next issue. If there is an error in this information, please send corrections to the editor. We thank you for your support.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc., PO Box 1600, Lamar CO 81052

FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS

Art & Arlette Briggs, 9979 Radcliffe NW, Albuquerque NM 87114
Will & Janet Butler, 16504 E 29th Terr, Independence MO 64055
Frank & Deane Carlborg, 400 S 9th St, St Charles IL 60174
Pat & Elsie Carothers, PO Box 32926, Juneau AK 99803
Jim & Ardis Everett, 17800 Bolger Rd 344A, Independence MO 64055
Robert E. & Dorothy Galvin, 1019 S National Ave, Fort Scott KS 66701
Ron & Betty Greenbaum, 7745 Westview Dr, Lakewood CO 80215
Pete, Georgann, Peter, & Anna Micono, 4007 San Andres Dr NE, Albuquerque NM 87110
Kendyl & Barbara Monroe, Kenton Route, Seneca NM 88437
Terry & Kathie Murrow, 3465 Monarch Pass Dr, Colorado Springs CO 80917
Jack and Katherine Nelson, 2276

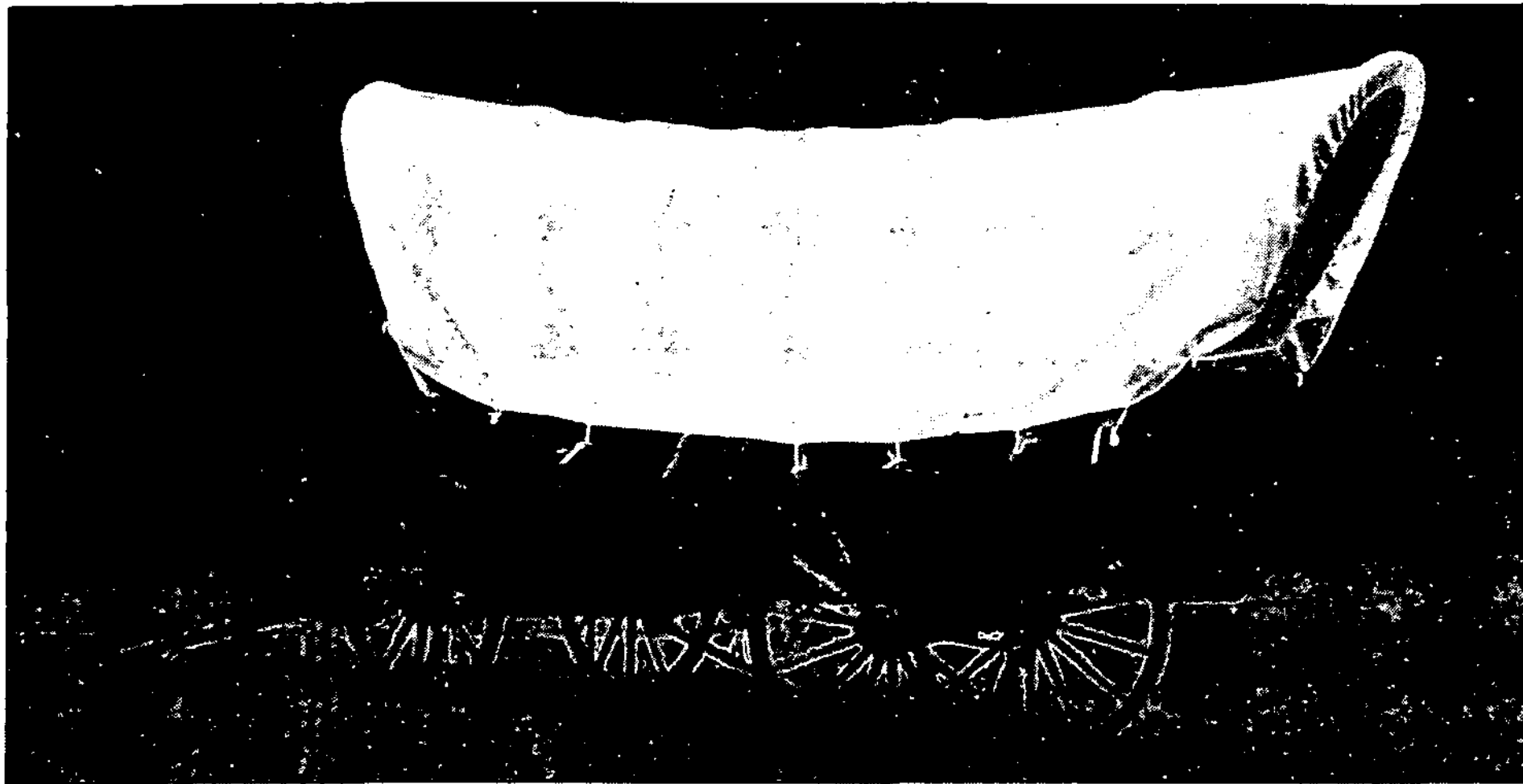
Windwood Ct, Grand Junction CO 81053

Dr. & Mrs. Larry Nelson, 440 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington DC 20003
David & Ramona Ruebush, 1301 B 80th, Lubbock TX 79423
Tom & Marcy Triplett, 1035 C Margo Ct, Montrose CO 81401
Frank & Deborah Wimberly, 297 Le Roi Rd, Pittsburgh PA 15208
Walt & Joyce Wolff, Santa Fe Trail Ranch, 7558 Overlook Dr, Trinidad CO 81082

