Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals
Compiled by LOUISE BARRY
PART NINETEEN, 1850

January-June.—Licenses to trade with Indians in “Kansas,” as granted by agents and subagents of the St. Louis superintendency, were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traders</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>Issued by</th>
<th>Rec'd at St. Louis</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arthur I. Baker</td>
<td>Sacs &amp; Foxes</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robidoux &amp; Vaughan</td>
<td>Iowas, and Sacs &amp; Foxes (of the Missouri)</td>
<td>A. J. Vaughan</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>(A. G.) Boone &amp; (J. G.) Hamilton</td>
<td>Sacs &amp; Foxes</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>(R. A.) Kinzie &amp; (J. H.) Whistler</td>
<td>Sacs &amp; Foxes</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josiah Smart</td>
<td>Sacs &amp; Foxes</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. B. Scott</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<td>(A. G.) Boone &amp; (W. R.) Bernard</td>
<td>Kansa, and Sacs &amp; Foxes</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert A. Kinzie</td>
<td>Pottawatomies</td>
<td>Luke Lea</td>
<td>May</td>
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<td>John D. Lasley</td>
<td>Pottawatomies</td>
<td>Luke Lea</td>
<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyprian Chouteau</td>
<td>Delawares, Shawnees, and Kickapoo</td>
<td>Luke Lea</td>
<td>May</td>
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<td>C(yprian) &amp; F(rederick) Chouteau</td>
<td>Kansa</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. B. Scott</td>
<td>Sacs &amp; Foxes</td>
<td>C. N. Handy</td>
<td>June</td>
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Ref: Superintendency of Indian Affairs (SIA), St. Louis, “Records,” v. 9, typed copy, pp. 405, 409, 417, 422, 429, 439, 440. Except as noted, the Sacs & Foxes were the “Mississippi” Sacs & Foxes (whose head chief was Moses Keokuk—“Keokuk, Jr.”).

January 1.—The St. Louis Intelligencer (v. 1, no. 1), and in subsequent issues, ran a table of distances on the Missouri from “St. Louis to St. Joseph”—as shown (in part) in column “A” below. The (partial) Missouri river table in column “B” combines nearly identical data from an 1850 J. Calvin Smith Illustrated Hand-Book, and an 1852 J. H. Colton Guide-Book. . . . In column “C” the

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(33)

3—1580
mileages have been compiled from a table in the 1851-published *James's Traveler's Companion*. (Compare with the distance tables in *KHQ*, v. 30, pp. 347, 348.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From St. Louis to:</td>
<td>Miles From St. Louis to:</td>
<td>Miles From St. Louis to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mouth of Missouri</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>St. Charles</td>
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<td>Missouri</td>
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<td>Liberty Landing</td>
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<td>Liberty Landing</td>
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<td>Wayne City [one landing for Independence]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mouth of Little Platte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas River</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>Kansas River Landing</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Little] Platte River</td>
<td>413</td>
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<td>Kansas [City]</td>
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*Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, January 1, 1850; J. Calvin Smith's *The Illustrated Hand-Book, a New Guide for Travelers Through the United States of America*, (New York, 1850); (J. H. ) Colton's *Traveler and Tourist's Guide-Book Through the United States of America and the Canadas* (New York, 1862); S. L. Massie, *James's Traveler's Companion* (Cincinnati, 1851), in which the distances are listed from mouth of the Yellowstone down to the Missouri's mouth, and for the above table have been compiled in reverse assuming the distance from St. Louis to the mouth of the Missouri as 18 miles.*

**January.**—William P. Richardson, St. Joseph, Mo., who had headed the Great Nemahaw Subagency, 1841-1845, received appointment to that post—replacing Alfred J. Vaughan.


**January 15.**—Daniel P. Mann, and two companions, with the express mail from Santa Fe, arrived at Fort Leavenworth, having been “about 40 days” en route.

*Ref: St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette, January 26, 1850 (from Weston [Mo.] Reporter of January 19). “Mann's Fort,” or “Fort Mann,” on the Arkansas, was named for Daniel P. Mann—see *Kansas Historical Quarterly* (KHFQ), v. 30, pp. 463, 407, 506, 535. The Missouri Republican, St. Louis, January 28, 1850, noted receipt of a November 28, 1849, issue of the Santa Fe New Mexico—presumably from the above mail.*
January 18.—At St. Joseph, Mo., “Ralph Ringwood” (correspondent for the New York Tribune) wrote: “From present appearances, it is likely that the overland emigration for California will commence here at least a month earlier than last season. The Missouri opposite this town has never once been closed over since Winter set in, and we have every indication of an early Spring. . . .” (It proved to be a late spring, “owing,” as “Ringwood” stated on April 23, “to a constant succession of cold rains. . . .”)

He reported, also: “Large and extensive outfitting stores have been newly established, commodious hotels fitted up, and a considerable amount of stock suitable for the trip collected. . . . Many of our citizens who intend taking up the line of march are awaiting impatiently the time [when first grass appears]. . . .

“Numerous passenger and freight lines are advertised to start at the earliest possible day. S. Roundy & Co. give notice that they will take passengers from Council Bluffs to Sutter’s Fort for $800—freight at $12.50 per 100 lbs. A passenger and freight train will also leave this point, and an other will start from Independence. . . .” (See pp. 61 and 77.)


February 1.—From Fort Leavenworth, with accompanying letter, Bvt. Maj. James H. Carleton, First dragoons, sent to the St. Louis Intelligencer the table of distances, below, on the “Route from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Kearny.”

(Since May, 1845, when Col. S. W. Kearny had supervised some route improvements—see KHQ, v. 30, p. 221, and the map between pp. 224, 225—this had been the military path utilized. But part of the Fort Leavenworth—Big Blue section remained “circuitous and objectionable.” Two months after Carleton’s letter was written, Bvt. Maj. Edmund A. Ogden laid out a new route through this area—see p. 44. On the Stansbury map—see facing p. 64—both the old and new roads are shown.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Fort Leavenworth to [Miles]</th>
<th>Total [Miles]</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independence creek .... 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clough creek .................. 16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolf creek .................... 10</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger creek ................ 24</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Nemaha ................... 30</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Good wood, water, and grass
Good wood, water, and grass
Good wood, water, and grass
Good grass, but wood and water indifferent several good places of encampment in the last distance
Excellent road for this distance, but wood and water no where found together on the route
Little Nemaha 10

Branch of Nemaha 20

Little Blue [i.e., Big Blue] 12

Good encampment 12
Sandy creek 20
A running stream 12
Little Sandy creek 18
Little Blue 15

Encampments on Little Blue 5
Encampments on Little Blue 23
Encampments on Little Blue 21

Through the bluffs to river bottom 22
Fort Kearny 15

This stream, is a remarkably fine one, and affords everything desirable for an encampment.

A very fine camping ground, with plenty of wood, water, and grass.

Fine river, about 50 yards wide, good fishing, plenty of wood, water, and grass; very good ford.

Wood, water and grass plenty.

Wood, water and grass plenty.

Good encamping ground.

Good encamping ground.

This is where the road first strikes the Little Blue.

The road that leads along this river, is obstructed by many ravines, running perpendicular to the stream; road heavy. Here the road leaves the river to strike the Nebrask, or Platte. Between the Blue and the Platte the road is very heavy, it is filled with difficult ravines and broken ground, no good places for camping. The distance along the river bottom to the fort level and marshy, and in wet weather would be exceedingly difficult for wagons.

EARLY (? ) February.—An express mail left Fort Leavenworth for Santa Fe. W. C. Skinner, departing the New Mexican capital on March 19, met the carriers 20 miles out.

Presumably the westbound mail party met en route, "Mr [Robert] Brent and party" who left Santa Fe on January 25 (and carried letters for Indian Agent James S. Calhoun); also the Fort Leavenworth-bound mail which left Santa Fe at the beginning of February.

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, May 11, 1850; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, March 31, 1850; James S. Calhoun's Official Correspondence ..., ed. by Annie H. Abel (1915), pp. 104, 105. "D." wrote from Santa Fe on January 31 that it had been more than 100 days "since our latest news from the United States"; and a mail was daily expected. If a January express left Fort Leavenworth for Santa Fe—and reached there in February—no information on it has been found.

MARRIED: Stephen Cole, of Gentry county, Mo., and Mrs. Lydia Yount, formerly of Jersey Shore, Lycoming county, Pa., on February 18, at "Ioway and Sac Mission" (present Doniphan county) by the Rev. William Hamilton.

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, February 22, 1850.

In the fore part of February an express mail from Santa Fe arrived at Fort Leavenworth. Issues of the Santa Fe New Mexican up to January 3 reached Missouri by this party.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, February 18, 1850. The mail got to St. Louis (from Fort Leavenworth) on February 17, via "the regular mail" across Missouri.

February 18.—Preston Beck (trader), and seven other men who had left Santa Fe January 27, reached Independence, Mo. Their 23-day journey, in a wagon, had been made across plains covered with "snow to the depth of ten inches."

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, March 9 (by telegraph from St. Louis), and March 30, 1850 (from St. Louis Daily Union of March 9). Beck arrived at St. Louis on March 8.

February 24.—The St. Ange reached Weston, Mo.—the first of 226 steamboats to arrive there in 1850. See, also, March 6 entry.

Steamboats which went to places higher up the Missouri during the year numbered 160. The last boat of the 1850 season at Weston was the Mary Blane, on November 30.

Ref: The Western Journal, St. Louis, v. 5 (March, 1851), p. 327.

February 25.—David Waldo obtained a contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden, AQM) to transport government stores overland from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Laramie. (Rate: $7.74 per 100 pounds; bond: $40,000; sureties: William McCoy and Jabez Smith.)


February 26.—Joseph Clymer, Westport, Mo. (connected with the Ewings—W. G. and G. W.), received a contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden) to freight government supplies from Fort
Leavenworth to Santa Fe. (Rate: $8.87½ per 100 pounds; bond: $50,000; sureties: William G. Ewing, Joseph A. Sire, and Edward Walsh.)


February 27.—A Journey to California—a guidebook by “Major” John Stemmons, Rocheport, Mo., published by Fisher & Bennett, St. Louis—was first advertised in the St. Louis Reveille. So far as known, no copy is extant.

The Reveille “ad” stated it embraced “a description of the country, incidents of the overland route, with directions to future emigrants in making up outfits.” The St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette, in April, mentioned this “guide to California emigrants”—priced at 25 cents—containing notes of Stemmons’ overland journey “last year.”

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, February 27 (and later issues), 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, April 5, 1850; Missouri Statesman, Columbia, Mo., March 1, 1850. The St. Louis Intelligencer also advertised Stemmons’ guide.

March 2.—James C. Ogden (by contract made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden) agreed to furnish and deliver at Fort Leavenworth, by December 31, 800 cords of “good quality” wood, for the sum of $2,774.


March 5.—James Brown and John S. Jones obtained the contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden, AQM) to freight government stores from Fort Leavenworth to the new military post in the vicinity of Fort Hall (“Idaho”). (Rate: $14.15 per 100 pounds; bond: $75,000; sureties: A. Fristoe, George Scrogin, and A. M. Forbes.)

The St. Joseph Gazette of March 15 reported: “Mr. John S. Jones, of Georgetown, Mo., advertises in Boonville Democrat to take 80 persons through to California if they will drive a team from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Hall . . . and after arriving at that post [Jones] will proceed to California with empty wagons. Each man will be furnished with one month’s provisions after arrival at the mines.” (See, also, May 21 entry.)

Ref: 31st Cong., 2d Sess., H. Ex. Doc. No. 23 (Serial 599), p. 15; St. Joseph Gazette, March 15, 1850; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, May 8, 1850. The “Fort Hall” post was abandoned in the early summer of 1850. Jones freighted the army supplies to Fort Laramie. The Reveille ran James Brown & Co.’s advertisement (dated April 27) for a “mule train of Passenger Carts from Kansas [Kansas City, Mo.] to California, [to start] between the 15th and 20th of May. The train . . . [to be] fitted out by men of experience; James Brown, of Pettis county, Missouri, the great Government contractor . . . being at its head. The price of passage will be $175. . . .” Brown, from the evidence, backed out on the passenger train enterprise. His freight wagons were on the trail, however, apparently in charge of John S. Brown (who, in 1849—see KHQ, v. 31, p. 279—had been a Brown & Russell “surty”). Henry A. Stine (of the Glenn & Co. passenger train), west of South Pass on July 30, wrote: “a number of the passengers have purchased oxen from John Brown’s Government Freight Train at $100 per yoke and intend to leave the [Glenn & Co.] train. . . .”—Stine’s diary quoted from typed copy, courtesy California State Library, Sacramento.
March 6.—David Waldo received a contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden, AQM) to transport government supplies from Fort Leavenworth to El Paso del Norte. (Rate: $13.47 per 100 pounds for the first 125,000 pounds; $13.87% per 100 pounds for the remainder; bond $75,000; sureties: Jabez Smith and William McCoy.)

Ref: 81st Cong., 2d Sess., H. Ex. Doc. No. 23 (Serial 899), pp. 15, 18. A supplemental contract of June 28, altered the above to read: “the delivery of stores . . . shall be made by said Waldo at Santa Fe or at such of the interior posts of New Mexico not more remote than El Paso. . . .”

March 6.—The Kansas left Weston, Mo., to return to St. Louis. Among the upbound boats she met were the Anna, Haydee, Cora, St. Ange, Minnesota, Rowena, Gen. Lane, Alleghany Mail (the last three? all lower-river boats), Sacramento, Saluda, Highland Mary, and Duroc.

On March 10 the Haydee and Cora arrived at St. Joseph, Mo.—the first steamboats to reach there in 1850. Both departed downriver, on the 11th. The Missouri was reported to be in “good boating condition.”

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, March 12, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, March 15, 1850.

March 7.—Promoting Independence, Mo., over St. Joseph, Mo., as the starting point for westbound emigrants, “California” (in a communication published by the Missouri Republican, St. Louis) wrote: “. . . the crossing [crossings?] of the Kansas river (where six new boats are provided,) is a ‘mere circumstance,’ when viewed with the difficulties of crossing the Missouri.”

[Emigrants starting west from Independence (or Westport, or Kansas, Mo.) in 1850 could ferry the Kansas at Delaware (or, Grinter) crossing, about eight miles west of the Missouri line, and take the military road up past Fort Leavenworth to join the St. Joseph branch of the Oregon-California road. Or, they could remain on the south side of the Kansas river, traveling the “old” Oregon-California road westward to one of three crossing points—all in present Shawnee county: the (so-called) “lower ferry” at present Topeka; the ferry upstream at Pottawatomie Baptist Mission; or the “upper ferry” a little above the Pottawatomies’ trading post “Union Town.”]

Later in March, in a circular addressed to California emigrants, signed by 46 Independence merchants and residents (also published in the Republican), it was stated: “At the crossing[?] of the Kansas on this route there will be twelve[1] new ferry boats, by the arrival of the first emigrants.”

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, March 7, 21, 26, 1850.

March 15.—A mail express from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, which left the post on the 15th, was met by eastbound W. C. Skinner on the Cimarron about March 29; and reached Santa Fe about April 15.
From Santa Fe, in March, Frank Hendrickson and James Clay set out for Fort Leavenworth with the mail (in a wagon); reached their destination, safely, in April. See, also, April 18 entry.


March.—Several parties of Santa Fe traders, overland from New Mexico, reached Missouri this month.

On the 15th, “H. M[alyer], from Chihuahua and J. S. Lucas and H. Lightner from El Paso,” arrived at Independence. It was stated the party had left Santa Fe on February 10, “making the journey in 22 [i. e., 33?] days.” Young James Belt (16 or 17), son of Dr. W. S. Belt, Independence, was a cotraveler.

“McCarty’s train” (eight “Americans” and four Mexicans), which had set out from Santa Fe on February 6, was overtaken by the above traders between the Little Arkansas and Cottonwood Crossing, traveling afoot, their animals (some 25 mules and horses) having been stolen at Big Bend of the Arkansas by Indians (Pawnees, or Kansa). “Some relief for this party was sent back from Council Grove,” Belt reported. By March 20 all (or part) of the hapless McCarty train reached Missouri. “T. L.” [John L.?] Hatcher (one of the “Americans”) boarded the *Highland Mary* at Kansas, Mo.; arrived at St. Louis on the 21st.

Upwards of 20 men—James Webb, (Charles L.?) Spencer, James E. Sabine, George Estes, Thomas Flourney, William Mitchell, among them—were in a third traders’ company eastbound on the Santa Fe trail in March. By one account they left Santa Fe on February 10, but were not expected to reach Missouri till the last of March.


In mid-March, by report, not less than 80 out of Parkville, Mo.’s, 150 inhabitants started “in search of gold, high up on Caw [Kansas] River, in the Indian territory.” The Liberty *Tribune* “understood” the expedition numbered about 40 men, with nine wagons. (See, also, April 8 entry.)

Ref: *St. Louis Intelligencer*, March 29, 1850; *The Weekly Tribune*, Liberty, Mo., March 29, 1850.

March 19.—At Fort Scott, the Rev. Daniel (?) Clarkson (Episcopalian; from the New Jersey diocese) became chaplain. (He remained till Fort Scott was abandoned in 1853.)

Some time in 1850 Father John J. Bax, S. J., of Osage Mission (about 40 miles distant) established a Catholic missionary station at Fort Scott, continuing it until, and after, the military post closed.

Ref: F. B. Heitman’s *Historical Register & Dictionary of the United States Army* . . . (1903), v. 1, p. 308; *Kansas Historical Collections (KHC)*, v. 16, pp. 355-39 (wherein the name is given as “David” Clarkson). The army record has been presumed correct. If Fort Scott had a chaplain prior to March, 1850, the record has not been located. Clarkson’s tour of duty there ended April 26, 1853. For Father Bax, see G. J. Garraghan’s *The Jesuits of the Middle United States* (New York, 1938), v. 2, p. 569.
March 19.—From St. Joseph, Mo., "Ralph Ringwood" wrote Horace Greeley: "With the opening of steamboat navigation they [California-bound emigrants] have been pouring in upon us, and a few of them are now ready for their long tramp. . . . As yet the arrivals are confined chiefly to those who have come from our neighboring Western States. A few Virginians are now on the ground. . . . Some will leave as early as the 1st of April, taking along corn enough to last their cattle and mules [until there is grass to sustain them]. . . ."

