Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals

Compiled by Louise Barry

PART FIVE, 1826-1829

1826

Mountain man Ewing Young, partners-in-trade Thomas H. Boggs and James Dempsey, Paul Baillio, six men of the Santa Fe road survey crew (sent East by Comm'r G. C. Sibley for economy’s sake), and several other persons—around 20 in all—were in the company with laden pack horses and mules which left Taos, N. M., for Missouri in mid-February. They crossed present Kansas in March, and probably reached Fort Osage around April 1. Somewhere on the Santa Fe road a band of perhaps 200 Pawnees robbed members of this party.

Ref: Kate L. Gregg, ed., The Road to Santa Fe . . . (Albuquerque, c1952), pp. 41, 42, 84, 140-150, 227, 231, 260, 263, 275. Ceran St. Vrain may have been with this party.—See comment in David Lavender’s Bent’s Fort (Garden City, N.Y., 1954), pp. 65, 375.

Francis G. Chouteau’s “Randolph Bluffs” (Mo.) depot (see 1821-1822) was “washed away entirely” in early May (or late April) by a flood on the Missouri. Chouteau, it is said, removed his family to the “Four Houses” post (see 1819) some 20 miles up the Kansas river (in present Johnson? county). Then he relocated on higher ground, and higher up the Missouri—a mile or so above the “Randolph Bluffs.”

The new site was on the river’s south bank (within what is now “Guinotte’s Addition” to Kansas City, Mo.), and about two miles below the mouth of the Kansas. Frederick Chouteau was quoted (in 1880) as saying: “My brother Francis . . . built his house at [what is now] Kansas City in 1828—a frame house—where he lived with his family.”

(Within the next 12 years—before his death in 1838—Francis Chouteau’s establishment came to include “one of the largest and best farms in the county, with a steamboat landing [built in 1832, perhaps near what is now Olive street, Kansas City, Mo.], warehouses, and costly dwellings, and outhouses. . . .” All of this was swept away by the great flood of 1844.)

Ref: Kansas Historical Quarterly (KHK), v. 16, p. 7; W. H. Miller’s History of Kansas City . . . (Kansas City, 1891), p. 10; Kansas Historical Collections (KHC), v. 8, p. 425; The Kansas Monthly, Lawrence, v. 2 (June, 1879), p. 83 (John C. McCoy’s statement on Chouteau’s farm, etc., and the flood of 1844); Kansas City (Mo.) Times, February 10, 1951 (or “Kansas City, Mo., History Clippings,” v. 5, p. 146, in Kansas State Historical Society (KHi) library).

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Late in May a caravan (80 to 100 persons) left Missouri for New Mexico. (In mid-April the Franklin, Mo., paper had reported the company would include “all those lately returned”—and it is known that Ewing Young, Paul Baillio, and Thomas H. Boggs made this journey.) There were “waggons and carriages of almost every description,” and the “amount of merchandise taken . . . [was] very considerable.” The Franklin editor commented:

“It has the air of romance to see splendid pleasure carriages, with elegant horses journeying to the Republic of Mexico, yet it is sober reality. In fact the obstacles exist rather in the imagination than in reality. Nature has made a fine road the whole distance.

Spanish trader Escudero, who left Missouri in the fore part of June with “six or seven new and substantial [goods-laden] wagons,” may have caught up with the large caravan, but probably traveled the route separately.

Ref: Missouri Intelligencer, Franklin, Mo., April 14, June 9, 1826; Independent Patriot, Jackson, Mo., July 8, 1826; Lavender, op. cit., pp. 65, 375 (for notes on Ceran St. Vrain’s presence? with this company); B. E. Twitchell’s Old Santa Fe . . . (Santa Fe, c1925), p. 217.

Baronet Vasquez—the first subagent for the Kansa—was appointed in September(?), 1825, and served till his death in August, 1828. The only persons employed for the Kansa up to September, 1826 (according to the St. Louis Indian superintendency report), were Subagent Vasquez and Gabriel Philibert, blacksmith. (The latter probably was hired in mid-1826—a record of tools purchased for Philibert bears the date July 11, 1826.)

During his tenure Baronet Vasquez maintained a home, and the agency headquarters, within present Kansas City, Mo. He brought his wife, Emile Forastin (Parent) Vasquez, and children upriver from St. Louis, perhaps as early as 1825. (Frederick Chouteau was quoted, in 1820, as stating: “His [Vasquez’s] family was [in 1828] at my brothers’ agency at Randolph, where he had lived since 1825.” This could be interpreted to mean that the Vasquez family had quarters supplied by Francis Chouteau—first at “Randolph Bluffs”; and after the 1826 flood, at Chouteau’s new location within present Kansas City, Mo.) According to the Rev. G. J. Garraghan (whose source of information was Vasquez family letters): “The Vasquez house [of 1828], a good-sized comfortable sort of building, was apparently rented at Government expense for the use of the Kansa Indian agent. It stood on the south bank of the Missouri just below the mouth of the Kaw, probably [i. e., possibly] at what is now the foot of Gillis Street in Kansas City [Mo.]”

Ref: 19th Cong., 2d Sess., H. Ex. Doc. 112 (Serial 136), Sig. 40; G. J. Garraghan’s Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City . . . (Chicago, 1920), pp. 28-30; KHC, v. 8, pp. 426, 425 (for Frederick Chouteau); Superintendency of Indian Affairs, St. Louis, “Records,” (hereafter cited as SIA), v. 29, p. 29—in KHi ms. division.

On August 16 fur trader Joseph Robidoux (aged 43), up to then associated with the Chouteau (and company) interests in the
Council Bluffs vicinity, obtained a trading license in his own name. In 1826, and a year later (when he and a partner, Baptiste Roy, were issued a license on August 14, 1827), the listed places of operation were: Bellevue; mouth of the Papillion; the Omaha villages; the Pawnee villages; “a little above Roy’s grave”; and mouth of L'eau qui court [Niobrara river].

It is said that Robidoux landed at “Roy’s Branch” above the Blacksnake Hills (Mo.) in the fall of 1826; and that he soon afterwards removed to the mouth of Blacksnake creek—where St. Joseph, Mo., was later founded.

Robidoux and Roy obtained a license in 1828 (August 6) to operate in the same locations as before. Eight days later they were issued a license permitting them to trade at the Blacksnake Hills, near the Iowa subagency. However, in October, the Chouteau interests (American Fur Co., Western Dept.) bought out rival Robidoux, agreeing to pay him “$1,000 a year for two years to stay out of the Indian country.” It appears that he went to the mountains with Fontenelle and Drips in 1830 (see February, 1830, entry). When he returned to the Blacksnake Hills post (late 1830? or 1831?) he was an employee of the American Fur Company. But in 1834 he purchased the post from the company, and became sole proprietor. A license issued to Robidoux on July 30, 1834, indicated that he traded with the Iowas, Sacs, and Foxes, and employed eight men. Nine years later (1843) Robidoux founded the town of St. Joseph, Mo., at that location.


 Columbian Francis C. and Cyprian Chouteau obtained a license on August 17 to trade (for a year) at “Mouth of Kanzas River, and [at] the Dirt Village of the Kanzas” (over 100 direct land miles upstream, near the Big Blue junction). Apparently the “Four Houses” post (of 1819? origin)—20 miles up the Kansas—continued to serve as their base of operations on that river till late in 1828 when they built at a new location about 12 miles from the Kaw’s mouth. (See, under 1828.)

Ref: 19th Cong., 2d Sess., Sen. Doc. 58 (Serial 149); 20th Cong., 2d Sess., Sen. Doc. 57 (Serial 181) for September 3, 1827, license issued to Pierre Chouteau, Jr. (American Fur Company agent), to trade near the mouth of the Kansas, with the Kansas nation—a license covering the trading operations of his brothers, Francis and Cyprian, for the 1827-1828 year.

Between August 21 and October 10, Surveyor Angus L. Langham’s party meandered the Kansas river from its mouth to the Kansa village (near the Big Blue-Kansas junction). Langham’s assistants
were Thomas Swearingen, William S. "Old Bill" Williams (also serving as interpreter), and eight hired hands. The outfit included horses. (Subsistence of men and horses from August 1 to December 31 was a $382 item in the surveyor's accounts.) It is said the party had a small military escort—see below.

This company reached the "mouth of Warhusa" (Wakarusa) on September 2; passed the "Necushutebe, Soutrilte or Grass-hopper" (Delaware river of today) on September 13; and reached Langham's first objective—a point "20 leagues up," or "60 miles on a straight line from the mouth of Kansas river" on October 2. (By the Kansa treaty—see June, 1825—this survey point was to mark the east line of the Kansa reserve. It was about three and a half miles west of the center of present Topeka, in what is now Sec. 27, T. 11, R. 15 E., in Silver Lake township, Shawnee county.)

Continuing upriver, Langham noted they were near the "old Heart village" of the Kansa on October 5; that they passed the "bl[ack] Vermillion" on the 8th; and arrived at "the Kansa Village, 125 dirt lodges" on October 10.

Of the surveyors' subsequent movements no contemporaneous account has been located. It appears that Langham and his men retraced their path to the east line of the Kansa reserve; surveyed the approximately 23-mile section of the east line from the river northward; and then spent the rest of the year marking off, down along the Kansas, the 23 one-mile-square Kansa half-breed reserves (which extended eastward from the east Kansa boundary to about four miles below the mouth of the "Grasshopper.") Writing in 1885, John C. McCoy (surveyor in the 1830's, who likely heard the story direct from Langham) stated that Langham "passed the winter of 1826-7 on Soldier Creek [known as Heart river at that time] about 4 miles north of [present] Topeka, and about 3 miles east of the Kaw village of the 'Fool Chief' [a location dating from 1829—see map p. 59—not in existence when Langham was in the vicinity]. He had with him a small guard of infantry detailed from Fort Osage. . . . [But Fort Osage no longer existed in 1826, so the troops came from elsewhere.] The name 'Soldier Creek' was adopted afterwards in honor of the flag that proudly waved over the Major's [i.e., Langham's] shanty and the warlike aspect of the camp where the trophies secured during the winter were chiefly possums strung up by their tails curled over ropes and tugs stretched from tree to tree." (Isaac McCoy, in 1890, called the stream Soldier creek.)

At some time in 1827 Langham surveyed the approximately eight-mile portion of the Kansa east boundary south of the Kansas river, and then proceeded west for 200 miles marking a length of the south line of the reserve.