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS

Wilbur Ball, 330 Cherry Ave, Eaton CO 80615
Jim Benson, #9 Hill Dr, Glendale MO 63122
Fred L. Campbell, 3312 Chatterton Dr, San Angelo TX 76904
Dr. Joe T. Casper, 1617 SW Macvicar Ave, Topeka KS 66604
Ann Conner, 619 Fairdale, Salina KS 67401
Jack R. Dyson, 2792 Hidden Springs Circle, Placerville CA 95667
Gord Elliott, 401 Old Taos Rd, Santa Fe NM 87501
Grace Fernandez-Matthews, 220 W 61st, Hialeah FL 33012
James B. Frank, 5837 Los Angeles Way, Buena Park CA 90620
Paul Grunland, 544 Woodmont Ave, Berkeley CA 94708
Jesus Gutierrez, 1505 N Country Club Dr #205, Mesa AZ 85201
Rod Hancock, C Rd 3071 #5, Aztec NM 87410
Joe Hartman, PO Box 1336, Elkhart KS 67950
Patricia L. Kuhlhoff, 4229 Roadrunner Ln, Santa Fe NM 87505
Bill Martin, 1908 Tuolumne, Reno NV 89523
Dr. Norman Powers, 2801 Monterey Dr, Emporia KS 66801
Dave Rich, PO Box 3923, Durango CO 81302
Kevin Roe, 428 W 61st St, Kansas City MO 64113
Dale H. Shoemaker, 2021 W 4th St, La Junta CO 81050
David K. Smoot, 12245 Ash, Overland Park KS 66209
June Stephens, PO Box 123, Trinidad CO 81082
Adolph Turkowski, 1742 Macon St, Aurora CO 80010
Edgar L. Weber, 135 Borica, San Francisco CA 94127
Brenda K. West, 34915 W 95th, DeSoto KS 66018
F. Lothar Winkelhoch, Liefonroth 25, 51645 Gummersbach, GERMANY
Susan Zietkiewicz, 234 Kiowa Rd, Lyons CO 80540

CONESTOGA WAGON FOR SALE



William Wiley has restored this Conestoga Wagon as close to the original condition as possible. It is solid and ready to hitch up a team and go, if desired. It is for sale. For more information, please contact him at 10340 W Andrew Johnson Hwy, Mosheim TN 37818, telephone (800) 551-4056.

TRAIL CALENDAR

Everyone is invited to send notices for this section; provide location, date, time, and activity. Remember this is a quarterly. The next issue should appear in November, so send information for December and later to arrive by October 20, 1997.

June 1, 1996-Oct. 31, 1997: El Rancho de las Golondrinas, NM, special exhibit, La Junta, meeting of the trails, about the Chihuahua Trail (Camino Real) and the Santa Fe Trail, with emphasis on their impact on Santa Fe and its people. This bilingual exhibit includes period artifacts and hands-on activities. Contact Louann Jordan (505) 471-2261.

Sept. 1, 1997: Annual Bean Day,

Wagon Mound, NM.

Sept. 7, 1997: Bus tour of Blue Springs Route of SFT through Kansas City area, 1:30 p.m., led by Polly & Eric Fowler (816) 836-3350.

Sept. 14-Oct. 3, 1997: Santa Fe Trail Bicycle Trek (505) 982-1282.

Sept. 20, 1997: Santa Fe Trail Days, New Franklin MO (816) 848-2288.

Sept. 24-28, 1997: SFTA Symposium, Boise City, OK, Elkhart, KS, and Clayton, NM. Contact 1997 SFTA Symposium, PO Box 655, Boise City OK 73933.

Oct. 11, 1997: Fort Larned NHS candlelight tour; reservations required (accepted starting Sept. 29).

Oct. 25, 1997: Clayton NM Fly-In, highlighting the SFT in the area (505) 374-9253.

FROM THE EDITOR

WE are getting ready for the symposium and hope to see you there. We will carry the Last Chance Store in our pickup and fill all requests if possible. It is not convenient to unpack and set up everything three different places. Besides, we want to attend symposium events. If there is a particular item you wish to see, please let us know in time to pack it. Everything is listed on the order form in this issue.

To those who get impatient with the staff at LCS, let me remind you that we do all this out of our home as volunteers with the same pay you receive. In fact, during the last 10 years, we have paid many of the bills out of our own funds and we donated the original inventory. The revenue generated has been used to publish symposium papers and other projects.

Bonita has worked nearly full-time for several months to complete the index entries for the first ten volumes of *Wagon Tracks*. The index is being edited now and will go to the printer with Marc Simmons's splendid history of the first decade of SFTA. This will be a bonus to all members, with additional copies for sale.

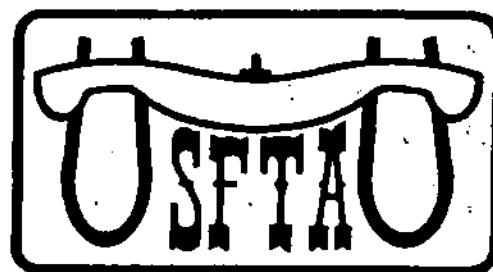
This issue marks the end of eleven years of *WT*. Thanks to everyone who has contributed and supported this effort. It has grown far beyond all expectations we had when it started in 1986. It has changed my life, requiring more than 100 hours per issue.

Happy Trails! See you at the symposium.

—Leo E. Oliva

WAGON TRACKS

Santa Fe Trail Association
PO Box 31
Woodston, KS 67675



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PERMIT NO. 2
WOODSTON KS 67675

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