(The first emigrant train reached Fort Kearny on April 13—see p. 46. But Lorenzo Sawyer, traveling up the Little Blue on May 15, wrote: "The bend [a 10-mile stretch between river points] is full of emigrants waiting for grass to become better; some of whom left St. Joseph as early as the 2nd of April.")

The New York Tribune's correspondent also reported: "Mules and cattle are selling at round prices—supply not over plentiful. Good American mules range from $150 to $200 per pair. Santa Fe mules from $200 to $300 per pair. Well broken cattle of the proper age are selling at from $60 to $100 per yoke, and few in the market that are fit for the trip. Everything else necessary for the emigrants' outfit in great profusion and selling low.

"Whilst I write the steamboats Daniel Boone and Saranac are at the wharf, landing emigrants. The former has on board a company of 80 from the Hoosier State [Indiana]. . . . To judge from present appearances, the emigration from the Western States will be considerably larger than it was last season. . . ."

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, April 6, 1850; Lorenzo Sawyer, Way Sketches . . . 1850 (New York, 1852), p. 28. The Missouri Republican, St. Louis, of March 12, 1850, reported: "The Steamer Daniel Boone reached this city night before last, from the Wabash River, with a company of California emigrants on board. They number between 70 and 80 and have their camp equipage, wagons, mules, &c. on board. This is the first organized company that has reached here this season, and they depart to-day on the same boat for Independence [L. e., St. Joseph]."

March 19-27.—The Mary Blane left St. Louis on the 19th (with some 250 cabin passengers, and perhaps 200 more on deck); reached Weston, Mo., on the 26th, and St. Joseph, on the 27th.

Landing at St. Joseph (to travel overland to Fort Pierre—up the Missouri's left bank) were Alexander Culbertson (the American Fur Company's principal upper Missouri agent) and his brother Thaddeus A. Culbertson (who, under auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, would spend part of the summer on an expedition to the Bad Lands).


Markham (missionary of the northern Methodist church), assigned to the Wyandots and Shawnees in August, 1849, by the Missouri conference, had reached the Wyandot reserve sometime after October 4; made his residence there; and was preaching to the northern-church Wyandots from a small log chapel. (The Wyandots' brick Methodist meeting house—erected 1847-1848—was in the hands of the Church, South. See KHQ, v. 30, pp. 557, 558, and v. 31, p. 195, for the controversy between the Anti-slavery and Proslavery church factions.)

On April 20 a letter protesting Lea's action was addressed to the Comm'r of Indian affairs by Shawnee Indians Charles Fish, James Captain, John Fish, William Rogers, Crane, and Paschal Fish. (All were "northern church" members; as was their amanuensis, Wyandot John M. Armstrong.) They blamed the persons in charge of Shawnee Methodist Mission and manual labor school (The Rev. Thomas Johnson, and others of the southern church) for influencing Lea to make the ruling against Markham; and accused them of other "improper acts."

Ref: Office of Indian Affairs (OIA), Letters Received from Fort Leavenworth Agency (National Archives Microcopy 234, Roll 903); Comm'r of Indian Affairs, Report, 1849, Thomas Moseley's report, therein; A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, 1883), p. 1228; KHQ, v. 9, p. 230.


Meeker's diary entry of March 21 also stated: "We have a great Sauk dance on the Boat in the evening." The Indians were making the journey to attend the trial of two tribesmen accused of murdering Santa Fe trader Norris Colburn in 1847—see KHQ, v. 30, pp. 498, 499.

Ref: Meeker "Diary" (in KHI ms. div.); St. Louis Intelligencer, March 26, 1850; SIA, St. Louis, "Records," v. 9, typed copy, p. 424; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo.; St. Louis Daily New Era, September 15, 1849; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, March 28, 1850, which stated that "Ichiti-thi-mar and Es-co-tah, two Gages[1]," charged with Colburn's murder, would be tried during the U. S. district court session beginning "next week."

March 24.—The St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette reported: "... there are now at this landing 3 large flat boats, and a new and excellent horse boat, and a steam ferry boat will be here in April next. In addition to the above, there are two new flat boats at the ferry a few miles above St. Joseph."

(Aaron Lewis, John Duncan, and William Lewis had advertised on February 15 that they would "have in operation by April 1," a "good and substantial horse ferry boat" at St. Joseph.)
The St. Joseph Adventure of May 17 stated that “three ferries—one steam ferry boat and four flats” had been “constantly employed for the last four weeks.” Emigrant N. A. Cagwin, at St. Joseph on May 5, “… prepared for crossing over the River. Done so about 1-O’clock P. M. on a Steam ferry Boat. ….” On May 20 emigrant James Bennett “Reached St. Joseph’s at 9 o’clock this morning. … Crossed the Missouri at 4 p. m. in a steam ferry-boat. ….”

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, March 24, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, February 15, March 24, 1850; Adventure, St. Joseph, Mo., May 17, 1850; N. A. Cagwin’s “Diary,” 1850 (from typed copy, courtesy California State Library, Sacramento); James Bennett, Overland Journey to California … (New York [1931]), p. 11.

March 26-29.—Leaving Savannah Landing (Mo.) on the 26th (weather very cold and snow falling) to return to St. Louis, the Pocahontas met the Minnesota at “Lost Lake,” the Mary Blane at “Grand Prairie”; on the 27th met the El Paso at Weston, Haydee at Blue Mills, Cora and Princeton at Camden; on the 28th met the Consignee at Waverly, Melodeon and Julia at “Hill’s Lodge,” Saluda at Glasgow, Lightfoot “just below,” Highland Mary at Lamoine, Embassy at Boonville; and on the 29th met the Duroc, Alton, Sacramento, Lake of the Woods, and Kansas.

At Glasgow, Mo., the El Paso (passing up on the 25th) was reported to have over 200 California immigrants aboard; and to be making her first trip up the Missouri. The new Melodeon, passing Glasgow on the 27th, was said to have some 300 passengers aboard, mostly bound for California; and to be one of the roomiest boats on the river.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 1, 1850; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, March 28, 1850.

March 29.—The St. Joseph Gazette reported: “Every boat that arrives at our wharf is crowded with Californians. Within the last week several hundred have arrived at this place. We suppose there are now in this place, and vicinity, upwards of 1,500. ….”

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, March 29, 1850.

March 31.—Joseph D. Ellis and party (17 Americans—returning from California?) arrived at Independence, Mo., from Santa Fe (left March 5), via the Bent’s Fort route. They reached St. Louis April 8. (Ellis was in the Santa Fe trade.)

The account sent east from St. Louis by telegraph stated there were 17 Mexicans as well as 17 “emigrants” in the company. The “Americans” reported they had found Agent Thomas Fitzpatrick “at the Big Timbers, engaged in conference with several tribes of Indians.”

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 10, 1850 (from Independence [Mo.] Commonwealth of April 2); New York Weekly Tribune, April 6, 27, 1850. The news sent by telegraph frequently became garbled in transmission.

March.—Santa Fe trader Moses Goldstein, of Independence, Mo., and seven other men who had spent the winter “in an open prairie”
on the Jornada, "about 30 miles on the south side of the Arkansas," with James Brown's 20 stranded wagons (freighting goods for "Goldstein, Thompson and Flourney") were reported (by parties reaching Independence March 31 and April 14) to be "in good health and good spirits," "patiently awaiting the arrival of oxen from the States." (A relief train "with provisions and cattle" left Independence in March—see April entry, p. 52.) During a period of freezing weather Goldstein, and companions, had found it necessary to burn two wagons for self-preservation. (See KHQ, v. 31, p. 333, for the November 17, 1849, disaster to Brown's train.)

Ref: Missouri Statesman, Columbia, January 25, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 24, June 21, 1850; New York Weekly Tribune, April 6, 22, 1850.

C April 2.—Bvt. Maj. Edmund A. Ogden (post quartermaster) left Fort Leavenworth, accompanied by "a lot of Kickapoo Indians as guides," and a "negro named Morgan, who lived with them, as interpreter," to lay out an improved (shorter) military road from the fort to a junction with the St. Joseph branch of the Oregon-California trail. (For the "old" road see February 1 annals entry.) In company with Ogden were "a number of officers and their families" bound for Forts Kearny and Laramie; also a detachment of Troop B, First dragoons, and some infantry recruits, as their escort. (Trooper P. G. Lowe later recollected three officers who made the journey were Lt. Col. Gustavus Loomis, Capt. Henry W. Wharton [accompanied by his family], and Bvt. Capt. Alexander B. Dyer.) Ogden stopped at the Big Blue (where his project ended); presumably he and his guides returned to Fort Leavenworth well before month's end.

If Ogden made a report on his April, 1850, road survey it has not been located. Trooper Lowe, in his Five Years a Dragoon (1906), stated: "The first night out we camped at the springs near where Lowemont, Kansas, is now located. We followed the military road to Santa Fe about eight miles, and from there to the intersection of the St. Joe road about 120 miles we followed the divide on account of excessive wet weather, heading, or crossing near the head of the streams running northeast into the Missouri and those running southeast into the Kaw [Kansas], crossing the Delaware where is now Kinnekuk [Kennekuk], the Nemaha where is now Seneca, intersecting the road from St. Joe between Seneca and Marysville [Big Blue crossing]."

Dr. J. S. Shepherd (a Wisconsinite on his way to California) traveled Ogden's road before it was a month old. His party reached Fort Leavenworth April 24; encamped within half a mile; set out for the West on May 1. Shepherd's recorded mileages (May 1 to May 7) to the point where he "struck the high road from St. Joe West..." total 122. He wrote: "From Fort Leavenworth, the road we have travelled, is a new one made by Uncle Sam's men this spring, and is better than any road leading from Racine, not ex-
cepting even the plank. ...” Shepherd noted that the distance from St. Joseph, Mo., to the junction was said to be 120 miles.

Philip L. Platt and Nelson Slater, in their *Travelers’ Guide* (published in 1852) discussed the “route from Fort Leavenworth to its intersection with the St. Joseph Road, a little east of the Big Blue river” as follows: “This road, after passing out from the fort 14 miles, divides; the right hand road being the old one [see February 1 entry; and see the Stansbury map *facing* p. 64], and the left hand road the new one, which was surveyed and first traveled in the spring of 1850. ... The left-hand or new road is the shortest and the best. It intersects the St. Joseph road 103 miles out from the fort. [Shepherd had reckoned it at 122 miles.] It is somewhat crooked, like all the other routes to avoid the hills and hollows, and to strike the streams at the best points for fording. This road has been remarkably well laid out by the government surveyors, being located more nearly on a level, and running with more directness than any one would suppose it could, judging from the rolling aspect of the country through which it passes.” (See, also, the November 6 entry on Stansbury.)

Commenting on the road “surveyed by myself” in 1850, Bvt. Maj. Edmund A. Ogden, in his October, 1851, report, wrote: “... the principal obstacle is ... the Big Blue, which is often swollen by floods and impassable, so that the troops, contractors’ and emigrant trains frequently encounter there very serious delay. At this place [the future Marysville] there should be a bridge and a party of twenty soldiers stationed for its protection. ...” [In 1852 the military permitted private enterprise to handle the situation, by allowing Francis J. Marshall to establish a ferry and trading post at this “Marysville” crossing of the Big Blue.] Ogden also recommended bridging the “Sauterelle” [Grasshopper; now Delaware] 40 miles west of the fort, to eliminate detours and “indifferent fords” on the forks of that stream.


April 5-12.—The St. Joseph Gazette of the 5th stated: “Several hundred emigrants have arrived at this place during the past week. ...” The issue of April 12 reported: “Californians continue to arrive daily in large numbers. Several hundreds have already crossed the river, some of whom have left for the plains, taking with them forage for their horses and mules.”

April 5—The season’s first ox train (10 wagons, D. Burroughs, of Kendall county Ill., captain) was scheduled to leave St. Joseph (according to the St. Louis Republican). Capt. D. Burroughs and 19 men had arrived at St. Joseph on March 17.

April 9—A large Wayne County (Ohio) Company (around 260 names were on the roster, including some Pennsylvanians), which had arrived at St. Joseph, on the *Consignee* from Pittsburgh, March 31 (and subsequently had crossed the Missouri to camp on the “Kansas” bluffs six miles out, on April 7 and 8) began the journey overland. (This mule and horse train reached Fort Kearny April 20; arrived at Fort Laramie on May 4; and on July 4 encamped near Lawson’s Ranche in California.)
April 10—L. D. Dick, and nine companions, from Rock Island, Ill., with horse-drawn wagons, left St. Joseph for the West.

April 11—A company of footmen (Tacitus P. Zander, of Milwaukee, and 26 others from Illinois, Ohio, New York, Indiana, etc., were listed in this party) started from St. Joseph with 40 days’ provisions. (“There was a company of twenty-two left here on foot, with their knapsacks on their backs, on the 10th; they expect to walk through in 40 days!” a St. Joseph correspondent stated on April 13.)

“Cheyenne,” at Fort Laramie, wrote that the first company of emigrants—24 men, with six light wagons, from Kendall county, Ill., captained by S. B. Craw—arrived at that post on April 29. (Presumably this company—from St. Joseph—had been the first to arrive at Fort Kearny—on April 13.) East of Fort Bridger, on May 15, an eastbound Mormon party met “Captain Craw’s company of five wagons from Kendall County, Illinois, with twenty-five men. They had performed their journey from the Missouri River in thirty-nine days. Their horses looked well.”—A. M. Harmon’s Journal.

“Cheyenne,” on May 4, listed the day’s arrivals at Fort Laramie as: Captain Denison’s company (250 men; 50 wagons) from Wayne county, Ohio; Captain Burrough’s company (50 men; 14 wagons) from Kendall county, Ill.; and five men with one wagon, from Rock Island, Ill.

“Cheyenne,” in a May 14 letter, reported that, up to then, 950 men and 215 wagons had passed Fort Laramie (whereas, in 1849, no emigrant had yet arrived on that date!). He commented “The strangest set of all, however, that has yet made its advent is a party of footmen, numbering some 15 or 20. These men carry everything on their backs—provisions, blankets and all. They look a little the worse for wear, but appear to get along well.”

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, March 29, April 5, 12; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 16, June 9, 16; Missouri Statesman, Columbia, April 26, 1850; George Kelles, A Trip Across the Plains, and Life in California . . . (Massillon, Ohio, 1851); Maybelle H. Anderson, ed., Appleton Milo Harmon Goes West (Berkeley, 1946). Also, see, Edward Eberstadt & Sons, N. Y., Catalogue 159, [n. d.], p. 92, for item on Henry M. Wertz’s letters. (Wertz was a member of the Wayne County [Ohio] Company.)

On April 7 Franklin Street (with ox teams; and probably with Ohio? companions) set out across “Kansas” from St. Joseph, Mo., on the St. Joseph branch of the Oregon-California trail. He arrived in Salt Lake City on June 23; and reached California in August. At Cincinnati, in 1851, his guidebook California In 1850, Compared With What It Was In 1849 was published. Reprinted here (with added notes) is the St. Joseph-to-Fort Kearny section from Street’s “Table of Distances, From Point to Point.”

| From St. Joseph the road runs through the bottom, which is covered with a dense growth of cotton-wood and other timber. It is very crooked, and in some places extremely muddy. Clear Creek, at the foot of the Bluffs is a fine place for camping. From here, the road is somewhat hilly, to Mosquito Creek; low bottom on the east side of this Creek, some timber on both sides. From here the road is quite hilly. |
|---|---|---|
| **Miles** | **Total Miles** |
| 6 | 15 | 21 |
Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals

Wolf Creek—Low wide bottom on the east side. There are some old dilapidated Indian huts, and farms, in the bottom near the Bluffs. Banks of the Creek very steep and miry. The Indians have a temporary bridge across the stream. They charge twenty-five cents for each wagon that crosses. [See cover KHQ, Summer, 1965, issue, and page following, for “Wolf River” views.]

Indian Agency—At this place there is quite a number of Americans living, in the employment of Government. It is the agency of the Miami[1] and Kickapoo Indians. [The Great Nemaha Subagency, in 1850—and earlier—embraced the Iowa, and the Sac & Fox Indians “of the Missouri.”] There is a [Presbyterian] Missionary Station here, several fine farms, and a good school for the education of Indians.

Mill Creek, is a small stream in the prairie, some green elm trees standing on its banks, a few rods above the road. [Now Clear creek, Doniphan county.]

Small Creek—Left of the road; some timber on its banks; good place to camp. [Now Walnut creek, Brown county.]

Grove, half mile north of the road; good place to camp. Groove, on a small creek, to the right of the road; nice place, and a good camping ground.

Small Creek, one mile north of road. Plenty of timber and water.

Nemehau Creek—This is a beautiful stream of clear water; plenty of timber, and a delightful place to camp; banks a little rocky on the east side. [Now South Fork Nemaha river, Nemaha county.]

Little Nemehau—Plenty of timber and good water. [Now Turkey creek, Nemaha county. A. H. Thomason, an 1850 emigrant, wrote: “After we cross the creek and got on top of the hill I look back the road is so crooked some of the teemies looks as tho they was going back...”]

Small Creek in the prairie; plenty of water and some timber.

Rock Creek—Some green elms on the banks of the creek; plenty of good water. [The upper waters of West Branch Vermillion river, Marshall county. The Platt and Slater Travelers’ Guide, 1852, called this “Stony Creek,” and noted: “In the bottom of this stream are large stones. The Indians call it Vermillion Creek. From its banks they get red clay with which to paint their faces.”]

Blue River—Should this stream be up, you will have to build a raft to cross on. It is about fifty yards wide, and a very rapid current; the stream abounds with excellent fish. [The crossing at what became Marysville, Marshall county.]
[The "Independence" Oregon-California trail, and the St. Joseph branch, joined (according to Stansbury) 8 miles beyond the Blue. By other accounts the distance was 9 or 10 miles. Street, oddly, made no mention of the junction.]