Ref: Photostats of A. L. Langham's 1826 field notes; his 1826 accounts; and two William Clark letters (July 9 and October 9, 1826), all in KHi ms. division; John C. McCoy letter, February 9, 1885, in KHi ms. division; Isaac McCoy statement, 1832, in 23 Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Doc. 512, v. 3 (Serial 246), p. 486; John C. McCoy statement, 1885, in KHi, v. 5, p. 352; John C. McCoy statement, 1889, in KHC, v. 4, p. 302. The time of occupancy of the Kansa "Heart village" has never been satisfactorily determined. For McCoy's 1830 references to Soldier creek see KHi, v. 5, pp. 352-354, 364.
The company of traders (size unknown) which left Fort Osage in August and reached Santa Fe in November, included James Collins (at a later date Indian affairs superintendent in New Mexico), Elisha Stanley, Solomon Houck, Edwin M. Ryland, James Fielding, Thomas Talbot, and William Wolfskill. All these men remained in Mexico for nearly a year. (See, also, October, 1827.) Apparently with this party was Andrew Broadus, who, at the Walnut creek camp (near present Great Bend), underwent, and survived, emergency amputation of an arm (injured earlier in a gun accident). And if Broadus was in this company, so was the runaway 17-year-old Christopher "Kit" Carson (who, by his own account, witnessed the surgery while on his first journey to the Southwest in 1826).

Ref: KHO, v. 21, pp. 581-563; Josiah Gregg’s Commerce of the Prairies (1844), v. 1, pp. 59, 60; Blanche C. Grant, ed., Kit Carson’s Own Story of His Life (Tucs, N. M., 1926), p. 10; Missouri Historical Review, v. 38, p. 497; Lavender, op. cit., p. 386.

After a 70-day march William H. Ashley and party (over 50 men; more than 100 pack animals) reached St. Louis the last week in September (returning from a spring and summer overland expedition beyond the Rocky mountains—see last 1825 entry). It was reported that each horse and mule carried nearly 200 pounds of beaver fur, and that the 123 (?) packs of beaver were valued at $60,000. According to St. Louis editor Charles Keemle:

... The whole route lay through a level and open country, better for carriages than any turnpike road in the United States. [East of the Rockies, Ashley’s route, generally, was along the Sweetwater, Platte, and apparently on the north side of the Missouri—a pathway he had first used in the fall and winter of 1824-1825; and had traversed again, west-bound, in the spring of 1826.] Wagons and carriages could go with ease as far as General Ashley went, crossing the Rocky Mountains at the sources of the north fork of the Platte, and descending the valley of the Buenaventura [Bear River] towards the Pacific Ocean. ...


Describing the Indian peace council held at St. Louis in late September and early October, William Clark (superintendent of Indian affairs, St. Louis) wrote:

... a deputation from the Great and Little Osage Nation met one from the Delawares, Shawnees, Piankeshaws, Peorias, Weas, Senecas, and Kickapoos, at this place, on the 25th day of September, and, after [my] recommending that they should make an attempt to effect a permanent peace, without the interference of the Government, they met in Council, and, after six days warm
debate and recriminations, I was forced to take my seat among them, and with much difficulty obtained their entire approbation to the Treaty . . . [on October 7 and 8].

The tribes with whom the Osages made the reluctantly-arrived-at peace treaty were nations (or, rather, portions of nations) then residing in Missouri and Arkansas territory which the government hoped could be induced to emigrate to reserves west of Missouri and Arkansas, where some Shawnees had already moved (see November, 1825).

Ref. 19th Cong., 2d Sess., House Doc. 9 (Serial 149), pp. 9-12; American State Papers: Indian Affairs, v. 2, pp. 673, 674; also a William Clark letter of October 9, 1826 (photostat in Langham survey papers, ms. division, KHi).

A harvest of 260 bushels of corn from the farm at the little station Mission Neosho (in present Erie township, Neosho county) on the Neosho river—see 1824—was reported for the year 1826. As a result, “the expense of supporting the mission families [the Pixleys and the Brights] was very moderate.”


1827

East-bound on a perilous, heart-of-winter, 1,500-mile journey overland to St. Louis (from a January 1 starting point in the Great Salt Lake valley), snowshoe-equipped William L. Sublette and Moses “Black” Harris, with their Indian-trained pack dog—all three exhausted and starving—left the Platte near Grand Island and headed southeast towards the Kansas. In their extremity, the men finally killed and ate the dog. Later they shot a rabbit; and after that, in a timbered area, brought down some wild turkeys. Meanwhile, they had found an old Kansa trail which eased their travel through the deep, uncrusted snow. After traveling down the Big Vermillion (in present Marshall county) they made their way to the Kansa village (near the Big Blue’s mouth) in the latter part of February. There they got food and other aid. Sublette traded his pistol for a horse (to give Harris—who had sprained an ankle—transportation), and the two men hastened down on the Kansas valley to Missouri. They arrived in St. Louis on March 4—three days late for the all-important business date with William H. Ashley which had occasioned the epic winter journey. (Ashley fulfilled the contract anyway.)

Earlier (in mid-July, 1826), in the Rocky mountains, Jedediah S. Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette had formed a partnership and bought out fur trader William H. Ashley. Ashley had then returned to St. Louis—see 1826 entry—where he was, by contract, to supply Smith, Jackson &
Sublette supplies and goods at certain prices, provided the partners gave him their order by March 1. See March, 1827, entry for a west-bound journey over this new route—“Sublette’s Trace.”

Ref: Weekly Picayune, New Orleans, January 1 and March 18, 1844. After journalist Matthew C. Field heard, from Sublette, in 1843, the story of the 1827 winter trip, he wrote two articles (“Death of a Dog,” and “A Perilous Winter Journey”) which were published in the Picayune (as noted above), and in the daily issues of December 27, 1843, and March 14, 1844. Also, see Matthew C. Field’s Prairie and Mountain Sketches... (Norman, Okla., c1957), pp. 165, 166 (for Field’s diary notes, August 21, 1843). For Smith, Jackson & Sublette partnership see Dale L. Morgan, op. cit., pp. 189-193, 225.

At, or near, the Osage towns on the Neosho (in present Neosho county), several log buildings were erected during the year. On January 12 a contract was let for construction of a house for each of the three principal Osage chiefs living on that river. (This was in accordance with Article 4 of the Osage treaty of June 2, 1825. The total cost—$5,700—suggests they were substantial homes.)

On February 1 David Bailey (native of New Hampshire; hired as “agriculturist” to the Great Osages in late 1826) was given $450 to build quarters for his use. Bailey, and his wife—who was “instructress to Osage Women”—continued to work among the Osages, and to reside in present Kansas, till sometime in 1831. (Nothing has been learned of the Baileys’ family, if any.)

Between March 16 and August 20, Richard Brannin (native of Virginia; hired as “agriculturist” to the Little Osages in November, 1826) was given $445.40 to build quarters for his use. Brannin, and his wife—an “instructress to Osage Women”—continued among the Little Osages till the spring (?) of 1831. (Nothing is known of their family, if any).

Other log houses and buildings already in the vicinity of the Osage towns were those at the Osage Agency; at the “Trading House”; and at Mission Neosho. The headquarters of Agent John F. Hamtramck (of Indiana; a May, 1826, appointee; and the first resident agent) was on the right bank of the river, “on a Rock Ridge one half of a mile from the Neosho,” surrounded by Indian villages, some within half a mile,” on the former site of White Hair’s town (White Hair and a band of his people had moved six miles downstream). Other persons at the Osage Agency included Robert Dunlap (a Virginian, blacksmith to the Osages since late 1824), and Baptiste Mongrain (hired as interpreter in April, 1827). At the “Trading House” were Paul Liguiste Chouteau (Osage subagent), Pierre Melicour Papin (trader), and others. (See, August, 1827, entry.)


A site for the Kansa Agency was selected by the Kansa chiefs and Subagent Baronet Vasquez early in 1827 (or possibly late in 1826). The place chosen was just east of the last half-breed re-
serve (No. 23), over four miles below the Grasshopper's (Delaware's) mouth, on the north bank of the Kansas river—65 miles below the Kansa village (as then located—near the Big Blue's mouth).

It was something like 50 miles from Subagent Vasquez's residence (within present Kansas City, Mo.—see first 1826 annals entry). Described in relation to other present-day place names, the Kansa Agency was in the southern part of Jefferson county, seven miles upriver from Lawrence.

Perhaps the agency's first white resident was Daniel Morgan Boone (a son of the famous Daniel) who had been hired as "agriculturist" for the Kansa Indians at least as early as March, 1827. An account dated March 19-21 shows transfer to him of $450 for construction of buildings; also that he had spent $114 for a cart and yoke of oxen, and had purchased two other yokes (at $35 and $40), as well as tools and sundries. Besides Boone and his family, other "first residents" were Gabriel Philibert (the blacksmith), the half-breed Clement Lessert (interpreter), Louis Gonville with his Kansa family, and half-breed Joseph James (holder of reserve No. 23). Two miles to the northwest, a good-sized stone house was built (in 1827?) for Chief White Plume (in accordance with a promise made to him by William Clark), and a number of Kansa families lived near him.

Isaac McCoy (an 1830 visitor) noted the "comfortable hewed log buildings" of the subagent, blacksmith, interpreter, and agriculturist, and White Plume's "large stone building" two miles distant. John T. Irving, Jr., after a brief stay at the Kansa Agency in 1832, wrote this description (for a work of fiction):

It was a half savage white settlement. . . . Three cabins built of unbarked logs, and thrown together in the rudest style of architecture, composed the dwelling of the workmen belonging to the agency. A little apart from the rest stood a house of larger dimensions, but scarcely more finished in its construction. This was the dwelling of the agent. Attached to it was a large field of Indian corn, almost the only grain raised by a backwoodsman; and in front was a small yard, surrounded by a slender white railing. Not only the cornfield, but a large space around the hamlet was filled with burnt and scathed trunks, giving intimation that a luxuriant growth of giant forest trees had once covered the spot, but had yielded to the unspiring inroads of man.


Outfitted by William H. Ashley, and the American Fur Company, a party of about 60 men, commanded by Hiram Scott, left St. Louis late in March for the trappers' summer rendezvous at Bear Lake
(where they arrived about the end of June). They took with them “a piece of artillery (a four-pounder) on a carriage which was drawn by two mules”—the first wheeled vehicle to be taken across the Rocky mountains. (It was also the first wheeled vehicle known to have crossed what is now northern Kansas.)

William L. Sublette accompanied this expedition, which (it seems established) traveled “Sublette’s Trace” (pioneered in February by the eastbound Sublette and his companion “Black” Harris—see first 1827 entry)—the pathway which led up the Kansas valley, turned northward beyond the Little Vermillion’s crossing (in present Pottawatomie county) toward the Little Blue, and near the head of that river, crossed to the Platte—the route of the future Oregon trail.

The returning expedition, piloted by James Clyman (over the same line of march as on the outward journey, apparently), brought down over 7,000 pounds of beaver from the mountains, leaving Bear Lake July 13 and reaching Lexington, Mo., about October 1. (Clyman, westbound on the section of the Oregon trail between the Little Vermillion and the Big Blue, on June 24, 1844, noted in his diary: “to day struck our old trail made on our return from the mountains in the summer of 1827. . . .”) Recroutted by Ashley, William L. Sublette and David E. Jackson promptly started back to the mountains and reach the Rockies by the end of November, but had to winter east of the Divide because of severe weather. (There was no caravan to the mountains in 1828, this second outfit of 1827 having taken its place.)


Between April 27 and May 24, Surveyor Angus L. Langham and his assistant, R. P. Beauchamp, ran a line to determine “the beginning of the Osage reservation”; and then surveyed the 50-mile stretch of eastern boundary.

(The Osage treaty of June 2, 1825, had specified that the reserve would have a beginning point “due east of White Hair’s village” [in present Neosho county], and 25 miles west of the Missouri boundary; and that the east line would run 10 miles north of the village from the beginning point, and 40 miles south of it.)

The surveyors began work on the Neosho’s east bank where they “had a view” of White Hair’s town but could not reach it because of high water. They proceeded due east to the Missouri boundary, intersecting it 102 miles south of the Kansas river’s mouth. Turning back, they then established the northeast corner of the Osage reserve—on May 11; and set out southward to mark off the 50-mile east line. On May 14 they crossed the road leading from “the
[Chouteau] Trading House” to Harmony Mission. Ten days later they completed the east line survey at a point on the Neosho river. Langham discharged his work crew on May 30 at Harmony Mission (Mo.), reporting that they had, with one exception, refused to “go westward on the south or north boundary” through fear of Indians.

By John C. McCoy's account (in 1889) Langham's camp had been invaded one day by a large party of “naked, painted, yelling Osages” chasing one of the workmen. They had dashed through “in a solid phalanx,” “tromping down tents and camp fixtures,” and bowling over Surveyor Langham, who was seated, writing. The Indians “wound up the demonstration with an impromptu war dance, and an emphatic demand for the surveyor and his party to vamos, with which command they complied with alacrity.” (McCoy, who ran the Osage north line in 1836, probably heard the story from Langham.)

In the early winter of 1827-1828, apparently, Langham surveyed the south boundary of the Osage lands. His letter of January 4, 1828, from “Neosho Saline” advised of expenditures for Osage surveys; and on February 2 he wrote (from Franklin, Mo.) that he had arrived from the Osage country on January 31, and had completed all the Osage and Kansa surveys except the north boundaries of their reserves.

Ref: Langham's field notes and letters (photostats from National Archives) in KHi ms. division; Office of Indian Affairs (OIA), “ Registers of Letters Received,” v. 2, p. 294 (microfilm from National Archives); KHC, v. 4, pp. 308, 309.

C Cantonment Leavenworth was founded in the spring by Col. Henry Leavenworth, commander of the Third U. S. infantry. He wrote, on May 8, that he had chosen a location for a permanent military post atop a 150-foot bluff on the Missouri’s right bank (the March 7 orders had specified the left bank, but he found no suitable place there), 20-odd miles above the Little Platte's mouth; and reported that Bvt. Maj. Daniel Ketchum and a battalion of Sixth infantry (having evacuated Fort Atkinson [Neb.] as required by the March 7 orders) had stopped on their way down the Missouri to deposit army property and stores from the upriver post.

Four companies of the Third infantry, under Capt. William G. Belknap, which had started up the Missouri in keelboats from Jefferson Barracks (Mo.) on April 17, arrived shortly afterwards and were put to work on temporary quarters. (These were huts of logs and slabs of bark, it is said.) Some time later Colonel Leavenworth departed for Jefferson Barracks, and Maj. Daniel Baker (a late arrival) became commanding officer. “Cantonment Leavenworth” was named after the war department officially approved (September 19) the site selected.

The post’s first garrison (B, D, E, and H companies, Third infantry, captained by William G. Belknap, John Garland, John Bliss, and John B. Clark)
had, for the quarter ending October 31, a strength of 14 officers and 174 enlisted men. There were, also, women and children at Cantonment Leavenworth in 1827. Families of some officers and enlisted men had arrived with the troops. Two ladies present whose names are known: Anne (Clark) Belknap, wife of the senior captain, who had come with her husband in the spring; and Mary (Hertzog) Dougherty, wife of the new “Upper Missouri” Indian agent (see a following entry), who was a late September arrival. During an outbreak of malarial fever in the autumn, one of the victims was the six-year-old son of Lt. Samuel W. Hunt. Asst. Surgeon Clement A. Finley was the post’s first medical officer.

Ref: Elvid Hunt and W. E. Lawrence’s History of Fort Leavenworth 1827-1937 (Fort Leavenworth, 1937), pp. 13-20; F. B. Heitman’s Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army . . . (Washington, 1903), v. 1 (for army officers’ names); Annals of Iowa, 3d series, v. 7 (October, 1906), pp. 533-537 (for data on the Belknap family).

The large Santa Fe caravan (about 105 men; 53 wagons; and pleasure carriages) which left Missouri in May had Ezekiel Williams (see 1813, 1814) as its elected captain. Among other officers of this highly organized company were David Workman (one of nine “commanders of the guard”), Richard Gentry (marshal), and the Rev. John Pearson (chaplain). Another traveler was Augustus Storrs (formerly appointed U. S. consul at Santa Fe) whose letter dated “Santa Fe Trace, 120 miles west of Franklin, May 18, 1827” is the principal source of information on the expedition.

Of this caravan (“the largest which has traversed this route”) it was reported that the “line of march” was “at least one mile in length”—a sight “extremely beautiful to the eye of the spectator.”


George C. Sibley and a work party of 14 (including Andrew Carson, Jacob Gregg, and Benjamin Majors) spent from May 25 to July 1 in present Kansas, making corrections in the 1825 Santa Fe road survey and putting up sod-mound markers on a section of the route west of Missouri. They reached Council Grove (westbound) on June 7. (Sibley estimated he had cut the distance from Fort Osage—162 miles by the 1825 survey—to 149 miles. In J. C. Brown’s final field notes it was entered as 142 miles.) Continuing 16 miles southwest of Council Grove on June 10, this party camped at “the Springs.” Wrote Sibley in his journal:

. . . This Spring [called “Jones’ Spring” by Sibley in 1825] is very large. Runs off boldly among Rocks, is perfectly accessible and furnishes the greatest abundance of most excellent, clear, cold Sweet water. It may be appropriately called “The Diamond of the Plains” and So I had it Marked [by “Big John” Walker] on an Elm which grows near & overhangs it.
In this fashion Diamond Spring(s) received its name; and the near by creek, which to Sibley was “Otter Creek” subsequently became “Diamond creek.” Turning homeward from this place the party reached Council Grove again on June 12. Next day, by Sibley’s account, they

... Coursed and chained the Cut off from Council Grove to Gravel Creek. ... Here halted for the day. ... Found an excellent Spring near Camp—which I had Marked [on a Big Oak near by] “Big John’s Spring” as it was first discov[ere]d by John Walker. ... 

Thus another landmark on the Santa Fe road received its name; and the stream—Sibley’s “Gravel Creek”—became “Big John creek.”

On July 1 the tour of correction was completed to the Missouri boundary. Sibley reached home (near old Fort Osage, Mo.) a week later.

Ref: E. Gregg, op. cit., pp. 45-47, 175-195 (Sibley’s journal), also pp. 60, 272; The Western Journal, St. Louis, v. 5 (December, 1850), pp. 178-181.

C Successor to Benjamin O’Fallon (resigned) as head of the “Upper Missouri” Indian agency (headquarters at the Council Bluffs—“Bellevue” [Neb.]), was John Dougherty, who had been interpreter and subagent there since 1819. Before Dougherty wrote (on May 30) to accept the position, Cantonment Leavenworth had been founded, and Colonel Leavenworth had requested that the Upper Missouri agent locate there. The move—as a temporary expedient till the end of 1828—was approved by William Clark at St. Louis.

On September 25 Dougherty and his family arrived at Cantonment Leavenworth. At that post, despite controversy, he maintained his “headquarters” till sometime in 1832.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, February 15, 1827; “Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Registers of Letters Received” (microfilm, from National Archives), v. 2, pp. 140, 157, 180, 202; “Dougherty Collection” (typed copy of Dougherty’s March 9, 1832, report) in KHi ms. division; RHQ, v. 23, p. 102; Hunt and Lorance, op. cit., pp. 18, 19.

C Six Osage Indians (four men, two young women) and Paul Loise (half-breed interpreter) were conducted to Europe in the summer by David Delaunay and Francis Tesson of St. Louis (who calculated to make money exhibiting them abroad). Three years later, two of the men, both women, and an infant, returned to their Neosho river [Kansas] homes and kinsmen.

(For a time, after arriving in France on July 27, the Indians attracted great crowds, and were entertained by royalty. But the financial schemes of Delaunay failed; he was imprisoned for debt; and the Osages wandered through Europe in 1828 and 1829, suffering many hardships. Two Osage children were born—one was adopted by a Belgian woman. In the latter part of 1829 funds were raised to return the Indians to America. On board ship two of the men died,
It was the spring of 1830 before the others reached the Indian country.—William Clark wrote on May 15 that he had sent the Osages who returned from France to their nation, except Paul’s Loise.)

During 1827, when the visitors from America were still a novelty, two slim (and now rare) volumes relating to the Osage Indians were published at Paris. One, credited to Paul Vissier, was titled: *Histoire de la Tribu des Osages* (Paris, C. Bechet, 1827) in which about a dozen of the 92 pages dealt with the six Osages, and their travels up to August 21 when they were presented to the French king. The shorter work—Six *Indiens Rouges de la Tribu des Grands Osages*—was devoted wholly to the subject of its title. The imprint of the Society’s third edition copy of this latter book reads: “Paris. Delaunay, Libraire de son altesse royale Madame la duchesse d’Orleans, Palais-Royal, No. 243. 1827.”

Ref: *KHO*, v. 16, p. 24; *Niles’ Weekly Register*, v. 37 (September 5, 1829), p. 19; *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, St. Louis, v. 5, pp. 109-128 (for Grant Foreman’s article on the Osages, which has reproductions of contemporaneous portraits of the Indians); SIA, v. 4, pp. 119, 120 (for William Clark).

| Public sale of lots in the new town of Independence—seat of recently organized Jackson county, Mo.—was held on July 9. (The Missouri general assembly, by an act approved December 15, 1826, had established Jackson county.)

(By 1832 Independence was to become the dominant outfitting point for, and eastern terminus of, the Santa Fe and southwestern trade.)


| A party of some 20 traders returning from Santa Fe, reached Franklin in mid-July with “about $30,000 in specie, and several hundred mules”—concluding a “very profitable trip.”