**Small Creek**—in the prairie; some timber half a mile from the road, on each side.

**Small Creek**—Plenty of standing water. ["Ketcham’s Creek—sometimes called Ten-mile Branch."—Stansbury]

**Small Creek**—Plenty of water, and some green timber, half mile north of the road. ["Turkey Creek."—Stansbury]

**Wythe Creek**—Plenty of timber, and good water. After this, several small streams to cross, and steep hills to ascend and descend. ["Wyeth’s Creek—Trib. of Big Blue."—Stansbury]

**Big Sandy**—Good water, and some timber. ["Sandy Creek."—Stansbury]

**Dry Sandy**—This stream is very wide, the bed of which is composed of loose sand, in which the water sinks, in dry weather. ["Big Sandy Creek."—Stansbury]

**Little Blue River, or American Fork**—This is a deep narrow stream, of beautiful, clear, running water. Its banks are skirted with a thin growth of cottonwood. You travel up it forty-four miles;—camping places all along the river.

**Road leaves the River** ........................................... 44 254

**Platte River** ........................................... [24] 278

**Fort Kearney** [Kearny] (near the head of Grand Island) 10 288

Ref: Franklin Street’s *California in 1850* . . . (Cincinnati, 1851)—from microfilm, Library of Congress copy; Platt and Slater, *op. cit.*, Howard Stansbury’s *An Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah* . . . . (Philadelphia, 1852), pp. 270-277; A. H. Thomas’s “Diary” of journey to California in 1850 (from typed copy, courtesy California State Library, Sacramento, which has the original diary).

* April 8.—By report from Independence, Mo., “a party of enterprising persons,” guided by Smallwood Noland, was to set out this day on an expedition “to test the reported existence of gold” on the Kansas river some 160 miles due west.

On May 6 a St. Joseph, Mo., man wrote: “The grand bubble of the gold mines on the ‘Caw’ River, or Kansas, is exploded at last. Those who went out there some weeks ago to dig for the ‘dust’ have returned with their ‘pockets full of rocks,’ but they happen to be not of the right sort.”

Ref: *The Daily Reveille*, St. Louis, April 10, 1850; *New York Daily Tribune*, May 21, 1850.

* April 9.—An auction was held at Fort Leavenworth to dispose of some 350 wagons, 200 ox yokes, bows, etc., no longer “required for
the public service.” (The sale advertisement, dated March 16, stated that about 200 Spanish mules, 350 oxen, and 200 horses would “probably be sold at the same time.”)

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, March 22, 1850.

April 11.—The Boonville (Mo.) Observer published a table of distances “Camping Grounds on the [Independence] route to California,” by C. Q. Lewis (a returned '49er?). Of his 2,140-mile itinerary (via South Pass, Fort Bridger, Fort Hall, Humboldt river, the Truckee route, Johnson’s ranch, and Sacramento) to San Francisco, the section of the “old” Oregon-California trail out as far as Fort Kearny is reprinted here.

From the [Fort Leavenworth-Fort Scott] military road 25 miles South of Independence. The road leads over a dividing ridge between Grand [Neosho] river and Bull creek. By turning to the right a camp can be had at a distance of five or six miles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Miles</th>
<th>[Total Miles]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To the head of Grand River</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Santa Fe road</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[30]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Rogdger’s [Rogers, or Rodger’s] settlement (an Indian farm)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[40]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the Oregon [California] road</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>[43]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a tributary of Walkerrusha [Wakarusa]</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>[50]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To main Walkerrusha, intermediate camp</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[60]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Willow Spring, intermediate camp</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>[78]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Forks of Upper and Lower [Kansas river ] ferry roads, good camp</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[88]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Lower Ferry [Topeka vicinity]</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>[92]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Upper Ferry [Union Town vicinity], it is supposed the lower ferry road is the best</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>[106]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To an Indian [Pottawatomie] settlement, good camp</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>[108]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a bend in Kaw [Kansas] river, good camp</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[118]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To next water and camp ground</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>[123]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Indian settlement, good camp</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>[127]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To crossing of Vermil[l]ion int’l’iate. camps</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>[145]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Big Vermil[l]ion, intermediate camps</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>[185]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Big Blue [Alcove Spring vicinity], camps scarce</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>[209]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To St. Joseph road [junction]</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>[219]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Otter Creek, camps scarce</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>[253]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Republican Fork of Blue [i.e., Little Blue], camps scarce, camps scarce</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>[277]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Where the road leaves the river, camps good</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>[317]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the next water, good camp</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>[323]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Pawnee trail, good camp a little ahead</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>[327]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Platte river, a couple of lakes to the right in the distance, 18</td>
<td>[345]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Fort Kearney [Kearny], good camps</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>[365]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ref: Boonville (Mo.) Observer, April 11, 1850. See KHQ, v. 29, facing p. 448, for the “Pawnee trail” as shown on the Fremont map of 1845.
April.—The St. Joseph Gazette of April 12 stated: "There are more steamboats now in the Missouri trade than was ever in it before... from 15 to 20 being [at this time] on the river between St. Louis and St. Joseph."

The Melodeon had left St. Joseph on April 1 (and reached St. Louis April 8). Just behind was the Highland Mary (departing on the 2d; and taking aboard at Kansas, Mo., "Some twelve or fifteen Kaw [Kansa] Indians" going to St. Louis "to buy farming utensils"). She left the Embassy, Consignee, and Lightfoot "in port" at St. Joseph; met the Saluda (hard aground) at Iatan; [passed the Cora at Weston, apparently]; met the Alton and Duroc at Fry's Point; the Sacramento at Liberty; other boats below; and reached St. Louis on April 8. (The Consignee, from Pittsburgh, Pa., with a charter load of Ohio and Pennsylvania emigrants-for-California—246 of them the Missouri Republican reported when the boat stopped overnight at St. Louis on March 21—had reached St. Joseph on the 31st. The Lightfoot had been chartered at St. Louis to take 400 English Mormons to "a point high up the Missouri."

Also on the Missouri, and bound for Kansas river, or higher, in the first-half-of-April period were the Kansas, St. Paul, and Anna (all of which returned to St. Louis April 13), the Robert Campbell, Saranak, J. L. McLean, St. Ange, Pocohontas, Tusculumia, El Paso (the last three of these returned to St. Louis on April 18), Pride of the West (which reached Weston April 14; then returned to St. Louis), Bay State (which had left St. Louis, April 9 with "about 300 passengers" mostly California-bound, but including Missionary Jotham Meeker, and two daughters, who debarked at Kansas, Mo., on the 13th), and the Princeton. (The Robert Campbell and St. Ange went up to Council Bluffs; the latter reached there April 15, but the Robert Campbell, on the 17th, was reported to be "a few miles below... in the ice... with heavy freight and [a load of English Mormons] passengers." The Bay State left St. Joseph for St. Louis on April 15; the Princeton started upriver for Council Bluffs the same day.)

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, March 23, April 8, 13, 18, 20, 1850; The Frontier Guardian, Kansasville, Ia., April 17, 1850; The Daily Jneville, St. Louis, March 24, 26, April 14, 1850; Jotham Meeker's "Diary," loc. cit.; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, March 22, 1850 (or, New York Daily Tribune, April 2); Keller, op. cit.; C. W. Smith's Journal... N. Y. [1920]), for Pride of the West.

April 12.—At Independence, Mo., a correspondent wrote: "For some unknown cause, this town is extraordinarily dull this season; as yet, compared to last season there are but few California emigrants here... The prospect is quite discouraging for an early start; the nights are cold and frosty, clear and dry...

(See May 14 entry, p. 71.)

The St. Joseph Gazette of April 12 stated: "We learn, by a gentleman just from Independence, that there are only about five hundred emigrants at that place.

April 13-19.—At St. Joseph, Mo., on the 13th, a man wrote: “This place is all bustle at this time with emigrants for California. From the best estimate that can be had, there have been 8,200 arrivals at this place, and a great many of them have crossed over the river [into “Kansas”] and started on their journey. . . . There are in this place and across the river encamped, about five thousand. None of the Missouri boys have gotten here yet, except some five or six from Ralls county. . . .”

Ohio emigrant Walter G. Pigman reached St. Joseph on the 15th (by stage from Weston, Mo.). His journal states: “April 15 . . . found my company ashore but all in a bustle. Hundreds of wagons and thousands of persons for the diggings. April 16 Rain and snow fast stop the crossing. Both sides of the river are literally crowded. . . . April 19 Start for the Ferry five miles above the town. . . .” [Pigman and company had to wait their turn—finally got across on the 21st.]

Reaching St. Joseph on April 17 (via steamboat) Ohio emigrant John Wood wrote in his journal: “The excitement here is almost alarming. There are now about 10,000[!] emigrants in this place and all are hurrying to make a start.” He remarked the “quarreling and wrangling in the town”; stated that “considerable sickness also prevails now among the emigrants, in this town. . . .” [Wood’s company “concluded to move up the river about forty miles” to recruit stock for “a few weeks” before starting.]

The St. Joseph Gazette of April 19 stated: “During the past week upwards of three thousand California emigrants have arrived at this place by land and water. From the best estimate we can make, we suppose upwards of eight thousand have arrived at this place, during the present spring.” (See the Gazette’s April 26 estimate!)

Emigrant Silas Newcomb wrote in his journal on April 19: “This place [St. Joseph] contains some two thousand five hundred inhabitants and at present is a very busy place. . . . Hills and dales are white with . . . [emigrants’] camps. Many have crossed the river and encamped on the west side in the Indian Territory. . . . [St. Joseph] contains four good sized Hotels, about twenty Stores and the residue is made up of groceries, bakeries, &c."

Ref: Missouri Statesman, Columbia, April 26, 1850; Ulla S. Fawkes, ed., The Journal of Walter Griffith Pigman (Mexico, Mo., 1942); St. Joseph Gazette, April 19, 1850; Sawyer, op. cit., p. 17 (for quote from Silas Newcomb’s “Journal”—the original being in the Coo Collection, Yale University Libraries); John Wood, Journal . . . 1850 (Chillicothe, Ohio, 1852).

April 14.—Travelers (some 25 in all) arriving at Independence, Mo., from Santa Fe (left around March 19) included William C. Skinner, Dr. Henry Connelly, Messrs. James L. Collins, Charles E. Kearney, of Taos, N. M., George H. Peacock, of Independence, F. Y. Ewing, W. T. Pigott, and Dr. J. F. Hassel, of Lexington, Mo., Mr. Frazer, of Santa Fe, and Henry Martin, of Jefferson City, Mo.
They were in advance of Manuel Armijo’s cotraveling party. S. L. Hubbell (who had started from Pajarito, N. M., with Armijo) reached St. Louis April 30 (on the J. L. McLean), leaving Don Manuel at Council Grove. His train had lost 20 mules (frozen) at Walnut creek, and had been detained, otherwise, by severe weather.

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, May 11, 1850 (from Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 24); New York Daily Tribune, May 13, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, May 3, 1850; The Daily Recorder, St. Louis, May 1, 1850.

April.—On the 18th James Clay, Frank Hendrickson, and a man named Branton left Fort Leavenworth with the express mail for New Mexico. On the Santa Fe trail they overtook a relief train, headed by Thomas W. Flournoy, which was going out to James Brown’s stranded wagons—see p. 44. (Flournoy’s party was at Little Cow creek on April 11.) Around the end of April “Mr. Thos. Flournoy and mail carriers” were “near to Brown’s wagons,” on the Jornada.

Subsequently, in the fore part of May, 10 men were in the mail carriers’ party when, at a camp near Wagon Mound, N. M., Apaches attacked, and massacred all of them. Killed were Clay, Hendrickson, Branton, Flournoy, Moses Goldstein (who had spent the winter with the stranded Brown wagons), also Benjamin Shaw, John Duty, John Freeman, John Williams, and a German teamster—some (or all) of whom had joined from an eastbound company en route. The bodies were found on May 19, but the men had died perhaps as early as May 7. Most of the mail was recovered.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, June 21, 1850; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., June 21, 1850; Calhoun, op. cit., pp. 198-200, 206-209; New York Daily Tribune, May 29, July 1, 1850; The Daily Recorder, St. Louis, May 1, June 28, August 27, 1850; McCall, op. cit., pp. 493, 494; St. Louis Intelligencer, November 1, 1850; Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden’s Fort Leavenworth, June 18, 1850, letter (typed copy in KHI ms. div.), which gives the massacre date as May 12. Lt. A. E. Burnsides (see Calhoun, p. 198), and others, put the date earlier in May—around the 7th.

April.—Henry Harvey, from Clinton county, Ohio, new head of the Osage Subagency (a post to which he had been appointed in December, 1849) arrived in “Kansas” with his family. (Earlier—1840-1842—The Harveys had been “Kansas” residents while in charge of Shawnee Friends Mission—see KHQ, v. 29, pp. 331, 431.)

On April 21 Matilda Smith (a Shawnee Friends Mission teacher) wrote in her diary: “Henry Harvey and wife, 3 sons and daughter and Lindsay Cook and wife were here to meeting. . . . After dinner George Harvey [Henry’s eldest son], Joseph Parks [Shawnee chief] and another man came . . . . the Harveys went to J. Parks and stayed all night. They were on their way to the Osage Indians.”

Henry Harvey was Osage subagent till mid-1851, when, in the Indian department reorganization, Neosho Agency was created, and Osage Subagency discontinued. In December, 1850, his accounts included an item: “Building
a house for subagent . . . $800." (See KHQ, v. 30, p. 211, for previous subagency residence.)

Ref: 32d Cong., 1st Sess., H. Ex. Doc. No. 103 (Serial 647), pp. 357, 429, 704, 706; Shawnee Indians in Kansas (Kansas City, Kan., n. d.)—a 32-page booklet (copy in KHi) in which are some extracts from Matilda Smith's diary 1849-1850; KHC, v. 13, p. 348; OIA, Letters Received from Osage Subagency (National Archives, Microcopy 234, Roll 639) has Henry Harvey letters of August 25, 1850, and May 5, 1851, from Osage Subagency. By 1855 the Henry Harveys were again in Kansas—early territorial settlers on Dragoon creek in Wabaunsee county. In 1855, also, Mr. Harvey's History of the Shawnee Indians, 1851-1854 was published (in Ohio). Mrs. Ann Harvey died July 8, 1859, near Wilmington, Kan.—See Topeka Tribune, July 21, 1859. Caleb E. Harvey (second son of Henry and Ann) married a Shawnee widow—Mrs. Sally Bobb—about 1830—see "Census of . . . Shawnees" (1857), in KHi archives div. Henry Harvey returned to Ohio after his wife's death.

April 23.—At Weston, Mo., emigrant C. W. Smith wrote: "The ferry boats here are very poor and make slow passages. Common flat boats are used, propelled with oars; they have to tow them up the shore a quarter of a mile before crossing, to prevent landing below their mark on the other side. They carry about two waggons each time, beside several head of cattle or horses. We are now to cross."

On May 14 the company with which John A. Stauder traveled, arrived at Weston, and "camped 3/4 of a mile above town." "Weston [wrote Stauder] is a beautiful place fine buildings 1400 inhabitants a good wharf on the Missouri river." But his party "crossed the Missouri River 4 miles above Weston . . . ." [on May 15 and 16].

Ref: Smith, op. cit., p. 17; John A. Stauder's "Memorandum of Travels . . . ." ("typescript," in Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia).

April 23-26.—At St. Joseph, Mo., on the 23d, "Ralph Ringwood" wrote to the New York Tribune: "The Californians still continue to pour into this place in one constant stream. . . . A few days since I crossed the Missouri to visit them at their encampments [in "Kansas"]. I found it impossible to make out a list of the companies. . . . From the river bank out to the bluff, a distance of some five miles, their camps are strung all along." (About 6,000 emigrants, by estimate, were in the St. Joseph vicinity around April 25—as reported at St. Louis on the 28th by officers of the Kansas.)

"Ringwood's" letter included these comments: "As near as it can be computed there are now 1,000 wagons between this point and Grand Island [Fort Kearny]. Most of them carry with them corn sufficient to feed their cattle on for three weeks. Over 5,000 persons have already rendezvoused at this point alone. One of our papers sets it down at 8,000.—There are now at Council Bluffs over 1,000[?], and at Independence between 2,000 and 3,000, to say nothing of the various other points of departure on the frontier of
lesser note. . . . Among those now here are a few from the western part of New York. The Eastern emigration overland is small in comparison with that from the Western States. . . .” [The St. Louis Reveille of March 15, in a paragraph headed “California Fever,” had observed: “All the papers of Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio come to us filled with accounts of preparations by companies, in all the towns and counties, for California. Double the emigration of last season is a moderate estimate of that likely to go this spring and summer.”]

The St. Joseph Gazette of April 26 stated: “From the best estimate we have been able to make, 15,000[1] emigrants have made this place a point of departure for California . . .”; and “about 3,000 teams are reported to be at Council Bluffs.” “It is estimated that at least 15,000 will leave this state [Missouri] alone and we think the balance of the states will swell the number to 50,000.”

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, May 25, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, April 26, 1850; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, March 15, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 29, 1850.

April 27.—“Steamboats are coming into St. Joseph, three and four a day, each with three hundred or four hundred passengers California bound. The lower deck is filled as closely as they can stow them with horses and mules, and the upper decks with wagons and men. Some are playing cards, some fiddling, some drinking, others dying, all at the same time and on the same boat. The streets of St. Joseph are so thronged with men and animals that you cannot tell which way the mass is moving.”—Emigrant Gershom B. Day, in a letter.

The St. Joseph Adventure’s “Marine List” for the April 26-May 2 period was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>Departed</th>
<th>For</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 26</td>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Pocahontas</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Highland Mary</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Pocahontas</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Highland Mary</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Tuscumbia</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Pride of the West</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Tuscumbia</td>
<td>Council Bluffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bay State</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pride of the West, St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ref: M. E. D. Trowbridge, Pioneer Days, the Life-Story of Gershom B. and Elizabeth Day (Philadelphia, c1895), p. 96; Adventure, St. Joseph, May 2, 1850. The book on the Days links Gershom B. Day to the 1849 emigration, but there is ample evidence he crossed the plains in 1850, not 1849. The St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette of April 19, 1850, noted the arrival of the Rev. G. B. Day, and four other men, from Michigan; the May 3 issue reported the departure of the Michigan company “of which Rev. G. B. Day is a member” for Old Fort Kearny on April 29; and the July 10 issue printed Day’s May 27, 1850, letter from Fort Laramie.
April 29.—An express from Fort Kearny (left on the 22d) arrived at St. Joseph, Mo., bringing word from Bvt. Maj. R. H. Chilton that supplies at Forts Kearny and Laramie were insufficient for the troops, and therefore not available to emigrants.