Ref: *Missouri Intelligencer*, Fayette, July 19, 1827.

| The Rev. Charles Felix Van Quickenborne, S. J., arrived August 24 at the house of Osage Subagent Paul Ligueste Chouteau, on the Neosho river (present Neosho county), after a 16-day overland journey from near St. Charles, Mo., with a lay companion. He spent two weeks among the Osages of that vicinity. The day following his arrival he said “the first verifiable mass in Kansas.”

Of the 17 Osage half-breed children baptized by Father Van Quickenborne (on August 27 and September 2), the first was two-year-old Henry Mongrain (son of Noel Mongrain and Tonnapai). Surnames of the others baptized were: Vasseur, Chouteau, Quinnville, and Williams. (“Clemence Williams” was doubtless a child
of William S. "Old Bill" Williams, whose half-breed daughters, Sarah
and Mary, had been given land under the June, 1825, Osage treaty.)
Sponsors of the baptisms were Subagent Chouteau, Pierre Melicour
Papin (trader), Agent John F. Hamtramck, Louis Peltier, Alexander
Peter, P. L. Mongrain, and Christophe Sanguinet.

Ref: G. J. Garraghan's The Jesuits of the Middle United States (New York, 1938),

† Born: at Mission Neosho, either in 1827, or the latter part of
1826, Lucia Francis Pixley, daughter of the Rev. Benton and Lucia
F. (Howell) Pixley. Insofar as records are available, it would ap-
pear she may have been the first white child born in what is now
Kansas. (For Mission Neosho, see under 1824.)

Ref: U. S. census, 1850, Jackson County, Mo., No. 1187 (household of Mrs. Lucia
Pixley, aged 61, of Blue township), as recorded on September 19, 1850. Listed in the
household, also, were: Harriet N. Pixley (aged 33, born in Virginia); Lucia F. Pixley
(aged 23, born in "Ind. Ter."); Flora A. Pixley (aged 21, born in Missouri); also Mrs.
Lucia Pixley's daughter-in-law (?) and her infant; and Madison Meador (aged 22, farmer).
Though no substantiation from any other source has been located, there is every reason
to suppose that Lucia Francis Pixley was, in fact, born in present Neosho county, Kansas,
where her parents lived as missionaries to the Osages from September, 1824, to March,
1826. According to W. W. Graves, in his First Protestant Osage Missions . . .
(Oswego, c1849), p. 244, the Pixleys had six children, some (?) of whom were born at
Mission Neosho: Harriet N., Levi F., Mary Jane (who married Madison Meador), Lucia
F., Flora A., and A. B. Graves also stated (p. 243) that the Rev. Benton Pixley is said
to have died at Independence, Mo., April 11, 1835.

† In September, after a four months' absence, about 60 members of
the large spring caravan of Santa Fe traders returned to Missouri,
bringing "a considerable amount of money," and around "800 head
of jacks, jennets, mules, etc.," valued (it was reported) at nearly
$28,000.

Ref: Missouri Intelligencer, Fayette, Mo., September 20, 1827.

† While the Kansa were gathered near the mouth of the Kansas
river in September to collect their annual annuities, the greater
part of the nation fell ill, and some 70 Indians died of the epidemic
malady. Agent John Dougherty, learning of the disaster upon his
arrival at Cantonment Leavenworth in late September, hired a
Liberty, Mo., doctor to go to the aid of the Kansa. On the advice
of the post medical officer, Asst. Surg. Clement A. Finley, Dougherty
also "procured several barrels of flour and some salt provisions
and took them to the Indians."

Ref: SIA, v. 4, pp. 72, 73; "Dougherty Collection," KHi ms. division.

† En route to Missouri from New Mexico, with "horses, mules,
asses, and specie," the small party of 12 to 15 traders which in-
cluded Messrs. Collins, Stanley, Houck, Ryland, Fielding, Talbot,
and Wolfskill (see August, 1826), camped on October 12 about 25
miles west of Pawnee Fork crossing [probably at Little Coon creek, present Edwards county]. A band of perhaps 30 Pawnees made a midnight raid on their stock and ran off 166 animals—all but three the party had. Next day, by good fortune, the traders found about 66(?) head (either abandoned by, or escaped from, the Indians). The arrival of this party in the Missouri settlements was noted in early November (by the Fayette newspaper).


1828

¶ On April 14 the steamboat *Liberator* set out from St. Louis for Cantonment Leavenworth—presumably carrying freight. On April 23 the steamboat *Illinois* (advertised in March as a “new and substantial” craft) left Jefferson Barracks, Mo., for the same place, with Companies A, F, I, and K, Third U. S. infantry aboard. Col. Henry Leavenworth, head of the regiment, accompanied them. The troops' arrival (early in May) placed eight out of 10 companies of the Third infantry at Cantonment Leavenworth.

It appears that these steamboats may have been the first on the “upper” Missouri (i.e., above the mouth of the Kansas) since 1821. The *Liberator* returned to St. Charles, Mo., on April 27; the *Illinois* was back at St. Louis “from the Platt” on May 6.

Ref: *KHO*, v. 16, pp. 140n, 144-146, 148.

¶ The Western Cherokees (those living west of the Mississippi) in a treaty with the United States signed on May 6, were guaranteed a reserve of “seven millions of acres” of land and a “perpetual outlet” to the west, in what is now Oklahoma. This tract (40 by 300 miles) was to be for all of the Cherokees:

. . . a permanent home . . . which shall, under the most solemn guarantee of the United States, be and remain theirs forever—a home that shall never, in all future time, be embarrassed by having extended around it the line, or placed over it the jurisdiction of a territory or state, nor be pressed upon by the extension, in any way, of any of the limits of any existing territory or State.


¶ The large Santa Fe caravan (about 150? men) which left Missouri in the fore part of May is said to have taken merchandise valued at $150,000 to New Mexico; and, by report, the smaller caravan (about 50 persons) which left the last of May, carried goods worth $41,000. Alphonso Wetmore captained the latter expedi-
tion which rendezvoused at the Blue Springs (Mo.) on May 28th. [His brief diary (May 28-August 2), with its graphic, colorful comments, enlivened an otherwise staid senate document published in 1831.]

Wetmore’s company reached Council Grove on June 11; met a return caravan on the 12th; crossed Cow creek (in present Rice county) on the 24th; and on July 4 arrived at the Caches (Wetmore called them “Anderson’s caches”) of 1823 origin. There the caravan crossed the Arkansas and proceeded by way of the Cimarron desert route to New Mexico.


At Cantonon Leavenworth, on May 29, a post office was established—the first in what is now Kansas. Philip G. Randolph, first appointee, was succeeded as postmaster by Thomas S. Bryant on October 16.


Died: In May, Clermont, I, long-time chief of the large band of Osages residing on the Verdigris river (in present Oklahoma)—first mentioned in this chronology under 1802-1803. It is said that he had four wives and 37 children. (His son, Clermont, II, also a distinguished man, died in 1838.) The town of Claremore, Okla., near the one-time Osage village site, was named for the chiefs “Clermont.” Of Clermont, I, the missionary W. F. Vaill wrote:

... a man of noble countenance and stately figure, of robust constitution, and vigorous intellectual powers. ... He was a jealous, subtle man—a wily, intriguing politician, and a most eloquent speaker. ...

Ref: Report of American Board of Comm’rs for Foreign Missions for 1926, pp. 80, 91; Grant Foreman’s Indians and Pioneers ... (New Haven, 1939), pp. 22, 157, 183.

In the spring Father Charles Felix Van Quickenborne made a second journey (see August, 1827) to the Osages of the Neosho river, stopping en route at Harmony Mission, on the Marais des Cygnes, in Missouri. It is known that he performed 17 baptisms, but there is no record of the names. A little Osage “prince” accompanied him on the return trip—to be educated at the Jesuits’ Indian school at Florissant, Mo.

Ref: Garraghan’s Jesuits ... , v. 1, p. 193.

On June 4 Indian Agent John Dougherty paid Calice “Montargu” (Montardeau) $7.25 for “his services and use of his ferryboat in crossing the Kansas Nation across the Missouri.” This transaction—listed in a Superintendency of Indian affairs, St. Louis, record
BOOK—is the earliest item located concerning a ferry operation at, or near, the mouth of the Kansas.

(Other ferry operators had been licensed in Clay county, Mo., as early as 1825—Joseph Boggs, John Thornton, and Richard Linville—all of whom had ferries within a few miles of the Kaw’s mouth. Linville’s location on the Missouri, in 1825, was in Sec. 18, T. 50, R. 32 W., Clay co., Mo., “where Louis Barthelette . . . lives.” Presumably this was at the Randolph Bluffs location where Louis (“Grand Louis”) Berthelet lived in 1823, and earlier—see annals entries for 1821-1822, and June, 1823. It is said that Linville sold his ferry to an old[? Frenchman named Calisse Montarges in 1826. After the spring, 1826, flood, if not before, “Calisse” doubtless moved the ferry nearer to the mouth of the Kansas, and across the river(?). A land entry of October 31, 1832, shows Calice Montardeau on the W.S. Lot 2, in Sec. 5, T. 49, R. 33 W., in present Kansas City, Mo. He is said to have operated his ferry till 1830. Catholic records of Kansas City, Mo., state that “Calice Montredie” died June 18, 1847, aged 49 years.)

Ref: SIA, v. 21, p. 26 (for the June 4, 1828, item); History of Clay and Platte Counties, Missouri . . . (St. Louis, 1885), p. 118; KHI, v. 2, p. 5; D. A. R., Kansas City (Mo.) chapter, Vital Historical Records of Jackson County, Missouri, 1820-1876 (Kansas City, Mo., c1934), p. 266.

Delegations from the Pawnee Republic band, the Omaha, Otoe, Iowa, Sac, Kansa, and the immigrant Shawnee Indians, called together by Agent John Dougherty, met in council at Cantonment Leavenworth on June 23, and made a peace treaty. Also present were Subagent Jonathan L. Bean (from the Iowa subagency), Lt. Samuel W. Hunt (of the Third infantry), and Levi Benjamin.

Ref: SIA, v. 21, p. 30; “Dougherty Collection,” in KHI ms. division.

During the summer, it is said, a “military” road was opened from a point opposite Cantonment Leavenworth to the town of Barry, near Liberty, Mo. Troops from the post worked on the section from the Missouri river eastward, while Clay county, Mo., residents built westward from the settlements.

Ferries were required at the crossings of the Missouri and the Little Platte river. By Joseph Thorp’s recollections (in the 1880’s) Robert Todd was authorized to keep the first ferry at the cantonment (and held the job for several years); while John Thorp (brother of Joseph) operated the first Little Platte ferry, but sold out in less than a year to a partner Zadoc Martin.

Ref: Joseph Thorp’s Early Days in the West . . . (Liberty, Mo., 1924), p. 65; Hunt and Lawrence, op. cit., p. 22; W. M. Paxton’s Annals of Platte County, Missouri (Kansas City, Mo., 1897), pp. 9-12.