The detachment reported there was no grass when they left Fort Kearny; yet the first emigrants had passed the post in mid-April; and they met a great number on the road.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, May 10, 1850 (from St. Joseph Advertiser, May 8, 1850); St. Joseph Gazette extra, April 29, 1850.

Married: the Rev. Nathan Scarritt (principal of Western Academy, the high school at Shawnee Methodist Mission—see KHQ, v. 31, p. 183) and Matilda M. Chick (daughter of William M. Chick, deceased, and Ann Eliza Chick), on April 29, by the Rev. Thomas Johnson.

Ref: Jackson county, Mo., “Marriage Book” No. 3, p. 12. Whether this was a “Kansas” marriage, or a Kansas (City), Mo., one, is not recorded. Matilda Scarritt’s mother—Ann Eliza Chick—taught at the Indian manual labor school in 1851; and perhaps in 1850, also.

April-May.—The St. Joseph Gazette of May 3 reported: “Since our last paper [April 26] went to press some 8,000 emigrants have arrived at this place—mostly emigrants from Missouri. . . . More than half . . . who have crossed . . . [here], are going across the plains with horse teams. This we presume, is owing to the scarcity of mules and oxen in Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana, where a large majority of the emigrants are from.” (“Ralph Ringwood,” in his April 23 letter, had written: “The larger portion of the emigration go this year with American horses. How the experiment will succeed is doubtful. . . .”) The Gazette commented: “The flood of California emigrants has run grain and provender up to a high price. Corn is selling from 75 to 80 cents per bushel and wheat from $1.10 to $1.12½. We recollect of seeing corn sell at 10 cents per bushel in St. Joseph, and very dull even at that price. Quite a change.” (The St. Louis Intelligencer of April 20, stated: “It is estimated that at least 17,500 emigrants will leave Missouri for California this year.”)

On May 6 “Ralph Ringwood” wrote (from St. Joseph): “The great rush of emigration appears now to be over; yet still they are pouring in by thousands. . . . During the two weeks last past there were more arrivals than in any preceding ones. . . . Just across the Missouri—almost within stone’s throw of us—there is now in the midst of the ["Kansas"] wilderness the hum and bustle of a great city. Not less than 10,000 emigrants are encamped in the
woods on the opposite bank. The poor Kickapoos and Pottawatomies [a band of that nation living with the Kickapoos] . . . gaze upon the crowd and their doings with wonderment. . . . Since this letter was commenced, several hundred emigrants who had got out as far as 300 miles (beyond Grand Island), have returned, and are now recrossing with their teams. They report that they saw the 'Elephant,'—head, tail and all—large enough to satisfy them. To-morrow their teams will be sold at auction [and they will return home]. . . ."


April-May.—In mid-April a company of Arkansans (and some Cherokees), headed by "Maj." Elias Rector, of Fort Smith, and "Col." Matthew Leeper, of Fayetteville, started for California, traveling up to Fort Scott ("Kan.") , and thence out to Council Grove (by the trail opened in 1849?—see KHQ, v. 31, pp. 278, 279).

Mark L. Evans wrote from "Pacific Springs" (Continental Divide) on June 26, that "Many of our company were sick with diarrhoea on the Platte. I escaped. . . ." Leeper, Ledford, Rector and Spring are behind us. Dr. Dean is with us, in good health. . . . Rollin and Eneas Ridge [Cherokees], Auchey Smith, Jack Stricklin, Jim Yoes and mess, also Moses Stout, are behind intending to pack. All well when we left them. . . ." Evans also stated: "The express mails from Salt Lake and the States [the Mormons' express; and the Estill & Co. express] that have just met here say the number of wagons ahead of us is 5,000, and are throwing away their wagons and are packing. I never have seen before in no place, such destruction of property. The most I see is wagons, carriages, harness, axes, cooking stoves, mining tools, log chains, and horse shoes, and everything that is not essentially necessary. . . ."


May 1-7.—"On the first day of May ice to the thickness of an inch formed in the Missouri, and in the vicinity of Council Bluffs boats experienced considerable difficulty in navigating, owing to the large masses of it floating in the river."—"Ralph Ringwood's" May 6 letter, from St. Joseph, Mo.

On May 7 Eleazar S. Ingalls (camped on the Missouri river bluffs in "Kansas" about six miles west of St. Joseph) wrote: "Had a bad night last night; it rained and snowed nearly all night. Had about two inches of snow on the ground this morning." (But the sky cleared; Ingalls' party made a start; and traveled 20 miles.)

May 3-9.—Steamboats arriving and departing St. Joseph, Mo., in this period (as listed in the *Adventure*) were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrived</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>Departed</th>
<th>For</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melodeon</td>
<td>Council Bluffs</td>
<td>Melodeon</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscumbia</td>
<td>“Table Creek”</td>
<td>Saranak</td>
<td>Council Bluffs (Old Fort Kearny)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saranak</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Andrew Jackson</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Tuscumbia Council Bluffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ange</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Cora</td>
<td>Council Bluffs</td>
<td>Andrew Jackson St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Princeton St. Louis</td>
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<td>May 6</td>
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<td>Anna St. Louis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alton</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>St. Ange St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Campbell</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Lightfoot</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Alton St. Louis</td>
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<td>Robert Campbell Council Bluffs</td>
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<td>May 8</td>
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<td>Lightfoot Council Bluffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>St. Paul</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The *Cora* (see May 5 above) had left Kanesville (Council Bluffs), Ia., on May 4. Her officers reported that the weather there had been disagreeable, with no signs of early vegetation; and that provisions were very high—corn selling at $2.00 a bushel.

On May 8, the *Sligo No. 2*, carrying a large number of California-bound emigrants “whom she had brought from Nashville, Tenn.,” reached Kansas, Mo.—the debarking point for her passengers. Among the Tennesseans was Madison B. Moorman, who, in his journal, recorded their arrival at “Kanzas, a new and seemingly growing little town.” (By May 12 he had decided it was “New and flourishing.”)


On May 4 or 5 a company of First U. S. dragoons (picked up at Jefferson Barracks, Mo.; assigned destination, Fort Hall “Idaho”) arrived at Fort Leavenworth aboard the *Anna*.


On May—Emigrants westbound on the St. Joseph branch of the Oregon-California trail who kept diaries, or wrote letters, usually mentioned Wolf creek crossing, the Iowa, Sac & Fox Presbyterian Mission, or the Great Nemaha Subagency—all in Doniphan county.
of today (see April 7 entry). These were the comments of some travelers in 1850.

Thomas Woodward (May 5)—"Traveled over Dry Ridges To Wolf River which we crossed. . . Below the Sac & Fox village. The Indians has Built here a Rude log Bridge otherwise it would be nearly impossible to cross. They charged 50 cent. . . [three miles to a brook; and three miles more] To the Mission There was a good many Lazy Indians Lounging about here We Registered our names. . . The Mission seems To be in a T[h]iving Condition. . . ." (Emigrant Francis White, who also crossed the Wolf creek bridge early in May, likewise recorded the toll as 50 cents per wagon.)

John Warnock (May 6)—"at Wolf creek is a log toll bridge built by the indians where they charge 25¢ for each wagon that crosses. The Keeper of the bridge says 1400 wagons had passed before us." [On May 7 Warnock "passed Iowa Mission."]

Lorenzo Sawyer (May 8)—"This morning we crossed Wolf creek 2 miles from our camp, on a toll bridge owned by the Indians. Several long trains were ahead of us, and the road as far as we could see, was lined with wagons on the march. Several trains came in on the Savannah road [the Missouri crossing point was near present Amazonia, Mo.] just as we passed the junction of the roads. . . . We saw a few log houses and some cultivated fields at the Mission this morning, the first seen since we left St. Joseph. . . . The bridge tender at the Missouri [i.e., at the Mission?] said 1400 teams had crossed the bridge. The Savannah road comes in this side of the bridge, and several hundred teams must have come in by that road, so there cannot be less than 2000 wagons ahead of us on this road."

Joseph Price (May 10)—"came to wolf creek it is a small Stream 13 feet or 14 feet wide very deep and swift current with a tall Bridge belonging to the Iowa Indians 25 cts for a wagon and team we then traveled 6 miles and came to the Iowa mission or agency it is a beautiful place there is a large Farm in a high state of cultivation established by the georvement for the purpose of learning the Red men of the west to cultivate the Soil there is at so a School or missionary establishment for teaching the children of those wild sons of Adam."

N. A. Cagwin (May 11)—"In passing Wolf creek yesterday the banks of which are very steep. We paid 2/-per wagon for the privilege of crossing on an old log bridge. . . . Here we saw some fine looking Indians remnants of Iowas, Sock and Fox tribes. . . . Five miles from Wolf creek is located the Indian Mission and a beautiful Site it is. Farm well fenced, houses comfortable and neat, a good mill & etc. The land here is very fertile and gently rolling."

"Old Boone" (May 19)—(From "Sac and Fox Territory, 57 miles from St. Joseph") "At the ferry at St. Jo, the Kickapoos demanded a toll of 10 cts per wagon, for crossing their territory, and at Wolf creek we had another 25 cts. to pay for crossing a bridge."

Dr. David S. Maynard (May 19)—"Traveled about 18 miles. Passed one grave. An Indian farm about four miles west of the toll bridge kept by the Sac and Fox Indians. Toll, 25 cts. Passed one of the most beautiful pictures of country I ever saw."
James Bennett (May 23)—“We arrived at Indian Agency to-day at 11 o'clock. Several white men were settled here with excellent farms under a high state of cultivation. The wheat, which was about knee deep, was the finest looking crop of the kind I have ever seen. I noticed several squaws very neatly dressed in the costume of the whites, sitting at work in the houses, while quite a number of Indian men, in their native dresses, were busily engaged in trading at a store.”

Ref: Wisconsin Magazine of History, Madison, v. 17 (March, 1934), p. 348 (for Woodward); St. Joseph Gazette, April 10, 1932 (for data from Francis B. White’s diary—original still privately owned?); John Warnock’s letter of May 22, 1850, is in Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia; Sawyer, op. cit., pp. 20, 22; Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Cedar Rapids, Ia., v. 11 (September, 1924), pp. 246, 247 (for Joseph Price); N. A. Cugwin’s “Diary” (loc. cit.); Weekly Missouri Statesman, Columbia, Mo., June 10, 1850 (for “Old Boone”); T. W. Froehl, David S. Maynard and Catherine T. Maynard . . . (Seattle, Wash., 1908), p. 8; Bennett, op. cit. p. 12.

Of May.—Below, are some descriptions of the Big Blue crossing (present Marysville area), on the St. Joseph branch of the Oregon-California trail, the country westward, and the travel situation, as recorded by emigrants of 1850:

A. H. Thomasson (May 4)—“came to big blyow this Stream is as prty a stream as I ever saw plenty timber butiful ford we traveld 1½ miles lef the road on our left ¾ mile and camped here we found grass little better wood very scarce saw 3 dead horses 2 graves on each side of the big blyow very rocky the first rock we came to since we left St Joseph we orgenised to knight we have 39 men in our company at present our teemes consist of horses & mules . . . .” (Traveling, on the next three days, Thomasson noted that he saw three graves on the 5th, seven on the 6th, and three on the 7th—on which evening they camped on the Little Blue.)

William I. Cook (May 8)—“started early in the morning, travelled about 10 mi. to a stream . . . called Big Blue River; crossed the same without any difficulty; travelled about 15 mi. further and encamped. . . . May 9th . . . travelled about 15 mi., crossed an ugly little stream with a grave on the east bluff, and two on the west . . . [moved on five or six miles to camp].” Cook wrote of the encampment: “in appearance a boundless prairie and a remarkable sight of wagons and teams. I think they may be seen five miles each way and the thickest places resemble little towns with white houses.”

Lorenzo Sawyer (May 11)—“About eighteen miles brought us to the crossing of the Big Blue river, a fine stream and fordable. Wood is plenty along its banks. The country east of the river is beautiful prairie, gently undulating and having a rich soil. On the west it is high rolling prairie. We took on wood and water at the ford, and drove seven or eight miles and encamped. . . .”

Eleazar S. Ingalls (May 12—Sunday)—[Made 30 miles and reached Blue river.] “Here we found a large city of tents, and preaching. There were probably 2000 men camped within two miles of the crossing; and here we found wagons broken down last year, with irons of those burnt. . . . we found some last year's graves, besides the usual amount of dead horses. . . . Blue River, or as it is commonly called, the Big Blue, is a beautiful clear stream, about eight rods wide, and at this time about three feet deep. . . . It has a skirt of timber, mostly cotton wood, from 8 to 100 rods wide along its west
bank, and generally plenty of grass may be found. Sometimes however the emigrant is detained here for two or three weeks by the high water, when his only consolation is in hunting antelope and wild turkeys, of which game there is an abundant supply on this river, and in fishing.

N. A. Cagwin (May 14)—"We are now in the midst of Extensive ox trains . . . we pressed on hoping by & by to get in advance of them all . . . finally brought up for the night on the farther banks of the Big Blue River [after a 27-mile day’s trip] fording good." On the 15th Cagwin wrote: "The scenery around and as you approach the Big Blue is highly picturesque & romantic. High bluffs, deep bottoms, extensive views of divide rising on divide. . . . The blue is a clear rapid stream 125 feet wide, pebbly bottom. Face of the country quite rolling. Road dry and very dusty. Met two teams on the retridge track." On the 16th Cagwin wrote: "What a beautiful country. Like the long peaceful swell of an Old Ocean at rest. The soil being a kind of blackish muck, is rich in the extreme as plainly indicative in the luxuriance of the grass and other species of vegetation now . . . shooting up to maturity. . . . Game of all kinds seem quite abundant. Prairie Hens and plover. The wolf and the badger, the Antelope, Elk and deer, living streams of water are only to be met with, at long intervals. . . . Passed by six graves today, but two of which were of this year’s emigration. . . ."

Joseph Price (May 16)—"Travelled 22 miles and camped on the east side of the big Blue. It is a beautiful Stream a bout 40 yards wide and near three feet deep. The crossing at this time is good; the water is clear with a bold current." (On the 17th Price wrote: "Cross the Big blue without any Difficulty and as we arose the high Roaling Prairie on the west side the most beautiful scenery the most pleasing landscape that I have ever seen. . . .")

W. R. R. (May 21)—From "Little Blue": "We left St. Joseph on the 9th. . . . Even at this time the grass is quite short. . . . The Californians generally, are in high spirits and good health. . . . Between the Big Blue River and this place we have passed four ‘newly made graves’—one of R. Melone of Huntsville, who accidentally shot himself through the head. . . . The crowd upon this route is perfectly astonishing. In travelling hours the wagons block the road as far as eye can see. It is impossible to camp within any short distance of the road without being surrounded with trains. . . . Last Friday [May 17] we passed the junction of the Independence and St. Joseph routes. The former from appearance has not been much travelled yet; and from gentlemen who came that way, I learn that over two-thirds of the emigrants from that point are yet behind. . . . We meet more or less returning Californians every day. . . . Nearly one half of the emigration upon the St. Jo route have horse teams. [W. R. R.’s company apparently had oxen]. . . ."

Dr. David S. Maynard (May 24)—"Camped at Blue river. One grave, child 11 years old. Forged the stream. Raised our loading. Got my medicines wet. Boys caught a meal of catfish. Fish were large and plenty, and included enough for tomorrow’s breakfast."

James Bennett (May 28)—"Arrived at Big Blue river at 10 o’clock a.m. This stream favorable at all ordinary times, we now found very much swollen. About fifty wagons were already collected on the bank and several companies were occupied in crossing on rudely constructed rafts. We . . . drove
on to a point a mile above and commenced constructing a couple of canoes.

There was a train of five wagons at this crossing, who had nearly completed a raft and proposed to us to join them in ferrying on it, which we agreed to do and abandoned the building of but one canoe." [They got the five wagons across on the 28th.] On the 29th: "When we launched our canoe this morning we found it capable of carrying a thousand pounds with perfect safety, although the stream was very rapid and apparently dangerous for so small a craft. We commenced placing our provisions and clothing in the canoe, while the empty wagons were crossed on the raft by means of ropes attached to each end of it and to the banks. [Except for a minor accident, all 14 wagons, and contents, were ferried across safely.] . . . after moving up the stream half a mile to the prairie we encamped." (George Keller, whose party forded the Big Blue on April 14, 1850, wrote: "Later in the season . . . this stream is swollen very much, and may detain a company several days, either in waiting for it 'to fall,' or in ferrying it.")

Ref: A. H. Thomasson's "Diary" (loc. cit.); Unionville (Mo.) Republican and Putnam County Journal, July 17, 1935 (for W. J. Cook); Sawyer, op. cit., p. 25; Ingalls, op. cit.; N. A. Cagwin's "Diary" (loc. cit.); Mississippi Valley Historical Review, vol. 11 (September, 1924), p. 247 (for Price); Weekly Missouri Statesman, Columbia, June 14, 1850; T. W. Prosch, op. cit., p. 9 (for Maynard); James Bennett, op. cit., p. 13; Keller, op. cit.

Cl May.—Several of the year's California-bound commercial passenger trains originating at St. Louis started their overland journeys either from St. Joseph or Weston, Mo., this month.

(1) McPike & Strother. John M. McPike and E. J. Strother, of Ashley, Pike county, Mo., had advertised in January, to start from St. Joseph, about April 25, a passenger train of 20 hacks (four mules to each, with extra mules and horses); passage $200; 50 pounds of baggage allowed; each passenger to provide his own arms and ammunition; proprietors to furnish provisions and cooking utensils. On May 3 the St. Joseph Gazette gave considerable space to the "Train of McPike & Strother," listing the officers (Dr. R. B. Ellis, St. Louis, captain; John W. Priest, Marion county, Ind., lieutenant; Dr. R. L. Ward, of Indiana, commissary; Dr. John L. Taylor, Palmyra, Mo., secretary), and the names of over 100 company members (Pike county, Mo., and Marion county, Ind., were well represented; but persons from Kentucky, Iowa, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Ireland were on the roster). By May 11 McPike & Strother's train was west of the Big Blue. On May 27th E. S. Ingalls (who crossed the Platte's South Fork this day) heard that "McPike & Strother's train lost 25 mules and horses in a stampede last night." From Sacramento City on September 22, "C." wrote that "McPike and Strother left most of their wagons on the desert."