Deed: On August 5, Kansa Subagent Baronet Vasquez, of cholera, while returning from St. Louis to his post. Two companions on the journey—Dunning D. McNair (20-year-old Indian superintend-
encey clerk), and the Rev. Joseph Anthony Lutz—reached the Vasquez residence (within present Kansas City, Mo.) on August 12.

Ref: G. J. Garraghan’s Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City . . . , p. 28.

 cita Intent on establishing a Catholic mission among the Kansa Indians, the Rev. Joseph Anthony Lutz (aged 26) arrived at the mouth of the Kansas river on August 12 (see preceding entry). After a week's stay there, at the Vasquez residence, he accompanied acting subagent Dunning D. McNair 65 miles up the Kansas valley, where, for the next six weeks, he made his headquarters at the Kansa Agency (with McNair), as the first missionary visitor to that nation. On August 20, the day after his arrival, he met Chief White Plume who was cordial; on the 24th, and subsequently, he visited the 16 Indian families (including White Plume) who lived two miles northwest of the agency. But he did not meet the main body of the Kansa till September 17, and they were then preparing to go on their fall hunt—not to return till mid-December.

On September 18 Father Lutz started for Cantonment Leavenworth (37 miles to the northeast) where his visit was the first by a Catholic priest at that post. Returning to the Kansa Agency, he remained till September 29. With McNair, he then went downriver to the mouth of the Kansas, and stayed with Mrs. Vasquez and her children—ministering to the “little community of nine families at the mouth of the Kaw” [present Kansas City, Mo.] till December 2. On that date he left for St. Louis.

Though it appears that Father Lutz returned to the Kansa Agency, briefly, in 1829 (to pick up some personal possessions left there), the plan to establish a Catholic mission among the Kansa was abandoned. There is no record that he baptized any Indians in 1828 or 1829.

Ref: Garraghan’s Catholic Beginnings . . . , pp. 27-33.

 cita In mid-August a company of perhaps 70 traders with about 1,200 head of stock left Santa Fe to return to Missouri. While heading for the Cimarron, two men, traveling ahead of the main party, were shot by unknown Indians. Young McNees died at the scene—near a little stream (a tributary of Beaver creek, in Union co., N. M.), then named “McNees’ creek” for him. Daniel Munroe, fatally wounded, was carried 40 miles to the Upper Cimarron Springs, where both men were buried. Soon afterward, some of the traders fired on (and killed most of) a small party of (Pawnee?) Indians that rode up to them—thereby precipitating an Indian war which was to be costly to Santa Fe traders. (It was the Pawnees who were reported, in November, to have gone “en masse in a war excursion against the whites.”)
It is said that Meredith M. Marmaduke and Milton G. Sublette were in the party firing on the Indians. These men, a William Taylor, and four others, had a narrow escape from death a few days later when they met a large band of hostile Indians while hunting—according to the recollections of William Waldo.

In September, probably in the Great Bend area, Pawnee Indians raided this company of around 700 horses and mules.

Ref: Missouri Intelligencer . . ., Fayette, September 12, 1828; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, September 23, 1828; William Waldo’s “Recollections . . .” in Cimarron of the Past, St. Louis, v. 5, pp. 68-71; 20th Cong., 2d Sess., Sen. Doc. 67 (Serial 181), pp. 17, 18; 22d Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Doc. 90 (Serial 213), pp. 31, 40; KIHQ, v. 13, p. 411—for McCoy’s statement concerning his own 1828 expedition: “We afterwards ascertained that we had been within 75 miles of the place where the last attack of the Pawnees was made on the first party defeated on the Santa Fe road, which happened in September while we were in that country.” McCoy’s party got as far west as present Marion county, to the Cottonwood, apparently. Also, in ibid., p. 433, is his comment, “While I was in that country two caravans, at different times were robbed by those western Indians [i.e., Pawnees]. The first company had two men killed, and lost about 700 mules and horses.” Ibid., v. 16, p. 170 (for Pawnee war excursion).

C Born: On August 22, at the Kansas Agency (present Jefferson county) Napoleon Boone, 12th (and last) child of Daniel Morgan and Sarah Griffin (Lewis) Boone. This grandson of famed frontiersman Daniel Boone was the second white child, and the first white boy born in present Kansas of whom there is record. (Napoleon Boone died, aged 21 and single, in California, May 20, 1850.)


C A party of 21 (?) homeward-bound traders, with 150 mules and horses, four wagons, and a quantity of silver money, left Santa Fe on September 1. Near the Upper Cimarron Springs they came on a large Comanche camp. The caravan’s captain, John Means, was killed and scalped when the Indians attacked the rear guard. Thomas Ellison and Milton E. Bryan, riding with him, escaped. The traders moved on, followed and harassed by the Indians, who, some days later, succeeded in stampeding all the horses and mules. (William Y. Hitt, wounded several times, narrowly escaped death when ambushed by the raiders.)

Forced to abandon their wagons and baggage, the merchants set out on foot, at night, on a northward course, each carrying as much silver as he could manage. On reaching the Arkansas (at Chouteau’s Island?) they buried most of the money, and headed for Missouri, some 350 miles distant. It was a journey of hardship and suffering. They reached Cow creek in a group, but some, from exhaustion, hunger, and exposure, could go no farther. Five of the stronger men continued to the settlements. A rescue party went
out from Independence and picked up the stragglers, who were scattered along the Santa Fe road for 150 miles. In the latter part of October these traders reached home.

According to Milton E. Bryan, and others, the buried money was recovered in 1829 when the Santa Fe caravan and military escort reached the vicinity of Chouteau’s Island in July.

Ref: Milton E. Bryan’s “The Flight of Time . . .” in The Kansas Chief, Troy, June 9, 1887 (clipping in KHi library); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 24, 1828; Otis E. Young’s The First Military Escort on the Santa Fe Trail . . . (Glendale, Cal., 1952), pp. 17-29, 86, 87; William Waldo’s “Recollections,” loc. cit., p. 70; Isaac McCoy (see KHiQ, v. 13, p. 493) stated, in 1828, that the traders carried with them “about $6,000 in specie on their backs,” when they abandoned the wagons.

Between September 4 and 24, U. S. Commr Isaac McCoy (a Baptist missionary at Carey [Mich.]) conducted a small Indian delegation (three Ottawas, two Pottawatomies, and a half-breed Pottawatomie interpreter) on an exploratory tour into present Kansas.

Though McCoy’s party had reached St. Louis (on horseback, from Carey) in mid-July, it was after the middle of August before McCoy, the Indians, and two hired hands—nine persons in all—left that town for Harmony Mission (Mo.). There, Noel Mongrain (an elderly Osage half-breed) joined them as “guide.” On September 4 they crossed into “Kansas” and camped on the Marais des Cygnes [in present Linn county]. As McCoy outlined the journey in his report (of October 7):

“... I proceeded westwardly up the Osage [Marais des Cygnes] river, generally on the north side. Passing the sources of Osage we bore South west across the upper branches of Neosho until we intersected the main river at a point eighty miles south, and 127 west of the mouth of Kansas river, and about 25 miles southeast of the Santa Fe road. We then bore north west until we reached the Santa Fe road [in present Marion county] ... 140 [miles] due west of ... [Missouri]. ... We turned eastward along and near to the Santa Fe road, to a point due South of the upper Kanzas village, then travelled north to said village on the Kanzas river, 125 miles west of ... [Missouri].”

It was on September 18 that they came to the “upper” Kansa town of about 15 huts—in the vicinity of Junction City of today. Heading eastward they passed between two other small Kansa camps; and early on the afternoon of the 19th sighted “the principal Kanzau village ... say 7 miles off”—two miles east of present Manhattan. Bearing southeast from that area they crossed Mill creek [in what is now Wabaunsee county]; reached the Wakarusa headwaters; continued eastward on the divide between the Kansas and Marais des Cygnes rivers; and on September 24 reached the Shawnee settlements near the mouth of the Kansas.

Isaac McCoy, summing up his impressions of the country traversed, noted its high rolling character; the abundant limestone; the
“exceedingly fertile” soil; the sufficiency (though not abundance) of water; the scarcity of wood (though it “is not so great as has sometimes been reported”); and the abundance of game (“Elk, Deer & Bear plenty,” also they had seen “a few Antelopes”). The Pottawatomies and Ottawas, he wrote, “while they lament the scarcity of wood, and especially the almost total absence of the sugar tree, pronounce it a fine country.”

Ref: *KHQ*, v. 5, pp. 227-268 (for McCoy’s journal; and brief report, on pp. 264, 265), v. 13, pp. 406-415 (for a longer report by McCoy), v. 26, pp. 152-157 (for a discussion of McCoy’s route, the Kansas village locations, and a map showing the general route of the exploring party).

The situation of the Shawnee Indians in present Kansas was described by the Rev. Isaac McCoy in late September:

The Shawanoes arrived in this country last Spring late. [The first immigrant Shawnees had come late in 1825—see annals entry.] They [now] consist chiefly of about one half of those who resided at Waupaugkonetta in Ohio, some from Merimack [river, Mo.] . . . , some from Lewistown, O[hio] & elsewhere. With some aid from government, chiefly in food & clothing, & farming utensils, they are in three or four settlements of villages putting up with their own hands very neat log cabins [in present Shawnee township, Wyandotte county—south of the Kansas river, and in Johnson county—also south of the Kansas].

McCoy also noted the presence of the “old prophet”—Ten-squata-wa (brother of Tecumseh). Among other Shawnee chiefs of prominence already in “Kansas” by the fall of this year were William Perry and Cornstalk.


On the Kansas river’s south bank, about six miles (by land) west of the Missouri boundary, within the Shawnee reserve, in the autumn, the Chouteau brothers built a new American Fur Company trading house—a post of some permanence—known as Cyprian Chouteau’s establishment by the 1840’s. At the scene in 1828 was Father Joseph A. Lutz, who wrote, on November 12: “Messrs. Francis, Cyprian and Frederick Chouteau have begun to erect at the Kanzas River a large building which will soon be looked upon as a sort of emporium for the sale and exchange of goods among the Shawnee and Kanzas Indians.” (The site seems to have been a mile or so north of present Turner, Wyandotte county, in Sec. 13, T. 11, R. 24 E.)

An 1830 trading license issued for its operation referred to the post’s location as “On the Kanzas river about 12 miles from the mouth . . . .”; in 1831 (and later) it was described as “opposite the old half breed establishment[?] on the Kanzas, about 12 miles from the mouth.” Frederick Chouteau (in 1880) was quoted as saying: “In 1828 and 1829 we built some trading-houses [the
1829 post was Frederick's—farther upstream] four or five miles [by land] above [what was later] Wyandotte, on the north [i.e., south—he must have been misquoted!] side of the Kansas river. . . . The houses built in 1828, in the fall, were for trading with the Shawnees and Delawares.” An early confirmation that the post was on the south bank can be found in the January, 1830, annals of Prince Paul's visit there. Also, Isaac McCoy's surveying party stopped there in August, 1830, and, as Prince Paul had done, crossed the Kansas at that point, to proceed to Cantonment Leavenworth.