(2) Jerome, Hanson & Smith. In March this company had advertised that their "Mississippi and Pacific Line" of spring wagons would leave from St. Joseph at the earliest practicable April date. On May 10 "Jerome and Hanson's" train was camped on the bluffs (in "Kansas"), opposite St. Joseph. Listing over 120 passengers (including, near the end of the roster, William C. Smith, Mrs. Smith, James H. Hanson, and M. Jerome), the St. Louis Missouri Republican of May 18 stated that "Messrs. Jerome, Hanson & Smith's train," on the 14th[?], had "struck out in earnest for Sacramento City." Later, a traveler from Fort Kearny reported at St. Louis that "Jerome and Hanson's
train” had passed that post on May 17[?]. “C.” wrote from Sacramento on September 22 that “Jerome, Hanson and Smith, left most of their wagons and packed.”

(3) WILES & BENNETT (or, Wild & Bennett). The St. Paul, which left St. Louis May 2 (and reached St. Joseph on the 9th) carried 300 California-bound emigrants and 500 tons of freight—including “Wiles & Bennett’s California train” (12 wagons and 40 persons) “with their ‘entire fixens.”’ Emigrant “C.” (who reached Fort Kearny May 31) wrote that “Wilds & Bennett’s train from St. Louis” had passed that post. On June 23, when “C.” was west of Fort Laramie, he wrote: “When we were at Fort Laramie, Hall’s train [see following], Smith, Jerome & Hanson, and Chadwick, Lavelle & Co. [a train starting from Council Bluffs] had passed. Wilds & Bennett are either behind or they failed to report themselves [i.e., had not registered at the army post].” From Sacramento, on September 22, “C.” wrote: “Wiles and Bennett succeeded in crossing the desert with their wagons and got a part over the mountains.”

(4) ALEXANDER & HALL. “Capt. Hall,” St. Louis, and G. C. Alexander, Edwardsville, Ill., advertised in March to “start a line of light spring wagons” from St. Joseph “at earliest possible day” (after leaving St. Louis about April 20); fare $200; passengers to furnish part of their outfit. (Both Hall and Alexander had crossed the Plains in 1849.) On May 10 “Hall’s train” was said to be camped at Weston, Mo. (Alexander, due to his wife’s illness, did not go with the train.) At the beginning of June, Alexander & Hall’s train was on the Little Blue. On the 5th, the first of several deaths occurred. Captain Hall wrote from Chimney Rock on June 13 that four passengers had died of cholera (two young Allen brothers, and a Mr. Walker, all of Benton county, Mo., and Mr. Hill of Jackson county, Mo.), and Mr. Blum, ill with smallpox, had been left at Fort Kearny. Hall stated that the ladies of the party (Mrs. Hunter, Miss Rice, and Miss Hall) were in excellent health; and that the train was getting on very well. “C’s” September 22 letter, from Sacramento, stated: “Hall’s train arrived here with 16 wagons and 3/4 ds of his animals.”

Ref: For McPike & Strother: Missouri Statecman, Columbia, January 18, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, May 3, 1850; Sawyer, op. cit., pp. 22, 25; Ingalls, op. cit.; Mississippi Valley Historical Review, v. 11 (September, 1924), p. 254; Missouri Historical Review, Columbia, v. 25 (October, 1929), pp. 135-137 (for the curious “History of Joe Bowers”). For Smith, Jerome & Hanson: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, March 6, May 15, 18, August 7, 1850; St. Louis Intelligencer, June 14, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, July 31, 1850. For Wiles & Bennett: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, May 2, August 20, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, July 16, August 7, 1850. For Alexander & Hall: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, March 23, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, March 6, 29, April 9, May 15, July 16, 30, August 7, 1850; St. Louis Intelligencer, June 14, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, July 31, 1850. For “C’s” letter, September 22, from Sacramento, Calif., see Missouri Republican, St. Louis, November 18, 1850.

May 7.—“From Independence to this point [St. Joseph] the country is full of emigrants for California,” wrote “B.” (in a letter), “and here every nook and corner is crowded. Hundreds have left every starting point, anxious to be on their ‘winding way,’ though the grass is scarcely above the ground. Vehicles of almost every size and shape, from a wheelbarrow to an old hackney coach, have
been put in requisition, with animals from the diminutive Indian poney, with a pack-saddle, to the spirited gelding. . . . The number of emigrants are variously estimated at from 20 to 40,000.” (“B.” thought 20,000 “higher than the reality.”)

On May 3 the St. Joseph Gazette had stated: “From the best information we can obtain there are about 1500 emigrants at Independence, 1000 at Kansas, 3 or 400 at Weston and about 10,000 at Council Bluffs. Up to the present time, some 20,000 emigrants have arrived at this place by land and water and they still continue to arrive in large numbers.” (The St. Joseph Adventure of May 3 asserted: “The whole number of emigrants that have reached the Missouri river at St. Joseph and the [Council] Bluffs and intermediate points may be safely set down at thirty-two thousand.”)

On May 6 “Ralph Ringwood” (at St. Joseph) had written: “As yet no accurate estimate can be formed of the number of the overland emigration of the present season. It is thought that up to this date 2000 have rendezvoused at Independence, 1,000 at Kansas, 1,000 at Weston, 10,000 at Council Bluffs, and from 15,000 to 20,000 at this point. The total number to reach the Missouri at the points above named and other intermediate ones, will not fall short of 50,000. How many more yet remain behind?”

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, May 13, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, May 3, 1850; Adventure, St. Joseph, May 3, 1850; New York Daily Tribune, May 21, 1850. One “wheelbarrow man” arrived at Fort Laramie on May 14 in good shape. He had left St. Joseph about 25 days earlier, it was said.—Missouri Republican, St. Louis, June 9, 1850.

¶ May 8.—“50 or 60 Cal[ifornia] wagons pass us,” wrote Jotham Meeker at Ottawa Baptist Mission (some three miles east of present Ottawa, Franklin co.). As appears below, these were probably Missourians, following a route used (for the first time?) in 1849, which entered “Kansas,” at, or near, present Louisburg, Miami co. This branch trail (the Harrisonville, Mo.-to-Council Grove route) lay “almost entirely on the ridge between the tributaries of the Kansas and Osage [Marais des Cygnes—in Kansas] rivers.” In mid-May a military party, eastbound from Santa Fe, “met a large number of emigrants near Council Grove [quite possibly the train, or trains, noted by Meeker]. There was little or no grass on the Plains, which caused much distress among the emigrants, as most of their animals had given out for want of food.”

The Boonville (Mo.) Democrat, in an early November (?) issue, stated that in 1849 two companies of Cooper county, Mo., emigrants had taken a route by way of Georgetown, Warrensburg, and Harrisonville, Mo. “and from thence intersecting the main California [i.e., Santa Fe] trail at or near Council Grove. Capt. Benj. McCullock’s company took this route last spring [1849?], and were the second company to arrive at the mines—the other companies following close behind him. . . .” After reaching Council Grove, presumably the emigrants proceeded towards California by a route up the Arkansas past Bent’s Fort (see KHQ, v. 31, pp. 299, 302).

Ref: Jotham Meeker’s “Diary” (in KHI); New York Daily Tribune, May 25, 1850; Jefferson Inquirer, Jefferson City, November 9 (?), 1850 (for the Boonville Democrat
May.—A band of Pawnees, intent on stock-stealing, came down into the Pottawatomies’ country, took some horses, and lost a few men in skirmishes with their enemies.

On May 8 emigrant James Mason wrote: “Passed Uniontowns. . . . Crossed Caw river & encamped 3 miles back got word that the Pottawatomies & the Pawnees was a ware some 16 miles. . . .” Next day Mason and party “passed the Catholic mishon [St. Mary’s]. . . . Saw a lot of Indian warriors & the arrow that Killed the Pawnees Saw them [the Pottawatomies] dance round the Scalp Saw a hand cut off. . . .”

On May 12 (according to the statement of “Dr. Garver, of Ohio”) Pawnees raided a small California-bound emigrant train (in the Black Vermillion valley, apparently) of “some 30 or 40 head of horses and mules.” “Wa-wa-sah” (a young Pottawatomie chief) proposed to pursue the Pawnees and rescue the stock for the whites. In a skirmish with the marauders two days later, the Pottawatomies were victorious. “Wa-wa-sah . . . himself shot the Pawnee leader” (on whose person were found four white and nine Indian scalps, which “seemed to have been but recently taken”); and a number of the horses were recovered, “with their lariats and picket-pins.”

Presumably referring to the above incident, a man wrote from “Union Post, Upper Crossing of Kansas River,” on June 5: “. . . Three weeks ago some Pottawatomie horses were stolen immediately west of Catholic Mission, 12 miles from here, by Pawnees. The Pottawatomies pursued the thieves, killed 3 and brought in the scalps and recovered the horses. Since then several false alarms . . . [of Pawnees]. Parties of armed Pottawatomies, Sacs, and Foxes went out to scour the country and give them battle. They proceeded some sixty or seventy miles west of this, and returned reporting no Pawnees. . . . The Pottawatomies and their allies, the Sacs and Foxes, are on the alert. If the Pawnees should come down, they will meet with a warm reception!”

South of the Kansas river (in present Douglas county), on May 13, emigrant Robert Chalmers “Met several Indians of the Caw [Kansa] tribe all armed. They had been at war with the Pawnees and were returning. Their heads were all shaved, but a small spot on the crown. It was braided and tied up. Their heads were painted red. They were large men, 6 feet and heavily built in proportion. . . . The weapons they used were a tomahawk, knife, spear seven or eight feet long, bow and arrow. They had taken three white scalps[?] which had belonged to two men and a boy.”

See, also, May 30 annals entry.

Ref: Nebraska History, Lincoln, v. 83 (June, 1952), pp. 107, 108 (for James Mason); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, June 4 (for Garver), 16 (for “Union Post” letter), 1850; Utah Historical Quarterly, v. 20 (January, 1952), p. 36 (for Chalmers). See KHC, v. 14, p. 545, for a statement that “Kack-kack,” chief of the Prairie band of Pottawatomies, who died in 1807, was “a famous warrior. . . . He planned the ambush by which the Pottawatomies defeated the Pawnees soon after the founding of the Catholic Mission at St. Marys. He killed some of the Pawnees. The scalps he had taken in all his fighting . . . were retained by him as long as he lived.” See KHC, v. 17, pp. 457, 458, for other statements on the Pottawatomie-Pawnee skirmishes of 1850.
The Kaw Methodist Mission at Council Grove, built in 1850-1851 (see p. 96), is shown here about 1910, when it was a private residence, and as it appears today. Purchased by the state in 1951, it is now a historical museum administered by the Kansas State Historical Society.

Reproduced on preceding page is the eastern "Kansas" section of a map (drawn by Lt. J. W. Gunnison and Charles Preuss) published with Capt. Howard Stansbury's report of his Great Salt Lake Valley expedition. (See p. 107, and KHQ, v. 31, pp. 312, 313.) From Fort Leavenworth out to a junction (east of the Big Blue) with the Oregon-California trail's St. Joseph branch, Stansbury, in 1849, marched over a circuitous "old" road. Returning, in November, 1850, he traveled the new (more direct) military road which Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden had laid out in April (see p. 44). Both routes are shown, but the map's defect is an inaccurately-sketched relationship of the Oregon-California trail to the 40th parallel. The St. Joseph branch crossed the Big Blue (at present Marysville) some 11 miles below the "Kansas-Nebraska" line; and the junction of the St. Joseph branch with the Oregon-California trail from Independence (west of the Big Blue) was nine miles south of the 40th parallel.
May 9.—From "Grasshopper Creek," 50 miles out (from Weston, Mo., apparently), probably in Atchison county of today, "Dr. McDow" wrote to the Weston Reporter that cholera, "in its most malignant form," had broken out in the train of "Dr. Clark." Dead was C. H. Moore, of Milford, Ill.; two others were not expected to live; and one stricken man was recovering.

On the St. Joseph branch, Oregon-California trail, there were reports, later in May, of cholera deaths. As examples: John Herlinger, aged 36, of Ralls county, Mo., who died May 17 "on a branch of Wolf river," probably was a cholera victim. His grave, and several others—in the Big Blue vicinity—were noted by an emigrant. John A. Stauder, of La Grange, Mo., whose company camped east of the Big Blue ("Marysville") crossing on May 22, wrote that he was in sight of a camp where two men had died of cholera on the 21st (and where another succumbed on the night of the 22d). After fording the Big Blue, on May 23, Stauder saw, about a mile beyond, the graves of two brothers—John and Thomas Walker, from Illinois (dead of cholera?)

Beyond the confines of "Kansas"—out on the Platte—many emigrants of 1850 were carried off by cholera, or a malady with like symptoms. A traveler, writing June 9, from 110 miles west of Fort Kearny, stated: "That disease broke out about the same time in every train that was in Plum Creek Valley from the 1st to 7th June. . . . Up to this time I have counted forty graves, in sixty miles travel, and we have passed several trains where from one to six were sick, and probably two-thirds of them are dead ere this." "Cheyenne," in a July 1 letter from Fort Laramie, commented: "A man just from the frontier states he counted no less than 645 new graves along side the road." A week later "Cheyenne" concluded that 700 emigrants had died on the trail east of Fort Laramie. The toll may have been higher.

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, June 1, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, June 28, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, July 18, August 9, 1850; John A. Stauder's letter is in the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri, Columbia.

May.—The Kansas (Kaw) valley scene, in present Shawnee, and Pottawatomie counties, as described by three Oregon-California trail travelers of 1850, each of whom ferried the river at a different crossing:

Joseph Rhodes' party ferried over, at the lower ("Topeka") crossing on May 3. Rhodes wrote: "Before we left the states we fell in company with 4 waggons from Cooper Co. Mo. We traveled on together to the Kansas river . . . where we fell in with 3 more waggons. We crossed over the river . . . went up the river one mile and camped. . . . On the 4th of May [the company now 30 men; eight wagons, and 30 yoke of oxen] we traveled 14 miles. . . . May 5th . . . 2 miles & crossed Cross
Creek. A few miles further on we came to a saw and grist mill, 2 miles further we came to a French and Indian Town of about 100 houses, then on to where we camped.”

Some five (?) miles upriver from the lower crossing was the Pottawatomie Baptist Mission—a little removed from the main trail. Madison B. Moor- man’s party, on May 20, “arrived at the ‘Potawatamie Manual Labor School,’ half a mile from the ferry of the Kanzas river." (Moorman noted that “Mr. Saunders”—the Rev. B. W. Sanders—was superintendent; that the site was “a most beautiful and healthy place”; that 54 pupils were in attendance—most of them “half breeds.”) “An hour or two spent here [and] we moved on to the ferry, where we found an old boat upon which we made out to transport our wagons. The mules were swan over . . . we moved out a short distance and encamped for the night . . . .” On the 21st, after traveling eight or nine miles, this company of Tennesseans came to “a creek with very steep and muddy banks [Cross creek] . . . exceedingly difficult of crossing, so much so that several hundred wagons had accumulated before we were off. In a distance of a few miles several other little creeks were passed over upon toll bridges. One belonged to some Frenchmen, who had Indian wives.—They were well fixed, good farms and a sawmill. . . . [At one creek were two bridges, and two gandy-dressed Indian youths; one asked five cents toll, the other ten.] About fifteen miles from the Baptist mission is one belonging to the Roman Catholics [St. Mary’s] . . . [It] seems to be in quite a flourishing condition. A great many of the Potawatomies live around and have nice fields.”

Nine miles above the Baptist mission was the upper (Union Town) crossing, where Dr. John F. Snyder’s party ferried the Kansas the second week of May. Snyder wrote: “After leaving the Kansas ten miles, we arrived at the ‘Pottawattamie Mission,’ establ. here by the catholics [St. Mary’s] . . . it is a very neat looking place, consisting of three, or four two story log houses belonging to the church, and about twenty small log huts. The Indians here have large farms, and seem to be very industrious. Ten miles farther we camped at the ‘Little [now Red] Vermillion.’ I here found a Frenchman [apparently not Louis Vieux (or Jarreau) though he later resided at that location] with his family living in a small log house and was called in by him ‘professionally’ to see a sick child . . . We met many Indians here in a tolerable state of civilization, being able to read & write. This nation (The Pottawattamies) number about 4000.”

Ref: Annals of Wyoming, Cheyenne, v. 23 (January, 1951), p. 61 (for Rhodes); Paden, op. cit., pp. 10–12; John F. Snyder’s May 22, 1850, letter (photocopy in KHI); Joseph B. Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma . . . (Chicago and New York, 1916), v. 5, p. 2168, in sketch of Jacob Johnson—who married Sophia Vieux (originally “Jarreau”), daughter of Louis Vieux, it is stated that Louis Vieux and family, moving to “Kansas” with the “Council Bluffs” Pottawatomies in 1847, settled at what became Indiana at 1857; then moved to the Vermillion, where Vieux kept a toll bridge. Louis Vieux (or, “Jarreau”) was half French, half Pottawatomie; but so were a number of the Nation. Considering the ever-present threat of Pawnee raiders, the Little Vermillion was, in 1830, a frontier location for a Pottawatomie family.

May.—Observations, and experiences of some emigrants in 1850, at Union Town (Pottawatomie trading post) and the upper Kansas crossing of the Oregon-California trail, were as follows:
Dr. John F. Snyder (May 8-10) — "We then came into the 'Pottawatamie' nation, and passed through their trading post, called 'Uniontown,' at the crossing of the Kansas river. This town consists of about fifty log houses, with a population of about 300, nearly all Indians. The government has stationed at this post, a physician, two blacksmiths, a wagon maker, two gun smiths, and a circular saw mill. Crossing the Kansas, we encamped near the hut of a chief; who had the U. S. flag floating proudly over his miserable habitation. . . ."

Robert Chalmers (May 15) — "Went 12 miles, passed Union Town. A few Indian huts and two or three stores kept by traders were scattered along the way. Arrived at the ferry and camped, for there were so many wagons there that we could not get across till morning. We drove the cattle down to the river to drink and they all got mired. It proved quick sandy clay. . . . We unyoked them and drew them out with ropes." (On May 16 Chalmers' party: "Went 2 miles. Ferried our wagons and forded our cattle and laid up half a day to let our cattle recruit after their mire. . . .")