As for the occupants of the trading house, the following statement from the Rev. Benedict Roux's letter of November 24, 1833, strongly implies that both Francis G. Chouteau (together with his family), and Cyprian were then living there. Father Roux wrote:

"I am at present at the trading house of the Messrs. Chouteau. . . . I cannot . . . speak too highly in praise of Mr. [Francis] Guesseau and of his wife and brother. . . . But I do not expect to remain long with them, as they are right in the Indian country and too far away from the Catholics [referring to the French settlement which had developed on the site of present Kansas City, Mo.] for me to carry on my ministry with convenience.

Ref: G. J. Garraghan's Catholic Beginnings . . ., pp. 52, 47, 48; 21st Cong., 2d Sess., House Ex. Doc. 41 (Serial 207); 22d Cong., 2d Sess., House Doc. No. 104 (Serial 334); KHC, v. 8, p. 425, v. 9, pp. 573-575; Ibid., v. 4, p. 302, and KHC, v. 5, p. 346 (for McCoy—the latter reference gives the date but does not specifically mention the trading post).

Between November 8 and early December a party of Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Creeks was conducted on an exploring tour of present "Kansas and Oklahoma," from the Kansas river southward to the Canadian, along a line of march at no place more than 48 miles west of the Missouri and Arkansas boundaries. By Isaac McCoy's report, the company which set out on November 8 from a camp (in present northeast Johnson county) about five miles south of the Kansas river's mouth, consisted of:

. . . Cap. C. H. Kennerly, leader, Lieut. [Washington] Hood Topographer, Mr. John Bell assistant topographer, and C. P. Todson surgeon. To me [McCoy] had been intrusted the nonied matters. The Chickasaw delegation consisted of 12 Indians, and an interpreter, accompanied by three white men chosen by themselves, in all 16, with Mr. John B. Duncan Sub. Agent, as their leader. The Choctaw delegation was composed of six Indians, and lead by Mr. D. W. Haley. The Creek delegation consisted of three, and was lead by Mr. Luther Blake. We had one interpreter to Osages and Kanzas [Noel Mongrain], seven hired men, and a black servant belonging [to] a Chickasaw Chief. In all 42. We had with us upwards of sixty horses.

The expedition moved "a little west of south" to the Marais des Cygnes (crossed it about 20 miles west of Missouri), continued southwest to the Neosho, and followed downriver to the Osage Agency (present Neosho county) on November 17. After four days
of Indian councils and peace talks Kennerly’s party proceeded about six miles down the Neosho to camp on the night of the 20th near White Hair’s village. They were entertained in the houses of White Hair and Belle Oiseau. (The latter accompanied McCoy’s party southward on the 22d.)

From the Osage towns they “took the road to the Creek agency on the Verdigris river, within four miles of its junction with the Arkansaw.” There, and near Fort Gibson (Okla.), they remained five days before continuing to the mouth of the Canadian river’s south fork—260 miles south of the Kansas river’s mouth. By December 10 all the Indian delegations had set out for their homes. Kennerly, Hood, Bell, Todson, McCoy, together with the hired hands and pack horses retraced their way to the Osage Agency (arriving on December 15), crossed the Neosho there, and “took the direct route to Harmony Mission” 70 miles to the northeast. From that place they returned to St. Louis on December 24th.

Ref: KHO, v. 13, pp. 400-462 (for Isaac McCoy’s journal and report; and the reports of Kennerly, Hood, and Bell); Isaac McCoy’s History of Baptist Indian Missions ... (Washington, 1840), pp. 350-369.

C Born: On December 7, at Cantonment Leavenworth, Lewis Bissell Dougherty, son of Indian Agent John and Mary (Hertzog) Dougherty. He was, so far as known, the third white child and second white boy born in present Kansas. (Lewis B. Dougherty died at Liberty, Mo., in 1925.)


C Four years before the treaties of October 27 and October 29, 1832, legalized and defined their tribal reserves in what is now Kansas, the bands of Piankeshaw and Wea Indians, and the Peorias, residing in southwestern Missouri, took William Clark’s advice and moved to lands already set aside for them, south of the Shawnee reserves. (In 1828 Angus Langham partially surveyed the two tracts—one for the Weas and Piankeshaws, the other for the Peorias and Kaskaskias—in present Miami and Franklin counties.)

It was during 1828 that these Indians first established villages in present Kansas. The exact time is unknown—a January 3, 1829, report on Indian tribes noted that 350 Shawnees “with all the Weas and Piankeshaws” had removed from Missouri to lands assigned them. (See, also, July, 1830, and March, 1831, entries.)


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<td>Island in Missouri river, between Atchison and Leavenworth.</td>
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<td>1819-18287</td>
<td>At mouth of Cedar creek? in Johnson county?</td>
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<td>Fort Osage sub-factory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyrus Curtis-Michael Eley trading post</td>
<td>1822?-1826?</td>
<td>On the Missouri, above the mouth of the Kansas river.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The Caches&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission Neosho</td>
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<td>Council Grove</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>On the Neosho river, in Morris county.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shawnee settlement (first immigrant Indians)</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>In Shawnee township, Wyandotte county.</td>
<td>1825</td>
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Artist Henry Worrall's reconstruction of the Kansa Agency (1827-1834?) and Chief White Plume's stone house (inset)—as sketched in 1879 after he visited the site (with its then fragmentary remains), and gathered other information from pioneers' recollections. The location was on the Kansas river in south Jefferson county. (Note portrait of Chief White Plume on cover.)
CYPRIAN CHOUTEAU
(1802-1879)

His trading post (from late 1828) was on the Shawnee reserve, south bank of the Kansas (present Wyandotte county).

FREDERICK CHOUTEAU
(1807-1891)

His Kansa trading post (founded 1829) was, after 1831, near the mouth of Mission creek (present Shawnee county).
Fool Chief's Kansa Village (dating from 1829?) between Soldier creek and the Kansas river (northwest of present Topeka). As drawn by George Lehman (from Nicholas Point's sketch?). Fathers Pierre Jean de Smet and Point paid a brief visit to the town in May, 1841, while en route west with an emigrant caravan.

De Smet stated there were about 20 of the "wigwams" (like stacks of wheat), each one about 120 feet in circumference—large enough to shelter 30 to 40 persons. He estimated the village population at 700 to 800 souls.
Subagent John Campbell came from Missouri in (the latter part? of) 1828 to occupy (perhaps build?) the Shawnee Agency (present Johnson county, near the Missouri line), where his particular charges (as subagent) were the Piankeshaws, Weas, and Peorias (whose tracts of land were south of the Shawnee reserve). In a February 9, 1829, report by the secretary of war, Subagent Campbell was listed as residing at “mouth of Kanzas river.” He was subordinate to Agent Richard Graham in 1828-1829, (then to Graham’s successor George Vashon, in 1829-1830, and to his successor, R. W. Cummins, in 1830-1833).

The beginnings of Shawnee Agency are obscure, and whether a building was erected prior to 1828 has not been ascertained. Agent Graham (in charge of the Delawares, Shawnees, Kickapoos, Piankeshaws, Weas, and Peorias residing in Missouri, Arkansas, and west of Missouri) had his headquarters near St. Louis, and visited the various Indians under his supervision when business demanded.

Shawnee Agency was well established by 1829. (The location, by present-day description, was on the E.% of the S.E.% Sec. 10, and W.% of the S.W.% Sec. 11, T. 12, R. 25 E.—See KHQ, v. 5, p. 342.) As 2d Lt. Philip St. George Cooke saw it in June, 1829: “. . . [on the edge of a] light and airy grove . . . was delightfully situated . . . the house . . . of the subagent of the Delawares—the hospitable old Major C[ampbell] . . . with ready joke and julep, did his best to make our long farewell to the settlements, a lively one.” Surveyor Isaac McCoy, westbound from Independence (Mo.), wrote, on August 21, 1830: “In the evening reached the Shawanoe & Delaware agency, at the house of Maj. J. Campbell the Sub. Agt. by whom we were kindly received. Our tents were pitched for the company, while I accepted an invitation to take quarters with Maj. Campbell.” (For an earlier Shawnee Agency event of that year, see January 12, 1830, annals entry.)


Author-editor-missionary Timothy Flint’s two-volume popular and “romantic” work, A Condensed Geography and History of the Western States, published at Cincinnati during the year, contained a chapter on “Missouri Territory” (defined as the area bounded by the British possessions on the north; the Northwest Territory, Illinois, and Missouri on the east; the Mexican republic on the south and southwest; and the Rocky Mountains on the west). By his description (but not from his own observation), beyond the partially wooded belt of country extending from 200 to 400 miles west of the Mississippi:

There commences that ocean of prairies, that constitutes so striking and impressive a feature in the vast country beyond the Mississippi and Missouri.
This vast country is for the most part, a plain, more or less covered with grass, in great extents fertile; in other extents almost a moving sand. It is pastured, and trodden by countless numbers of buffaloes, elk and other wild animals, that graze upon it.

Ref: Flint’s work, as noted above, v. 2, p. 435.

1829

William L. Sublette’s party (“52 men and two Indians”) left St. Louis around mid-March to take the Smith, Jackson & Sublette pack-mule train to the fur traders’ rendezvous in the Rockies, ending up at Pierre’s Hole. (Sublette had brought the partners’ furs down to Missouri in September, 1828, and had remained over the winter at St. Louis.)

In this company were George W. Ebberts, Joseph L. Meek, Samuel Parkman, and Robert Newell—new recruits among the more experienced mountain men like Milton Sublette. After a brief stop at Independence, Mo., this expedition followed out the Santa Fe trail for some miles, then, apparently, turned northwest, forded the Kansas, moved up its valley, then headed north to the Little Blue and on to the Platte—traversing “Sublette’s Trace” (see March, 1827 entry)—the future Oregon trail route.


Visiting Cantonment Leavenworth in March, on an inspection trip, Col. George Croghan made a report (dated March 31) which included these remarks:

. . . A great deal has been done [since 1827], much more in truth than could have been expected of a garrison so reduced by sickness; still the work is not half accomplished. . . . A good hospital has been erected, and four houses originally intended to quarter one company each (though now occupied by officers) have been put up and very nearly completed, but there yet remains to be provided for: Officers quarters, store houses, guard house, magazine, etc., etc. . . . I am . . . at a loss . . . as to the operating causes of [the cantonment’s] . . . sickness. There is certainly nothing apparently in its location to render it unhealthy, on the contrary, the site might be considered an admirable one.