Cyrus C. Loveland (May 18) — "We . . . passed through a settlement called Union Village, situated on the Kaw or Kansas River one mile from Johnson's Ferry. Arrived there about noon. There we found twenty or thirty wagons to cross before we could. We grazed our cattle [some 721 head of loose cattle and 64 head of work steers] till near evening, then crossed, drove a few miles and camped." (Loveland was a cowboy in the party of cattle drover Walter Crow, who, accompanied by his four sons, and employees, was taking a large herd of Durhams to California.)

M. Littleton (June 2) — "now camped at Caw [Kansas river], which is about ¾ of a mile from a village called Union Village which is Situated on the Hill on a beautiful cit for a town. There are about 25 or 30 Houses in it. Dwellings Stores Bakerys Beer Shops etc. . . ."

(See May 14-20 entry for another Union Town item; and see KHQ. v. 31, pp. 258, 259, for some '49ers comments on Union Town and the upper Kansas crossing.)


C May.—On the 9th, west of the Iowa, Sac & Fox Presbyterian Mission (present Doniphan county), emigrant Lorenzo Sawyer noted: "today we passed a large drove of cattle on their way to California." The St. Joseph Adventure of the 17th reported: "A drove of about eight hundred cows, destined for California, crossed the river at this place on Wednesday last [May 15]."

Perhaps it was the latter herd that diarist (and cowboy) Cyrus C. Loveland (of the Crow family cattle drive—see above) referred to in his May 24 entry: "we crossed Big Sandy [on the 23d they
had forded the Big Blue at the “Independence” crossing—near Alcove Spring]. . . . While we were at the creek a Mr. Packwood came up with nine wagons and about 400 head of loose cattle. He told me he had lost sixty head and eight mares.”

The Missouri river starting points of the herds mentioned below is not certain. Emigrant James Bennett, on June 26, west of Fort Laramie, wrote: “A train of forty wagons, Thompson’s, stopped about a mile above us, late in the evening. They drove upwards of 200 head of loose cattle. Their herd of cattle in all numbered over 500.” The mail from Salt Lake City (left September 11), brought to Independence, Mo. (on October 25), news that “Thompson’s, and Brown’s, and Waddle’s lots of cattle, for California,” had just started. At Lexington, Mo., on June 5, 1851, Robert Aull wrote to Siter, in New York, that “Bullard & Waddell will not be able to pay until they receive a remittance from California where they have taken [in 1850?] a large drove of oxen.” On the 26th Aull wrote: “W. W. Waddell of Bullard & Waddell has heard from California. I will endeavor to get your claim against them paid.”

Ref: Sawyer, op. cit., p. 23; Adventure, St. Joseph, May 17, 1850; Dillon, op. cit., Bennett, op. cit., p. 21; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, November 1, 1850; Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Collections, v. 5 (June, 1928), p. 310.

May 10.—At St. Joseph, Mo., the Adventure reported: “great numbers [of emigrants] continue to arrive, the largest portion overland with their stock and wagons. They generally cross the river immediately and are ready to leave as soon as grass is sufficiently grown to support their teams. Many thousands have left during the past week, taking with them forage to feed their stock from ten to twenty days.”

The Adventure, and Gazette, of May 10 concurred in projected estimates that the year’s emigration would run from 25,000 to 30,000 at St. Joseph; from 10,000 to 15,000 at Missouri river points above; the over-all total perhaps 40,000.

On May 17 the Adventure stated: “California emigrants continue to arrive, overland with teams in great numbers. Those starting from St. Joseph may be set down at 30,000 persons, from points above, to Council Bluffs, about 10,000. The number of animals will average more than 2 to each person, say from 100,000 to 120,000 horses, mules and oxen, will be taken on the plains from the States this spring.”

Ref: Adventure, St. Joseph, May 10, 17, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, May 10, 1850.

May 10-16.—At St. Joseph, Mo., according to the Adventure’s “Marine List,” these were the steamboat arrivals and departures:

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<td>May 10</td>
<td>J. L. McLean</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>St. Paul</td>
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<td>Mary Blane</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>J. L. McLean</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
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May 12    Monroe        St. Louis    Sacramento        Council Bluffs
          Saranak        St. Louis
May 13    Julia         St. Louis    Monroe        St. Louis
           Saluda        Council Bluffs    Saluda        St. Louis
           Julia        St. Louis
May 14    Lightfoot     Council Bluffs    Lightfoot        St. Louis
           Robert Campbell  Council Bluffs    Robert Campbell, St. Louis
           Highland Mary   Council Bluffs
May 15    Highland Mary  St. Louis
May 16    J. L. McLean   Council Bluffs    J. L. McLean        St. Louis
           Tuscumbia      St. Louis
           Pocahontas     St. Louis

The Saranak (which had left Council Bluffs May 10) reached St. Louis on the 16th with some 30 mountain men and 600 packs of buffalo robes—returns of Harvey, Primeau & Co.—taken aboard from Mackinaw boats at Council Bluffs. (The company’s Alexander M. Harvey, and James Russell—only survivors from a party of seven whose small boat capsized May 1 in the upper Missouri during a gale—had arrived at St. Louis on May 13.)

Ref: Adventure, St. Joseph, May 17, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, May 14, 17, 1850; St. Louis Intelligencer, May 20, 1850.

C May.—Various statements reporting on westbound traffic passing Fort Kearny (“Neb.”) this month are listed below. These “statistics” cover only that part of the California-Oregon—Utah” emigration which set out from points on the Missouri south of the Platte (Old Fort Kearny, “Neb.”, Savannah Landing, Iowa Point, St. Joseph, Weston, Kansas, Westport, Independence—in Missouri, Fort Leavenworth—in “Kansas,” and ferry crossings in between), to travel via South Pass. As will be seen, there are puzzling discrepancies in the wagon totals.

Despite the fact that spring was unusually backward in 1850, the first train bound for the gold regions reached Fort Kearny on April 13; and the emigration was, as one man put it, “full one month earlier than last year,” or, as another opined, three weeks ahead of 1849.

May 10—Up to this date, 2,691 men, and 25 women, having with them 744 wagons, had passed—as stated in a Fort Kearny May 10 letter, published in the Chicago Democrat.

May 11—Dr. A. H. Thomasson wrote: “up to ten o’clock to day 960 waggons has past the fort. . . .”

May 13—James Abbey wrote: “Eleven o’clock passed by Fort Kearney It is said that three thousand two hundred [1,200?] wagons had passed the fort before us, and 300 more are now in the vicinity.”

May 13—The Rev. Gershom B. Day—under date of May 14—wrote: “We left Fort Kearney about 11 o’clock. Since the junction of the St. Joseph and [Old] Fort Kearney emigrations the road is lined for miles with wagons. On Monday [May 13] ours was the four hundredth that had passed that day, and there were no less than a one hundred behind us.”
May 16—Samuel A. Lane (who reached Fort Kearny this day) later wrote: “Though we were almost at the head of the emigration that year [1850], a record kept at the fort showed that 1,952 wagons and 6,152 souls had preceded us.”

May 19—Dr. J. S. Shepherd (whose company reached the fort and camped three miles beyond): “There have been 2,300 wagons that have passed Fort Kearney before us....”

May 21—“Observer” (writing at the fort) stated that the number of wagons that had passed amounted to 2,754; that there had been an average of about 4½ men to each wagon (i.e., above 12,000 men), and a total of about 76 ladies.

May 24—Up to this day there had passed 3,462 wagons; averaging 4½ men to the wagon (upwards of 15,000, by this estimate)—as reported by a Boone county, Mo., emigrant; in a May 26 letter.

May 28—Odon Guitar (at Fort Kearney) stated that 5,000 wagons had passed.

May 30—Cyrus C. Loveland (whose company passed “Fort Garney” at 11 A.M.) wrote: “Here we learned the number of teams and emigrants which had passed the Fort—4,500[?] teams, 21,257 emigrants, are now ahead of us.”

May 31—“C.” (writing on June 1 from “New Fort Kearny”): “Up to this time, 6,500[?] wagons have passed this point.” He noted, also, that most were California-bound; that about 3,000 wagons (it was thought) had passed on the north side of the Platte—making “near 10,000” in all; and that each wagon averaged 4½ persons. “C.” estimated the year’s overland emigration to California, Oregon, and Salt Lake at little short of 50,000; and thought at least 20,000 were Missourians.

Ref: Missouri Statesman, Columbia, Mo., June 21 and July 12, 1850 (for April 13 and May 24 items); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, June 15, 1850 (for April 13 and May 21 items); New York Daily Tribune, June 28, 1850 (for Chicago Democrat item); A. H. Thomasson’s “Diary,” 1850 (typed copy, courtesy of California State Library, Sacramento, which has the original journal); Seymour Dunbar’s A History of Travel in America (c1915), v. 4, p. 1502 (for Abbey); Trowbridge, op. cit., p. 102 (for Day); Shepherd, op. cit.; Samuel A. Lane’s Fifty Years and More of Akron and Summit County (Akron, 1892), p. 1116; Missouri Statesman, July 12, 1850 (for Guitar); Dillon, op. cit.; Missouri Republican, July 16, 1850 (for “C.”).

May 11.—The El Paso (John Durack, captain), under charter (at $1,200 per month) to the American Fur Company, left St. Louis for the upper Missouri, carrying about 100[?] employees and some 200 tons of freight. Passengers included the company’s Fort Vermilion agent—Charles Larpenteur, and geologist Dr. John Evans (who went to Fort Pierre). The El Paso went by St. Joseph on May 17. The Gazette heard there were some 250 trappers and hunters aboard.

The El Paso’s log stated: “On the 18th of May, when near the mouth of Wolfe [Wolf] River [present Doniphan county], we ran afloat of a snag which crashed our blacksmith shop, carrying overboard our bellows, &c. . . .” In May, also, there were six cholera deaths aboard.
On July 6 the *El Paso* returned to St. Louis, having achieved a “first” by going up the Missouri higher than any other steamboat (to a point, reached June 20, beyond the mouth of Milk river). Passengers on the down trip included Thaddeus A. Culbertson (see March 19-27 annals entry), Ferdinand Culbertson (apparently), and company agents Malcolm Clark, James Kipp, and “Mr. Disantel” (Desantel).

Ref: *St. Louis Intelligencer*, July 8, 1850; *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 24, 1850; *The Daily Recollect*, St. Louis, May 12, July 7, 1850; *Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, May 17, July 8, 1850; Charles Larpenteur, *Forty Years a Fur Trader* (1893), v. 2, p. 289.

*About May 13 a detachment of U. S. troops (Third infantry, apparently) from Jefferson Barracks, Mo., destined for Santa Fe, arrived at Fort Leavenworth aboard the *Pocahontas.**

Ref: *St. Louis Intelligencer*, May 13, 1850.

*May-June.—At the Big Blue crossing on the Independence route Oregon-California trail (the ford not far from Alcove Spring; and about seven miles south of the St. Joseph route “Marysville” crossing) some emigrants of 1850 found the river fordable; others did not.*

*Dr. George W. Read (May 13)—“Passed the big Blue. A very beautiful stream. . . . We were very fortunate in passing it at low water. . . . We came into the St. Joseph road today.”*

*Madison B. Moorman (May 24)—“Our camp [after fording] was on the left (west) bank of the Big Blue, a fine stream of excellent water full of nice fish. . . .”*

*M. Littleton (June 8)—“about 9 miles from the [Black] Vermillion arrived here Blue River (big Blue) about 2 o’clock. are now making a raft to cross the waggons on. This is a fine bold Stream and I should think nearly 150 feet wide; the current rapid and now Swims the Horses it being up Some 3 to 5 feet. I can not Say how much there is a ferry needed here badly there is a plenty of timber here for all purposes cotton wood Walnut ash etc. good water on Both Sides and wood but not much grass. having the appearance of many Emigrants laying here for Some time.” (Littleton was one of the “Glenn & Co. train” passengers. So, also, was Henry A. Stine.)*

*Henry A. Stine (in a letter of June 17, after reaching Fort Kearny)—“At Big Blue River we stopped three days . . . [to repair wagons] and also to make a raft. The river being too high to ford and very rapid, we had to fix ropes from bank to bank and let the raft swing across by the action of the current, the first wagon [loaded with bacon] sunk the raft in about five feet of water, we got it out without damage. . . . the others crossed without difficulty. This was a Sunday [June 9] job. . . .”* (The Glenn & Co. train set out again on June 11.)


*May 14-20.—At Independence, Mo., on the 14th, a correspondent wrote: “Our town is yet quite crowded with emigrants; the numbers passing through greatly exceed our anticipations, and from*
every enumeration we can make we are firmly of the opinion, that they are more in number by one-third than passed through here last spring.

(In 1849—see KHQ, v. 31, p. 289—Independence had been the departure point—as appears—for at least 8,000 California-bound emigrants.)

On May 20 "H." (a Missourian) wrote from Independence: "The emigrants have nearly all left this point. For the last few days it seems as though the town was deserted." ("H.'s party—18 or 20 men—was piloted by David F. McClelland, making his third trip to California; and included James and Joseph Walker, who had crossed the plains before.)

From Union Town (near the "upper crossing" of Kansas river, on the Oregon-California trail's Independence route), a correspondent wrote, June 5, that no "regular records" had been kept at the Kansas river ferries, but from best estimates perhaps 2,700 wagons had crossed, and some 4,000 head of "loose cattle," in droves of from 150 to 500. At four persons per wagon (allowing for men with pack trains) it was thought around 11,000 persons had passed "through this neighborhood alone."

Ref. New York Daily Tribune, May 29, 1850 (from Missouri Republican); Jefferson Inquirer, Jefferson City, Mo., May 25, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, June 16, 1850. In 1849 (see KHQ, v. 31, p. 259), about 700 wagons had crossed at the Kansas "upper" ferry near Union Town by May 18. What proportion of the 1849, or 1850, emigration crossed at the "lower" ferry ("Topeka") is not known. Not enough information is available to make a guess. Nor is there adequate information available on travel overland in 1850 from Independence, via the Santa Fe trail, to California.

‡ May 14-15.—Jas. M. Estill & Co.'s. "Express Mail Line for the California Emigration" left Weston, Mo. (home of Estill, and of his chief? associate James W. Denver), on the 14th, and St. Joseph, Mo., on the 15th—bound for Pacific Springs (South Pass), and for California, carrying letters (at 50c each; double letters in proportion; and U. S. postage prepaid by the sender) to emigrants on the Oregon-California trail (and to California).

Estill's express had been announced in the St. Louis Reveille of April 30, and the St. Joseph Gazette, Columbia Missouri Statesman, Liberty Tribune (etc.) of May 3. Agents to accept letters at 18 towns from St. Louis upriver to St. Joseph were listed. "We have bought 3 Spring Carriages and 24 fine horses, and are sending out daily by emigrant wagons, 5 bushels of oats for various posts on route," Estill wrote. One carriage was to go through to California; the others would bring mail back to the States. Estill's wagons would carry 24 mailbags (each stamped with a letter of the alphabet). An advance express, as it passed the emigrants, would hand out printed alphabetical lists of the letters in the mailbags. Stops would be made at Forts Kearny and Laramie, as well as on the trail.
The St. Louis Reveille of May 9 reported: “Capt. Denver [James W. Denver] . . . leaves town today for the western border, thence en route for California . . . [and] carries with him a special issue of our paper, containing a week’s news from all portions of the country”; and next day announced: “Messrs. Ball, Warren & Wood will receive letters until 10 o’clock this morning, to go by Estill’s Express. . . .” However, it was May 20 when Denver’s party left Fort Leavenworth. By rapid travel, he and his companions “came up with Col. Estill’s train” before noon on May 24, west of the Big Blue. Four days later, the “express” party (Denver, “Judge Barnett,” and others) separated from the “train” (and Estill) to push on ahead. With a mule team, horses and a carriage, they proceeded “very rapidly” up the Little Blue; arrived at Fort Kearny on May 29; left on the 30th. (Emigrant Robert Chalmers wrote on May 29: “The mail passed us for California. We arrived in sight of Fort Carney.”) Fort Laramie was reached June 8; and left on the 10th. Denver, and Robert Forsythe, preceding the rest of the “express” party (left on the 18th) reached Pacific Springs (Continental Divide) on June 20. This was “headquarters” till mid-July. James M. Estill (in the rear) in a letter dated June 23, 1850, from “North Fork of Platte,” estimated, “having passed almost the whole . . . [emigration] in the express mail,” that it (the emigration) would “reach about 60,000”; and expressed the opinion that a “semi-weekly mail” from St. Louis to San Francisco was feasible.

Emigrant Albert S. Holmes (about to cross South Pass) wrote his wife a letter on June 24, stating “I expect to send this . . . [by] the express for the emigrants and [it] is now recruiting five miles from here.” Emigrant Joseph Price (who crossed South Pass on June 26) wrote a letter that day from “Sweet Water River,” addressing it to “Mrs. Elizabeth Price Caloway Cty Mo. Fulton P O Estill Co Express.” Emigrant L. M. Wolcott wrote from “South Pass” on July 4 (to Horace Greeley): “. . . ‘Estell’s Express and Mail’ leaves for the States on the 7th inst. . . .” But the date was, instead, July 14. On that day Christopher Ritson and John T. Shortridge started from Pacific Springs with the Estill’s express eastbound mail (to be “joined at Fort Laramie by E. S. Darlington”); and in the afternoon Denver and his party set out for California. On July 15 they “overtook Col. Estill’s train” (which apparently had started prior to July 14).

The St. Joseph Gazette of August 21 reported: “Estell’s & Co’s. express has returned from the Pacific Springs. They brought in
upwards of 4,000 letters. . . .” (The arrival date was August 15, or 16—accounts vary.) Holmes’ letter was cancelled at Weston on the 16th; the Price letter was postmarked “Weston Aug 19.”

At Salt Lake City on July 27, Estill “laid before Pres. Brigham Young . . . [and others] proposals for taking stock in a company organized for carrying mail and passengers from Independence to San Francisco. . . .” And from Mormon Tavern, Calif., on October 2, Estill addressed a letter to Young on this subject (as he had done earlier—on July 10).

[L. A. Norton, at a later time recollecting details of his overland journey in 1852, said that his party met a relief train “sent out from California,” in Carson Valley; that “Gen. James Estill” was “first in command”; and that he (Norton) was introduced to “Gen. J. W. Denver,” the “issuing commissary,” to “Gen. Price and some others. . . .”]

James W. Denver (for whom Denver, Colo., was named) served as acting governor, and governor, of Kansas territory in the period between December 21, 1857, and October 10, 1858. (In California, Denver had served in the state senate in 1852, and as secretary of state between 1853-1856.)

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, April 30, August 18, 1850; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, April 30, May 2, 3, 9, 10, July 20 (Estill’s June 23 letter), 1850; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, August 29, 1850; H. H. Bancroft’s History of California (San Francisco, 1884-1890), v. 6, pp. 659 and 687 (for some items on Estill and Denver); [James W. Denver] “Journal,” 1850, typed copy, from James W. Denver Collection, Division of Manuscripts, Library, University of Oklahoma; St. Joseph Gazette, May 3, 10, August 21, 1850; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., March 23 (for a Denver item), May 3, August 23 (for Denver’s July 18[?], 1850, letter), 1850; New York Weekly Tribune, September 14, 1850 (for Wolcott); Utah Historical Quarterly, v. 20, p. 38 (for Chalmers), v. 29, pp. 327-339 (for Estill at Salt Lake City; and the Holmes letter); Mississippi Valley Historical Review, v. 11, pp. 293, 294 (for Price letter); Pony Express Courier, Placerville, Calif., v. 1, no. 4 (September, 1854), p. 10 (for Norton); C. C. Barnes, Denver the Man (Wilmington, Ohio, 1949), p. 30.

¶ May 15.—“This day Mr Abelard Guthrie [of the Wyandot Nation] and Company set [out] for California. . . .”—William Walker’s diary entry.

Of Wyandotte, Butte county, California, H. L. Wells’ History of Butte County states: “This place was first located in 1850, by a party of Wyandotte Indians, who were prospecting for gold. The diggings proved very rich. . . . In 1850, there were at least two hundred miners in the vicinity.” Whether (as seems probable) the Wyandots were from the 49er company—see KHC, v. 31, p. 311—or from the above party, is not clear. Guthrie (and his companions?) returned to “Kansas.”


¶ May 15-20.—The Highland Mary, leaving St. Joseph, Mo., for St. Louis, met, on the 15th, the Tuscumbia (at Smith’s Bar), the Focahontas (at Iatan); on the 16th, the Bay State (at Parkville), Pride of the West (in Kaw river bend), the El Paso (at Randolph); on the 17th, the Princeton, St. Ange, Anna, Melodeon; on the 18th,
the *Kansas, Alton, Cora*; and on the 19th, other boats below. Reaching St. Louis just ahead of the *Highland Mary* on the 20th was the *Saluda* (which had been to Council Bluffs).

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, May 20, 1850.

*Mid-May.—Bvt. Lt. Col. John M. Washington, of the Third artillery (New Mexico’s military governor in 1849), and command, arrived at Fort Leavenworth overland from Santa Fe. In his party were Bvt. Lt. Col. Benjamin L. Beall (First dragoons), and son, Bvt. Capt. Thomas L. Brent (Fourth artillery), Bvt. Capt. Henry B. Judd (Third artillery), 2d Lt. Thomas G. Williams (First infantry), and a small troop escort. Also, there was a government train of 24 wagons (“Mr. Johnson’s train,” apparently).

Civilians traveling with Johnson included George Wethered, “Mr. Simons” (who, in advance, reached Independence on May 13), and E. W. Prewitt (who had left Santa Fe on April 17; and arrived at St. Louis May 21 or 22).

Ref: New York Daily Tribune, May 25, 29, June 6, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, May 19, 28, June 8, 1850.

*May 17.—Coming up from northeastern “Oklahoma” by way of the Cherokee trail (see KHQ, v. 31, p. 311), a California-bound company (principally Cherokee Indians, together with some 40 Arkansans and Missourians), captains by Clement V. McNair (a Cherokee), arrived at the Turkey creek junction with the Santa Fe trail (in present McPherson county). There were 37 wagons, and 132 persons (including 15 Negroes, and 12 females).

The May 17 journal entry of John Lowery Brown (a Cherokee) states: “today at 12 oclock Traveled 10 miles and came to the Santa fee Trail to Independence. Traveled about 8 miles after entering the Trace and camped on a small stream of water, Turkey creek. This morning the company devided. Part of the company, 19 waggons, started ahead, independent of Clem McNairs.” (The faster-traveling separating group included many Cherokees, and had as secretary John H. Wolf.)

On May 20 Brown noted that two wagons from Wolf’s company had rejoined his (the McNair) train—“we number 20 waggons & one Carryall . . . the other train passed on ahead.” McNair’s company camped this night at Cow creek. Brown recorded on the 25th that they “crossed Pawnee fork . . . camped on Ark[ansas]s River”; and next day (Sunday) while in camp “Captain T. F. Taylor’s company consisting of eight horse waggons came up with us . . . [to join].” Still in camp on May 27, Brown noted that “a Train of ox waggons, 20 waggons, came up this evening.” By the evening of the 30th, McNair’s train had “passed the Ruins of Ft. Mann and camped 2 miles above on the Bank of the River.” (The “Wolf company,” on May 29, was already 30 miles above “Camp Mann.”) On May 31 they
"Traveled 25 Miles [by Brown's reckoning] came to the crossing of the Santa fe Road Maj. FitzPatrick, Indian Agent, was there paying out annuities to the different tribes." (Fitzpatrick, at St. Louis, in June, mentioned a company of about 200 Cherokees, with their 60 wagons, bound for California.)

The California-bound companies continued on up the Arkansas. "T. J. Mims & Co Caught up with the crowd 12 days from home," Brown noted on June 2. McNair's train reached Pueblo on the 13th; "found J. H. Woolfs company there preparing to 'Pack'. . . . " On the 14th "The ox Train [Captain Oliver's—which included some Cherokees] consisting [now] of 33 wagons came up and camped near. . . ."

Via the Cherokee trail followed in 1849 (with some variations) the trains continued the journey West. On a branch of Clear creek, six miles beyond the South Platte crossing, Lewis Ralston discovered gold on June 22; but there was no large "find," and the gold-seekers went on. The Continental Divide was crossed on July 9. Between July 25 and September 6 eight deaths occurred in the company with which Brown traveled. For two sick men, arrangements were made with James M. Estill (see p. 72) to haul them to California. Among the Cherokee company there was much illness during the latter part of the journey.


May 20.—The Saluda, arriving at St. Louis from the Missouri, reported that nearly all the emigrants to California had left St. Joseph; but that from that point up to Council Bluffs "they were scarcely out of sight of California tents and wagons," and at every landing the emigrants were "still crossing the river in considerable numbers."

Other steamboats reaching St. Louis on the 29th, also reported that nearly all the emigrants had "taken up the line of march" from St. Joseph, Independence and other area river points. St. Joseph seemed almost deserted "compared to its previous lively appearance."

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, May 20, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, May 24, 1850, or, New York Daily Tribune, June 6, 1850.

May 21.—John S. Jones' train, freighting government supplies west under contract (see March 5 entry), left Fort Leavenworth en route to Fort Laramie. (His wagons undoubtedly traveled the new military route laid out by Ogden—see p. 44.)

William Grinstead, of Pettis county, Mo., was a teamster for Jones on this trip. His notebook jottings supply varied information—an itinerary of the journey; the names of some 43 fellow teamsters; items on mess rations; a brief table of distances traveled in eastern "Kansas." (From Fort Leavenworth to "California forks of road," 14 miles; to "little grasshopper," 21 miles; to "second
grasshopper,” 4 miles; to “main grasshopper,” 8 miles; to “West fork,” 20 miles; to “Lemataw” [Nemaha], 13 miles.)

The train departed Fort Kearney June 13. Eastbound Jesse W. Crosby (whose Mormon party had crossed the South Platte on June 19), on June 21 noted in his journal: “Passed several heavy trains belonging to Government, bound for Fort Hall, also 100 mounted men, soldiers. . . .” Grinstead’s record indicates Jones’ wagons arrived at Fort Laramie (end of the trip) before July 10. On that date he (Grinstead) continued his journey to California. He had “Worked for John S. Jones fifty-four days $20 per month.” Grinstead took Sublette’s Cut-off on July 30; left Fort Bridger August 5; arrived at Salt Lake City August 11; departed on the 15th; arrived at Carson river September 19; and at “Weberville,” Calif., on October 12.


C May.—At least two of the year’s St. Louis-originating commercial passenger lines to California left the frontier from the Independence, Mo., area this month.

(1) Glenn & Co. Messrs. Glenn (an “experienced ‘prairiemen’”) and Ridgeway were the principal operators. (A statement that one of the company had “performed a through trip 7 times” doubtless referred to Glenn.) In January this line proposed to start from Independence; switched, in March, to St. Joseph; but, on April 14, was reported planning to leave Independence May 5, and to have room for more persons. The March “ad” had mentioned a $200 fare; elliptic spring light carriages; 50 pounds of baggage allowed; two good (riding) ponies for passengers of each carriage; six-mule-drawn baggage wagons; company-supplied provisions, tents, and medicines. This latest train finally got under way (from a camp southeast of Independence) on May 22. Diarist Henry A. Stine stated that the company consisted of 124 men (passengers?); and that several “handsome and strong Barroaches” had been added to the original outfit. On June 2 the train passed Union Town and went into camp, above, near the upper Kansas river ferry. From Union Town a correspondent reported, on June 5: “Glenn & Co’s passenger train from Independence (39 wagons, 200 mules and horses, and 140 men) passed here on 2d inst. So did Patrick’s[?] ox trains on the next day.” The company reached the Big Blue on June 8, found it in flood; built a raft; crossed on the 9th and 10th. Glenn & Co. got to Fort Kearney on June 17. Before arriving at Salt Lake City (August 11), where the train broke up, two passengers and a teamster died.

(2) J. C. Faine & Co. In March this “South-western Company” line advertised to leave St. Louis March 15; and to touch at Independence on April 10; fare $150. H. A. Stine (of the Glenn & Co. train) wrote on June 3 (when at Kansas river, above Union Town) “We passed [en route from Independence] the Ox train of J. C. Fane & Co. . . .” (Was this “Patrick’s ox trains” referred to above?)

Ref: For Glenn & Co.: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, January 28, March 6, April 14, June 5, 1850; Henry A. Stine’s “Letters and Journal . . . 1850” (from typed copy, courtesy California State Library, Sacramento); M. Littleton’s “Journal . . . 1850” (from typed copy, courtesy California State Library); L. H. Woolley, California, 1849-1913 . . . (Oakland, Calif., 1915), p. 8. For J. C. Faine & Co.: Missouri Republican, March 6, 1850; H. A. Stine’s June 3, 1850, letter.
Around May 23 (?) one army officer with 50 troops, and their horses, reached Fort Leavenworth (from Jefferson Barracks) aboard the Dr. Franklin.


May 24.—John Tecumseh Jones (half Chippewa), and family, moved from Pottawatomie creek (on the old Pottawatomie reserve) to a location on Ottawa creek, four miles north of Ottawa Baptist Mission (with which the Joneses were associated). (The mission was about three miles east of present Ottawa, Franklin co.)

Jones and his Maine-born wife—the former Jane Kell(e)y—had been adopted (about 1848) by the Ottawas, after severing connections with the Pottawatomies. (See KHO, v. 30, p. 225; and v. 29, facing p. 328, for a portrait of Jones.) The home that "Ottawa" Jones (a Free-State man) built in 1850(?) was destroyed by border ruffians in August, 1856. But a fine stone house he subsequently erected still stands.


May 29.—"J. O. Sawyer" signed a contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden, AQM) to (1) "continue the construction of a stone warehouse now commenced" at Fort Leavenworth, and complete it by August 1, for the sum of $5,500; (2) construct another stone warehouse for $5,175 (to be completed by October 1); (3) finish two frame buildings "now commenced," for $1,150.

The warehouse facilities were required because of Fort Leavenworth's new role as "an intermediate depot" from which "troops are marshaled and supplies transported by trains to the posts on the Oregon and Santa Fe routes and in New Mexico."

Ogden's 1851 report stated: "One of the warehouses [40' x 100'; three stories high] . . . is at the river side, and is used as a receiving store. It . . . [stands] against a lofty bank, with a graded landing in front. Wagons receive, from the third story on the side opposite to the river, the property delivered from steamers in the lower story. This is an exceedingly strong building. . . . The other storehouse [39' x 100'; three stories, with cellar] is on the hill adjoining the garrison. . . ." The two structures, with grading and excavation expenses, cost $13,973. But "in reality . . . cost the United States nothing. The funds were derived from sales of unserviceable horses and mules and a great mass of worn-out ox wagons and worthless property [relics of the Mexican War volunteers' outfits]. . . . Sold, however, at a favorable time [the gold rush], it produced the handsome sum of $15,649.70. . . ." (For one such auction see April 9 annals entry, p. 48.)

built bridges for the army in Kansas territory in 1856. A "J. O. Sawyer" was superintending Fort Riley construction work in 1855 (see KHC, v. 7, pp. 101-105). Could these all refer to the same man? Jackson, in KHC, v. 17, pp. 42-44, listed the road contractor as "J. O. Sawyer.")

May 30.—"Learn that a general war between the Pot[tawatomie], Kansas, Osage, Kickapoo, Delaware, Shawanoe, Sauk & Fox tribes on the one side, and the Pawnees on the other is being raised forthwith," wrote Jotham Meeker (at Ottawa Baptist Mission).

According to E. A. Tompkins, his train, on entering the Black Vermillion valley May 30, found the Pawnees and Pottawatomies engaged in battle. One dead, scalped Pawnee was seen, in a ravine.

Emigrant M. Littleton (in the Glenn & Co. train), encamped south of the Kansas river, and west of the Wakarusa, recorded in his journal June 1: "this evening there was 19 Indians came flying across the Road on a way chase from the best information they are the Pottowatimas fighting the pawnees. . . ." Another Glenn & Co. passenger—Henry A. Stine—in a letter of June 3, near Union Town—wrote: "The other day 5 Pottawatomies chased 8 Pawnees right through our train at the top of their horses speed and the next day we heard that they had killed two of the Pawnees."

At Fort Leavenworth, on June 1, the Hon. Henry J. Coke (an English visitor going up the Missouri via steamboat) learned that "This morning the Pawnees descended en masse, and had a brush with the Potawatomies."

William Walker (Wyandot) recorded in his diary on June 4: "Just heard of an onslaught by the Pawnees upon the Pottawatomies in which the latter repulsed their assailants with the death of their leader. . . ." On the 7th Walker wrote: "Just learned that Capt. Ketchum, the Chief of the Delawares, had informed our Chief that a band of Pawnees had attacked the Pottawatomies and were repulsed and that one had been captured and six scalps had been found in his possession, supposed to have been taken from some California emigrants."


May-June.—The Robert Campbell returned to St. Louis on June 8 (?), having made the trip up to Council Bluffs and back (about 1,370 miles) in seven days and six hours running time—a speed surpassing that of any other boat (according to the Reveille).

On June 7 the Robert Campbell started up the Missouri again—bound for St. Joseph this trip.

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, June 4, 7, 1850.

June 1.—A letter Father John J. Bax, S. J., wrote from Osage Mission (present St. Paul, Kan.) contained a list of the Osage towns; and stated, also, that the Osages numbered nearly 5,000 souls—3,500 on the Neosho river, and the rest on the Verdigris.

According to Bax, these were the villages on the Neosho:
(1) Little Osages (1,500); 22 miles from the Mission.
(2) Village of Nanze-Waspe (600); 12 miles from the Mission.
(3) Big Chief (300); four miles from the Mission.
(4) Weichaka-Ougrin (500); three miles from the Mission. (Bax also wrote of the “village named Woichaka-Ougrin, or Cockle-Bird”—i.e., cockleburrs, apparently. [This settlement was called by Father Ponziglonie—see below—“Briar’s town.”])
(5) Little Town (300); 30 miles from the Mission. (Bax, in a June 10 letter, mentioned “Cawva-Shinka, or Little Village,” 30 miles distant.)

The villages on the Verdigris (as listed by Bax):
(6) Big-Hill, or Passoi-Ougrin (600); 40 miles from the Mission.
(7) Les Chéïers, or Sanze-Ougrin (nearly 700); 55 miles from the Mission.
(8) The Black-Dog, or Skanka-Sape village (400); 60 miles from the Mission [near present Claremore, Okla.—see below].
(9) “There are, besides, other small villages, dispersed at a great distance from us,” he wrote.

Some years later, Father Paul M. Ponziglonie, S.J., in a manuscript on the Osages, listed the 17 villages existing in the time of George White Hair (principal chief, 1843-1852). The “Neosho district” towns he described as follows: the Little Osages (grouped by Bax) had four villages—(1) Wha-pe-ka, on Owl creek some eight miles above its mouth, the northernmost settlement; (2) Ugckzecta (Bax once mentioned it as “Huzegta”), about 10 miles below, “just on the spot now occupied by Chanute”; (3) and (4) Chiefs Nishuman and Numpevale had their towns (not far from each other) perhaps five miles on downstream.

Below the Little Osages’ towns were the Great Osages’ Neosho river villages: (1) Nantze-waspe, on the east bank, at present Shaw—“on almost the identical place”; (2) Pawhuska—Chief George White Hair’s capital—on the west bank, on a range of small hills, nearly four miles west of present St. Paul (Osage Mission); (3) Briar’s-town, five miles east of Pawhuska, on Flat Rock creek (see Bax’s “Weichaka-Ougrin” above); (4) Beaver’s town, on a high hill, at the headwaters of Hickory creek, eight miles southeast (of Pawhuska?); (5) Littletown—where George White Hair’s brother was chief—on the west bank of the Neosho, where now is the “east end of Oswego”; (6) Chouteau’s town, outside of the Osage reserve, on the Cherokees’ lands, several miles above the junction of the Grand Saline with the Neosho.