Cantonment Leavenworth was then garrisoned by Companies A, B, D, E, F, H, I, and K of the Third U.S. infantry, with Bvt. Maj. John Bliss as commanding officer. Maj. Surg. John Gale was the overworked medical officer.

Ref: KHO, v. 15, pp. 353-355; Heitman, op. cit. (for officers’ names).

In the spring, probably in March, Mission Neosho (which had been operated since 1824 by the Rev. Benton Pixley and his wife
for the Osages of Neosho river) ceased operation. The hostility of Agent John F. Hamtramck towards Pixley brought about the abrupt closing of the mission, and the removal of the mission family from present Neosho county to Missouri.

(See under 1830 for a “revival” of the mission, in another location, with different personnel, and under a new name—Boudinot.)

Ref: Graves, op. cit., p. 194.

On April 13 the small, side-wheel steamboat Wm. D. Duncan (Captain Crooks), from Pittsburgh, Pa., left St. Louis for Franklin, Mo. (and returned on the 23d)—the first of several trips she made during the 1829 season, between the two towns. Her series of voyages may be said to have ushered in the era of regular steamboat travel on the Missouri. (See March 15, 1830, entry.)

Ref: KIQ, v. 16, pp. 284, 285; St. Louis (Mo.) Beacon, April 13 and July 4, 1829. (Though H. M. Chittenden in his Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri River (1903)—see KHC, v. 9, p. 278—stated that the Duncan ran to “Fort” Leavenworth in 1829, as a regular packet, this does not seem to have been the case.)

The 18th April issue of the Fayette Missouri Intelligencer carried Bvt. Brig. Gen. Henry Atkinson’s notice (of the same date) that about June 1 a detachment of 200 Sixth infantrymen, under Bvt. Maj. Bennet Riley, would leave Cantonment Leavenworth for the Santa Fe road and proceed to the Arkansas river for the protection of trading caravans bound for New Mexico. The notice concluded: “The detachment will halt at some position on the Arkansas, for the return of the caravans, till some time in October, when it will fall back upon the frontier.” (The Sixth infantry was then stationed at Jefferson Barracks, Mo.)

Ref: Young, op. cit., pp. 30, 40, 49, 50.

At Cantonment Leavenworth, on May 15, a 15-gun salute greeted the steamboat Diana, arriving with Bvt. Maj. Bennet Riley and four companies of Sixth infantry; and also bringing some of the soldiers’ families (“the boat swarmed with their wives and children; the deck was barricaded with beds and bedding . . .”).

The Diana had made the voyage in record time—10 days—from Jefferson Barracks, Mo.


Five companies of the Third infantry left Cantonment Leavenworth in keel and mackinaw boats on May 16 for Jefferson Barracks. Next day, the rest of the Third (three companies) left that post on the Diana, for the lower river. (The Diana reached the Barracks on May 20; the “3 keels and 4 small boats” arrived on May 23.)

Ref: Ibid., p. 270; KIQ, v. 16, pp. 288, 289; Young, op. cit., p. 54.
The latter part of May, Marston G. Clark ("General Clark" in various records of the time), new subagent for the Kansa Indians, arrived at the Kansa Agency (which was to be his headquarters for the next five years). A native of Virginia, but resident of Indiana, Clark had been appointed in March, to fill the vacancy created by the death of Baronet Vasquez in August, 1828, and filled interim by Dunning D. McNair. John T. Irving, Jr., who met him in the fall of 1833, described Clark as a "tall, thin, soldier-like man, arrayed in an Indian hunting-shirt and an old fox-skin cap."


Agent George Vashon (newly appointed to succeed Richard Graham, discharged) left St. Louis on June 4 for the mouth of the Kansas, to make an annuity payment to the Shawnee Indians. Probably he did not remain long at the Shawnee Agency (where Sub-agent Campbell resided), but in October he was back at "Indn Ag[y] mouth of Kanzas River," issuing (on the 21st) a trading license to Francis G. Chouteau; reporting (October 27) on the condition of the agency Indians, and forwarding (to William Clark) a treaty he had made with the Delawares on September 24, "at Council camp, on James's fork of White river, in the State of Missouri."

(Vashon served only briefly as agent to the Shawnees, Delawares, &c. of Missouri, Arkansas, and present Kansas. He left in mid-July, 1830, to become agent for the Western Cherokees.)

Ref: OIA, "Registers of Letters Received," v. 2, pp. 496, 497, 499; 21st Cong., 2d Sess., House Ex. Doc. 41 (Serial 207); SIA, v. 28, p. 34.

On June 11 the first military escort for Santa Fe traders—Bvt. Maj. Bennet Riley and 200 Sixth infantry troops—reached the traders' rendezvous at Round Grove (on the headwaters of Cedar creek, in present Johnson county). These soldiers were Companies A, B, F, and H, captained by William N. Wickliffe and Joseph Pentland. Among the junior officers was 2d Lt. Philip St. George Cooke, who, as a captain, in 1843, would lead a military escort on the same road.

Riley's expedition (with 20 heavily-laden wagons and four carts, drawn by oxen—an innovation on the Santa Fe trail; and a six-pounder, mule-drawn on a carriage) had left a camp across the Missouri from Cantonment Leavenworth on June 4; traveled down the river's left bank; and recrossed (on the 8th and 9th) near the Kaw's mouth, to head out on the prairie past the Shawnee Agency.

From June 12 to July 9, Riley's command marched—ahead of the traders—over the Santa Fe road, to the vicinity of Chouteau's Island (present Kearny county—see 1816).
Charles Bent (on his first journey to the southwest) was elected captain of the moderate-size Santa Fe caravan (about 70 men, and 37 wagons) which left Round Grove (see preceding entry) on June 12, following in the rear of the military escort. Among this company were William Bent, David and William Waldo, James L. Collins, and Milton E. Bryan. (The names of a good many others on this trip are known, also.) The caravan reached Council Grove on June 18; left there on the 20th; and proceeded without special incident to the Upper Crossing of the Arkansas (near Chouteau's Island), on July 9.

William Waldo's "Recollections," loc. cit., pp. 72, 75; The Western Monitor, Fayette, Mo., March 24, 1830 (for a list of more than 30 traders); and see Young's book, p. 184.

C MARRIED: Clement Lessert (interpreter at the Kansas Agency), and Julia Roy, on June 13, in Jackson county, Mo., by Andrew P. Patterson, J. P.

On July 10 the Santa Fe traders forded the Arkansas river (below Chouteau's Island, in present Kearny county) and camped on Mexican soil. Next day they took leave of the military escort and started across the sand hills for Santa Fe. They had traveled only six to nine miles when a party of about 50 Indians ambushed three men riding in advance—killing merchant Samuel Craig Lamme. (This incident presumably occurred in what is now Kearny county.) The traders, under Charles Bent's direction, corralled the wagons, dug rifle-pits, and got their small cannon into use. Nine volunteers rode back to the Arkansas for aid. Major Riley led his entire command into Mexican territory, rescued the traders from their predicament, and escorted them on through the sand hills. On July 15 Riley and the Sixth infantry battalion turned back to the Arkansas.

(The traders had a difficult journey to Santa Fe. Indians harassed them constantly, and the caravan, though augmented by a party of 120 Mexicans met on the road, might not have reached its destination except for aid from the west. Ewing Young and some 95 trappers from Santa Fe and Taos fought through the Indian lines and came to their rescue.)


Ref: Young, op. cit., pp. 74-85; Cooke's Scenes and Adventures, v. 2, pp. 42-46; Marriage records, Jackson County, Mo. Lessert (Kansas interpreter from 1827 to 1834) died July 20, 1854, aged 55—see D. A. R., Kansas City, Mo., Vital Historical Records of Jackson County, Missouri, 1826-1876 (Kansas City, Mo., e1934), p. 267.

Ref: Young, op. cit., pp. 85-103, 140, 141; Waldo's "Recollections," loc. cit., pp. 64, 72-77; [Cooke's] "Journal," loc. cit., pp. 280-282. In the Sand Hills battle the traders thought the Indians numbered several hundred (Waldo "recollected" their number at from 500 to 2,000!). Cooke's journal suggests there were probably not more than 50 in the party which killed Lamme.
Carrying dispatches and mail, Corporal Arter and Pvt. William Nation of the Sixth infantry, on July 12, left Cantonment Leavenworth on horseback for Major Riley's camp on the Arkansas. On July 23, when only "some 25 miles below" their destination, a small party of Indians (armed with bows and lances) wounded both men, took their horses and the mail. Though Nation was in poor condition, the two managed to travel perhaps 15 miles upriver. On August 10 Arter, alone, stumbled into Riley's camp. Forty soldiers with a cart went out and rescued Nation. He died on August 28, in present Kearny county; but the skirmish with the Indians apparently occurred in what is now Finney county.


A clash between Big Neck's band of Iowas, and some settlers in the Grand Chariton region of northern Missouri, in mid-July, created an Indian war scare. At Cantonment Leavenworth where Capt. Zalmon C. Palmer, and about 20 men of the Sixth infantry (all but six of them ill) composed the entire force to defend the inhabitants which included "eight or nine ladies and about twenty camp women." The ladies (and children?) "assembled every night in a large hospital which was surrounded by about 16 cannon." A request was sent to Liberty, Mo., for aid, and 40 men came to bolster the garrison.

Missouri's Gov. John Miller asked for troops from Jefferson Barracks (Mo.) to quell the "war." Bvt. Brig. Gen. Henry Leavenworth hastily organized an expedition of Sixth and Third infantrymen which proceeded to Cantonment Leavenworth on the steamboat Crusader. At that place, some Iowa, Sac, and Fox leaders met Leavenworth in council, in the fore part of August. They expressed regret for the actions of Big Neck's band and offered 19 chiefs and warriors as hostages (to insure surrender of the Iowas involved in the July affray). By August 19 Leavenworth, his command, and the 19 Iowas, aboard the Crusader, had reached St. Louis.

(Big Neck and nine others of his band were captured in September and taken to Jefferson Barracks in October. The hostages were sent home early in December.)

Ref: O. W. Pollock's A Sketch of the Life of Mrs. Jane Foster Wheeler (Wallace) . . . (San Francisco, 1910), pp. 24, 25; Young, op. cit., p. 62; Western Monitor, Fayette, Mo., August 29, 1829; St. Louis Beacon, December 20, 1830; RHQ, v. 16, pp. 294, 300, 302, 303.

Returning from Mexican territory after aiding the Santa Fe-bound traders (see July 10 entry), Major Riley, on July 26, selected
a summer camp site for his command on the left bank of the Arkansas (in U. S. territory), opposite Chouteau’s Island.

The days were uneventful till July 31, when four discharged soldiers, Simmons, Fry, Colvin, and Gordon, set out on foot for Missouri. About 10(? ) miles downriver they met some 30 mounted, “friendly” Indians. George Gordon was killed while shaking hands with one of them. His more prudent companions had moved on, but they retaliated by shooting an Indian. Fortunately for the three besieged men, a hunting party from Riley’s camp came along late in the day and rescued them. (Gordon’s body was found, and buried, several days later. His death perhaps occurred in what is now eastern Kearny county. Cooke’s journal says the men were “perhaps 18 miles” from Chouteau’s Island; Riley’s report says “not more than eight or ten miles.”)

On the afternoon of August 3, several large parties of Indians made a raid on the stock. One of the guards, Pvt. Samuel Arrison, was severely wounded and died an hour or so later. The troops engaged the 300 to 400 Indians in a skirmish that lasted about 45 minutes. The raiders lost eight warriors, but succeeded in driving off 50 oxen and some 20 horses and mules, and they wounded other animals. (It was later reported by Mexican traders that these were Kiowas and Comanches.)

The morning of August 11 Capt. Joseph Pentland and 18 men, with six oxen and a wagon, left camp to bring in meat from three buffaloes which had been shot earlier in the day. A party of perhaps 150 mounted Indians swooped down on them. Bugler Matthew King, and the team and wagon, were abandoned by Pentland, who fled, followed by his men, to a sand bar refuge. King was killed and scalped. Riley sent additional troops and the Indians withdrew, leaving the wagon and team unharmed. (Pentland was later court-martialed for his action in this affair.)

There were no further Indian depredations; in fact, the Indians disappeared. On August 16 Riley moved camp four miles downriver. All of September was a quiet month, with good buffalo hunting for the soldiers. The week of September 21st the move back upstream to Chouteau’s Island was begun—in anticipation of the arrival of the returning trading caravan, scheduled for not later than October 10.


* In the Missouri-bound caravan which left Santa Fe about September 1, there were 96 traders, some well-to-do Spanish refugees
(10 men and six women), fewer than 30 wagons, and about 2,000 head of horses, mules, and jacks. Col. Jose Antonio Viscarra and a force of 200 men (some 75 Mexicans, 91 “hired whites,” and 94 “hired Indians”) provided escort all the way to the Arkansas. Also in the party was Santiago Abreu, a New Mexican official.

On October 6, at the Cimarron (in the Oklahoma Panhandle of today), three (?) of the escort party were killed when the Mexicans had a skirmish with a large band of Indians following a “friendly” parley. In saving Viscarra’s life, one of the Pueblo Indians lost his own. With the traders’ assistance, the Indians were driven off, and several were killed.

On October 11, still more than 20 miles from the Arkansas river, and already a day late for the Chouteau’s Island rendezvous, the traders sent messengers to find Major Riley and inform him of their approach.

Ref: Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-144; Cooke’s *Scenes and Adventures*. . . . pp. 83-85; Josiah Gregg’s *Commerce of the Prairies*. . . . (1844), v. 1, pp. 47, 48, has comment on early female travelers on the Santa Fe trail, but does not state what year the first woman went over that route.

On September 23 the Rev. Isaac McCoy, his son Dr. Josephus McCoy, Gosa (an Ottawa Indian), and a hired hand arrived at the Kansa Agency. (This small party had left Fayette, Mo., on horseback, September 17 to make a “tour of exploration” at McCoy’s own expense, in order “to acquire a more definite knowledge of a portion of the Indian territory . . . .” in present Kansas.)

“We left the agency on the 29th,” wrote McCoy, “having added to our company [the agent] General [Marston G.] Clark, White Plume [principal Kansa chief] . . . and Plume’s son-in-law [Louis] Gunville [Conville], a Frenchman, who, though he could speak very little English, was our only interpreter.”

Two weeks later—on October 13th—they returned to the Kansa Agency. Where did these seven people travel during the two weeks of early October? Isaac McCoy was careful not to say! Beyond mention of the prairies he gave no geographical clue; and he did not state the direction of their journey.


At sunrise on October 11, after firing one shot from the cannon, Bvt. Maj. Bennet Riley and his Sixth infantry battalion left the camp near Chouteau’s Island and headed homeward. But three miles downstream they halted upon learning that the caravan from Santa Fe was within a day’s journey of them. (See September 1 entry.)

On the afternoon of the 12th the traders’ caravan, and its large escorting party under Colonel Viscarra, reached, and forded the Ar-
kansas near Riley's camp. By evening over 500 persons (Mexicans, Spaniards, Indians of several tribes, Creoles, Frenchmen, and Americans), and an immense number of animals (Riley's oxen, and more than "2,000 horses, mules, [and] jacks, which kept up an incessant braying") were gathered together on the river's left bank—a few miles below Chouteau’s Island (and within present Kearny county). Lieutenant Cooke wrote that it was "the strangest collection of men and animals that had perhaps ever met on a frontier of the United States."

The two days this congregation spent together were highlighted by exchanges of military and social courtesies, buffalo hunting, feats of horsemanship, Indian songs and rituals. Riley's Sixth infantry troops were displayed in review and drill for Colonel Viscarra; he, in turn, showed his troops in formation. Whereas the American officers could offer as festive menu only buffalo meat, salt pork, bread, raw onions, and "a tin cup of whiskey," served on a green blanket "tablecloth," Colonel Viscarra (on the evening of the 13th) provided an elaborate dinner including fried ham, "various kinds of cakes, and delightful chocolate; and . . . several kinds of Mexican wines"—all served on a low table set with silver.

Taking leave of each other on the morning of October 14, the Missouri-bound company (more than 300 persons; some 1,800? animals) started downriver; while Colonel Viscarra and his 200 men prepared to return to Santa Fe. Riley's battalion, the traders, and the Spanish refugees reached the Caches on October 17; took the dry "cut-off" towards the Great Bend; by October 23 were past that point and encamped on Cow creek. On the 25th the traders' caravan split up in several parties, each proceeding at its own pace. Riley and his battalion continued to follow the Santa Fe trail till November 5; then (somewhere in present Douglas county) they crossed the Wakarusa, and pursued a northward course 12 miles to the Kansas river; forded it (on the 5th and 6th) opposite the Kansa Agency (seven miles above present Lawrence). Lieutenant Cooke wrote: "... the log-houses there, were the first habitations of men we had seen for five months."

An hour was spent at the Agency, where they got a guide, and sent out an advance party to make a trail for the oxen (only 24 yoke were left) and wagons, across Jefferson and Leavenworth counties of today, to Cantonment Leavenworth. On the evening of November 8 the battalion "marched into garrison in Column of Companies, by field music"; and was received with a 15-gun salute. The Sixth infantrymen's post quarters were "the miserable huts and sheds left by the Third infantry the preceding May."

In the autumn Frederick Chouteau (aged 20, youngest of Pierre Chouteau, Jr.'s, sons) opened a trading house for the Kansa Indians at Horseshoe Lake, on the south side of the Kansas (in what is now Douglas county), across the river and about a mile from the Kansa Agency (seven miles above present Lawrence). He remained at that location for over two years, moving in 1832 [not 1830 as printed in KHC, v. 8, p. 425] to a location higher up the Kansas, near the mouth of American Chief [Mission] creek. (See, also, under 1832.)

In 1829, it appears, the Kansa Indians abandoned their large town near the Big Blue-Kansas junction to form three separate villages some distance downstream. (See next entry.) It was Frederick Chouteau's intention, in 1831, to move from Horseshoe Lake upriver to the vicinity of the new Kansa towns. The annual license issued on October 10, 1831 (to the American Fur Company), specified that his trade would be at "A point between the two upper villages of the Kanzas, on the Kanzas river." However, in December young Chouteau was still at the site opposite the Agency. On December 20 his brother Francis G. Chouteau (in person) applied to Kansa Subagent M. G. Clark for permission for Frederick to continue at that place. Clark wrote Chouteau a letter that same day, referred to the license of October 10, and stated: "... you have been vending goods at your old stand for some days [disregarding the license] both to Indians and to whites thereby bringing down on this agency, large bodies of Indians to the great annoyance of the few whites at this place by killing their stock, crowding their houses and begging for provisions. ... You had, I conceive, full time to have reached the point designated in the license and to have made your cabins, but the Kansas trade is unprofitable this year and you may think proper to abandon it this year. ...

Ref: KHC, v. 8, p. 425; 22d Cong., 2d Sess., House Doc. No. 104 (Serial 254); SIA, v. 6, p. 413 (M. G. Clark's letter of December 20, 1831). A biographical sketch of Frederick Chouteau on p. 45 of E. F. Heisler and D. M. Smith's Atlas Map of Johnson County, Kansas (Wyandott, 1874) states that his first wife was Nancy Logan, a [Shawnee] Indian whom he married in 1830, and that they had four children before her death in 1846.

It was apparently in 1829 that the Kansa abandoned their long-occupied 125-lodge village near the Big Blue-Kansas junction (see 1790-1791 annals entry) to move some 40 miles downstream and form three "permanent" towns—all west of present Topeka, within what is now Shawnee county. Discussing the Kansa, Agent John Dougherty commented, on January 30, 1830: "not until the last year, were they located in such manner as to enjoy any advantage from opening fields and cultivating the earth." His statement seems to imply a move in 1829. Unquestionably, the Kansa were well established in their new abodes by the end of 1830, in locations they were to occupy till 1847.

Fool Chief's village (700 to 800 people) was north of the Kansas river, and six miles west of the mouth of Heart river [Soldier creek].
On September 6, 1830, Isaac McCoy’s surveying party was at work about four miles west of present Topeka, and McCoy noted in his journal: “About a mile and a half north of us between the [Soldier] creek and [the Kansas] river is the village of Chachhaa hogeree, Prarie-village. It contains about 50 houses, with say three families to the house.” (Fool Chief’s town was on the S. E. ¼ of Sec. 16, T. 11, R. 15 E., in present Menoken township.)

About seven miles to the west, and on the south side of the Kansas was Hard Chief’s village (500 to 600 people), on high ground, but near the river. (His town was on the N. E. ¼ of the N. W. ¼ of Sec. 28, T. 11, R. 14 E., in Dover township.)

American Chief’s village (about 100 people), described as 20 dirt lodges of good size, was in the bottoms on the west side of American Chief [Mission] creek, about a mile and a half from the Kansas river, and about a mile below Hard Chief’s town. (American Chief’s town was, apparently, in Sec. 27 of T. 11, R. 14 E., in Dover township.)

Ref: 21st Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Doc. 110 (Serial 193), p. 10 (for Dougherty’s statement); KHC, v. 5, p. 353 (for McCoy); KHC, v. 9, p. 573 (for locations of the Kansas villages), v. 8, p. 425, and v. 9, p. 196 (for other data on the Kansas towns, according to Frederick Chouteau’s recollections [1880]).

(Part Six Will Appear in the Summer, 1962, Issue.)