The Great Osages’ “Verdigris District” villages: (1) Little Bear’s town, in the northwest part of the reserve, some 10 miles above the junction of Fall river with the Verdigris; (2) Chetopa, at the headwaters of a creek called Chetopa, running west of the Verdigris; (3) Elk-town, on Elk creek; (4) Big Hill Town—called, by the Osages, “Pawnee-no-pah-tze” for the chief—the principal town of the district, located a few miles northwest of Big Hill creek’s mouth, “where now is Independence”; (5), (6), and (7) On down the right bank of the Verdigris, “at a certain point between its junction with the Cama [Caney],” were three more villages “a few miles apart from one another”—called after their chiefs “Tally, Clearnor [Clermont] and Black Dog.” “They were settled by a clan of nice looking Osages, all stalwart
fellows, considered to be the bravest of the nation.” (Black Dog’s village—see KHO, v. 31, p. 149—was near present Claremore, Okla. These three towns were outside the Osage reserve, on the Cherokee’s land.)


♣ June 1.—The St. Ange, upbound from St. Louis, “Stopped four hours at Fort Leavenworth to discharge cargo” (as passenger the Hon. Henry J. Coke—brother of the Earl of Leicester—wrote in his 1852-published A Ride Over the Rocky Mountains to Oregon and California). Coke “walked up the hill and had a fine view of the Prairie.”

Coke, his friend “Fred, a British parson,” their five employees, and outfit of two wagons, nine mules, and eight horses, were aboard the St. Ange. After disembarking at St. Joseph, Mo., this party traveled northward to the Council Bluffs area before crossing the Missouri (on June 18); subsequently arrived at Fort Laramie on July 17.

Ref: Coke, op. cit.

♣ June 1.—Emigrant James Bennett, traveling up the Little Blue, recorded in his diary: “We met a company of dragoons today on their march from Ft. Kearney to Fort Leavenworth, having a number of baggage wagons in charge.”

Ref: Bennett, op. cit., p. 13.

♣ June 13.—Bound for Fort Laramie, Fort Leavenworth’s commandant, Bvt. Col. Edwin V. Sumner, First U.S. dragoons, set out from his post with an escort of 50 mounted Sixth infantry troops (from “B” and “D” companies).

Except for the loss of one man (Private Mahoney) and a horse (both killed by lightning below Fort Kearny), Sumner’s command reached Fort Laramie speedily and safely, in 21½ days (July 6, by official record).

On July 25 Sumner (and his escort) left Fort Laramie and marched southward—presumably by way of the established route along the base of the Rocky mountains—to the upper Arkansas river, where he would (under orders) select a site for a new military post. See p. 100. He arrived at the Arkansas on August 8. See p. 92.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, August 9, 16, 1850; New York Daily Tribune, August 26, 1850; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, August 8, 1850; Fort Atkinson (“Kan.”) post returns (microfilm of National Archives records, in KHI).

♣ June.—The Jefferson Inquirer of the 15th reported: “We learn from a man just from St. Joseph, that the emigration that has passed through that place, this season, amounts to at least 30,000 persons.”

On June 18, from “Council Bluffs Nebraska Territory,” a correspondent wrote: “The last company of California emigrants numbering near thirty men and some 50 or 60 horses left the Missouri river at this place the latter part of last week. . . . This brings up the rear of about 4,000 wagons,
ten or twelve thousand persons and eighteen or twenty thousand head of horses, cattle &c.—all of this immense number "have crossed within a scope of twenty-five miles of this place, numbering near six times as much as the emigration of last year." This writer noted that the Mormons (encamped near the Platte's mouth) "take some 500 or 600 wagons and teams, besides large quantities of cattle, sheep, hogs, poultry &c."


† June.—On the 16th, a few days in advance of Santa Fe trail co-travelers (left at Pawnee Fork), William O. Ardinger and Robert H. Smith arrived at Independence, Mo. (bringing first news of the massacre near Wagon Mound—see April 16 entry).

The company (of 20 or more men) with which Ardinger and Smith had set out about May 19 from Barclay's Fort, and on May 27 from Las Vegas, N. M., consisted of a mail party (apparently headed by "Mr. [Elliott] Lee," ); and the wagon trains of Hickman & Adams, and "Mr. Harley." From Las Vegas "to the crossing of the Cimarron," a military escort (headed by Bvt. 2d Lt. A. E. Burnside; including 2d Lt. P. W. L. Plympton, and 22 men) accompanied them. By June 18 the mail had reached Fort Leavenworth.

Leaving Santa Fe, originally, on May 14, the journey of these travelers had been interrupted and delayed when, on May 19, they came upon the massacre scene near Wagon Mound.

Ref: *Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, June 11, 1850; *The Weekly Tribune*, Liberty, Mo., June 21, 1850 (from Independence *Commonwealth* extra of June 17); *New York Daily Tribune*, July 1, 1850; or *The Daily Reveille*, St. Louis, June 21, 1850; McCall, *op. cit.*, pp. 493, 494; Calhoun, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-200, 206-208. The delayed mail (which was to have left on May 14) departed Santa Fe on May 24.

† In June these New Mexico-bound traders' and freighters' trains, and other Santa Fe trail travelers, were met by F. X. Aubry as he journeyed to the States (see July 3 entry):

June 21. At the lower crossing of the Cimarron: "a man with the mail, also Pike Vasques, Hatcher, Wood, Bransford and [Isaac?] McCarty," with 20 wagons.


June 27. Aubry saw (from the ridge road) six trains "on the lower [river] road." (Probably one belonged to Alexander Majors, who, in his mem-
oirs, stated: “In the early part of June, 1850, I loaded my train, consisting of ten wagons drawn by 150 oxen, at Kansas City, Mo., with merchandise destined for [merchants in] Santa Fe... .” Majors also related an adventure he had with Indians at 110-mile creek; mentioned Samuel Poteet as a faithful assistant on the trip; and recollected that he received $13,000 in Mexican silver dollars for this freighting job.

**June 28.** Water-bound at Pawnee Fork: “Sims, with 30 wagons.”

**June 30.** At Chaves creek: “[Cornelius] Davy, with 24 wagons, for Chihuahua.”

**July 3.** At 110-mile creek: “a quartermaster’s train of 40 wagons.”

Ref: *Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, July 8, 1850; Alexander Majors’ *Seventy Years on the Frontier* (Chicago, 1893), pp. 128-189.

**£ June 30.**—The “June” express from Fort Laramie, with mail dated up to the 11th from that post, arrived at Fort Leavenworth.

The preceding (or May) express from Laramie had been met on the Platte’s South Fork on May 11 by a westbound emigrant company. Undoubtedly it reached Fort Leavenworth well before the end of May.

Ref: *The Weekly Tribune*, Liberty, Mo., July 12, 1850; *Fawkes, op. cit.; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times*, July 11, 1850 (from Platte [Mo.] *Argus of July 6*).

**£ June.**—The *Saluda* (returning from Council Bluffs) reached St. Louis on the 30th. Aboard were nearly 40 mountain men, and 2,047 packs of buffalo robes and furs belonging to the Union Fur Company, consigned to Messrs. Robert & William Campbell. Other passengers included several Mormon teachers bound for England, or the European continent.

Ref: *St. Louis Intelligencer*, July 1, 1850; *Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, July 1, 1850.

**£ June-July.**—The *St. Ange* (Joseph LaBarge, captain) chartered by the Union Fur Company, left St. Louis June 13 for the upper Missouri. Aboard were partner Alexander M. Harvey, some 75 mountain men, and about 150 tons of freight.

The *St. Ange* arrived at the Yellowstone’s mouth July 8; started back the next day; and on July 19 reached St. Louis, having made the round-trip in 36 days—“it being by nearly one-third the quickest trip ever made.” In her cargo were about 800 packs of buffalo robes; also skins and furs.

Ref: *The Daily Reveille*, St. Louis, June 12, July 20, 1850; *Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, June 8, July 20, 1850.

**£ July-November.**—Licenses to trade with Indians in “Kansas,” as granted by agents and subagents of the St. Louis superintendency, were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traders</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>Issued by</th>
<th>Rec’d at</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Waldo</td>
<td>[Tribes on the Arkansas river]</td>
<td>Sup’t D. D.</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Duncan Macdonell
Iowas, and Sacs &
Foxes (of the
Missouri)
W. P. Richardson
July

John W. Forman
Iowas, and Sacs &
Foxes (of the
Missouri)
W. P. Richardson
July

John W. Polke
Pottawatomies
Luke Lea
August

(M. F.) Dyer & (S. G.)
Mason
Delawares, Kickapoos,
and Pottawatomies
Luke Lea
August

Duncan Macdonell
Pottawatomies
Luke Lea
August

Moses H. Scott
Pottawatomies
Luke Lea
September

Robert Robitaile
Pottawatomies
Luke Lea
September

(Michel) Giraud &
(E. L.) Chouteau
Osages
Henry Harvey
September

(David) Waldo &
(Jacob) Hall
Kansa
C. N. Handy
September

A. B. H. McGee
Sacs & Foxes (of the
Mississippi)
C. N. Handy
November

Ref: SIA, St. Louis, “Records,” v. 9, typed copy, pp. 442, 446, 455, 459, 462, 468, 468, 470, 471, 475, 481. “D. & T. D. S. Macdonell” opened a store in St. Joseph, Mo., in the autumn of 1849. Their “ad” in the Gazette first appeared in the October 28, 1849, issue; and see editorial comment in November 2, 1849, issue. In OIA, Letters Received from Fort Leavenworth Agency (National Archives Microcopy 234, Roll 803) is a Samuel G. Mason letter of December 26, 1849, stating: “I am here trading with the Kickapoo Indians with my wife’s brother [i.e., W. F. Dyer]. . . .” Robert Robitaile (a member of the Wyandotte Nation), and family, were residents of Jackson county, Mo., in 1850 (U. S. census, 1850).

C. July 1.—Departure from Independence, Mo., for Santa Fe, of Waldo, Hall & Co.’s. first stagecoaches marked the beginning of a regular monthly U. S. post office department mail service between the States and New Mexico. Partners in the four-year mail contract enterprise were David Waldo, Jacob Hall, and William McCoy (all Independence residents; all connected with the Santa Fe trade, and government freighting).

On June 27, at Independence, “M.” had written to Horace Greeley, of the New York Tribune: “The mail party [in charge of Bertram Spratt] which leaves here on the 1st prox. will consist of 10 men, well armed, all resolute fellows, except two young cadets from Fort Leavenworth, who have yet to be tried. If we meet the Apaches we are determined to give them hell or die in the attempt. If not scalped you will hear from me.”

As reported by the Independence Missouri Commonwealth, two[?] six-mule, eight-passenger coaches (having “beautifully painted” and “water-tight” bodies), each with a four-man, well-armed guard, would start for [and leave from] Santa Fe on “the first
of every month. "Each . . . [guard] has at his side, strapped up in the stage, one of Colt's revolving rifles; in a holster, below, one of Colt's long revolving pistols, and in his belt a small Colt revolver, besides a hunting knife; so that these eight men are prepared, in case of attack, to discharge one hundred and thirty-six shots without stopping to load!"

The Commonwealth account noted, also, that Waldo, Hall & Co. had "established a sort of depot at Council Grove," and had "sent out a blacksmith, a number of men to cut and cure hay, with a quantity of animals, grain and provisions"; and understood that they intended "to make a sort of traveling post there, and to open a farm. . . ." Jacob Hall testified in June, 1862 (at Washington, D. C.) as follows: "In the month of August [1850] . . . on my way to Santa Fe, in charge of about 60 wagons belonging to Waldo, Hall & Co., 35 of which were loaded with Government stores, and the balance with our own goods, and also in charge of the U. S. Mail, which Waldo, Hall & Co. were transporting as partners, I bought the house, field, corral &c., built [at Council Grove] by [William] Mitchell, from Mosier & Baker for the sum of four hundred dollars in cash, and where I established a mail station, and where I have kept one ever since. . . ." He stated, also: "Waldo, Hall & Co. . . . also took out a traders' license [see preceding entry] and kept an Indian trading house at Council Grove until 1854, when the first mail contract expired, and I became the contractor for the next four years. . . ."

Réf: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, June 4, July 26, September 3, 6, 1850; The Western Journal, St. Louis, v. 4 (September, 1850), pp. 414, 415 or, see KHI, v. 18, p. 97; New York Daily Tribune, July 26, 1850; New York Weekly Tribune, June 29, 1850; The History of Jackson County, Missouri (1881), p. 644; Hall vs. Huffer (brief in Circuit Court of U. S. for District of Kansas), in KHI library; SIA, St. Louis, "Records," v. 9, typed copy, pp. 442, 443, 455, 466 (re trading license for David Waldo); 33d Cong., 2d Sess., H. Ex. Doc. No. 86 (Serial 759), pp. 318, 319 (for Jacob Hall's mail contract in 1854).

July 1-5.—The Robert Campbell returned to St. Louis July 5, having left Council Bluffs on the first of the month. Passengers included Joseph V. Hamilton (American Fur Company agent at Fort Alexander, on the Yellowstone's headwaters), and over 50 company employees. Also aboard were 2,735 bales of buffalo robes and furs (the cargoes from 10 Mackinaw boats).

Réf: New York Daily Tribune, July 15, 1850 (from St. Louis Intelligencer, July 6); The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, July 6, 1850; T. A. Colbertson, op. cit., p. 90.

July 3.—Francis X. Aubry arrived at Independence, Mo., from Santa Fe (left June 12), four or five days in advance of his company (42 men, including traders Eugene Leitensdorfer and "Mr. Turley"; 10 wagons and 200 mules). He had left the train at Cottonwood Crossing (around 185 miles out) two days earlier; and "traveled 125 miles of this distance in twenty hours and a half, on the same yellow mare that did him such service . . . [in 1848—see KHI, v. 31, p. 182]. On that occasion, this animal traveled 200 miles in twenty-six hours. . . ."
Aubry reported having met about 400 out-bound traders’ wagons (see p. 82), also many Indians (friendly) in the Arkansas Crossing vicinity; and had thwarted, at Plum Buttes on June 29, an attempted raid by Osages on his mules.

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, July 8, 1850; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, July 9, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, July 8, 1850; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., July 12, 26, 1850, or, New York Weekly Tribune, July 20, 1850, or, St. Joseph Gazette, July 17, 1850—all from an account in the Occidental Messenger, Independence, Mo.

Early in July 18 persons died of cholera at Kansas (City), Mo.—17 of them Belgian emigrants recently arrived; the other, “Dr. Fulton,” who had attended them.

Visitor John O. Wattles, writing from “Kansas, Mo.,” in June, to Horace Greeley of the New York Tribune, had stated: “There are now just landing between 60 and 70 emigrants from the old country, (Florence) [i.e., Belgium!]. They are strong and able-bodied men and women. They settle in this State, within a few miles of this town. . . .”

Allen T. Ward, writing from Shawnee Methodist Mission (present Johnson county) on September 1, commented: “Our country . . . has . . . been perfectly healthy this summer, except some Belgians who settled two miles below Kansas were attacked with Cholera & some 15 or 20 died, the physician that attended them also died of the same disease. . . .”

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, July 20, 1850; New York Daily Tribune, July 8, 1850; Missouri Statesman, Columbia, Mo., July 26, 1850; Allen T. Ward’s letter (in KHi ms. div.); William Walker’s “Diary,” loc. cit. Walker recorded the death of “Dr. Fulton” as occurring on July 5, 1850. Under June 28 he had noted the cholera death, at Kansas, Mo., of “Mr. Walrond’s black boy Arch.” Wattles (a Yale graduate; active in the anti-slavery cause; friend of William Lloyd Garrison and Gerrit Smith) moved to Kansas territory in 1855, from Ohio, as did his brother Augustus. John O. Wattles, died in Linn county in 1839.—W. A. Mitchell’s Linn County, Kansas . . . (1926), pp. 135-140.

July.—At Fort Leavenworth the ranking officer was Capt. Charles S. Lovell, Sixth U. S. infantry. Dragoon recruit James A. Bennett, who arrived at the post about July 27 wrote: “Garrisoned by 2 companies of [First] Dragoons, 2 companies of [Fourth] Artillery, and 1 company of [Sixth] infantry. The Fort swarmed with Indians.”


July 8.—Government contractor Joseph Clymer (see February 26 entry) started a train of 38 wagons from Fort Leavenworth for Santa Fe. The army freight totaled 196,275 pounds. (By early August Clymer’s train had reached San Miguel.)


July 9.—A David Waldo 19-wagon train (carrying 97,592 pounds of government freight) set out from Fort Leavenworth for Fort Laramie. (See February 25 entry.)

July 10.—The Robert Fulton, reached St. Louis after a journey up to Council Bluffs. Both the Saluda (met at Wakendah Prairie) and Highland Mary (met above Glasgow) had cholera aboard. The latter had lost her first engineer by this disease.

Ref: The Daily Reveille, July 11, 1850.

July.—From Fort Leavenworth, on July 10, Jones Creech’s eight-wagon train (carrying 32,367 pounds of government freight) set out for Fort Kearny. On July 20 David Hunt’s nine-wagon train (carrying 41,820 pounds of army supplies) left for the same destination.


July.—A Pottawatomie “National Ferry” was established on the Kansas river not far west of Union Town (and near what is now the Shawnee-Wabunsee county line), with Lucius R. Darling as ferryman.

Darling’s contract (dated July 10; signed by him, and by Agent Luke Lea; witnessed by John D. Lasley and Samuel Lewis) stipulated that he would “keep and attend a ferry,” for the “use & benefit of the Potawatomi Indians,” “on the Kansas river, . . . at or near said Darling’s present habitation, within one & a half or two miles of [and upriver from] the trading post of Union Town, on the main emigrant route across said river.” The ferryman’s pay was set at $650 per year. (Darling operated the ferry till January, 1854, when John L. Ogee got the contract.)

Ref: OIA, Letters Received from Fort Leavenworth Agency (National Archives Microcopy 234, Roll 503). The land office plat of T. 11 S., R. 13 E. (in the state auditor’s office) shows Darling’s ferry-crossing in Section 15; the location being about three miles almost directly south of present Rossville, and about four miles east and north, of present Maple Hill, in northeastern Wabaunsee county. John Wentworth’s Early Chicago: a Lecture . . . 1875 (Chicago, 1876), p. 37, states that Lucius R. Darling married (apparently in the 1830’s) Elizabeth (Ouillette) Welch, widow of Michael Welch (whom she had married May 11, 1830, and by whom she had a daughter, Mary Ann), and daughter of Antoine Ouillette (a Frenchman with a Pottawatomie, or half-French wife). Lucius R. and Elizabeth Darling, by this account, had the following children: Mitchell, Lewis, Josette, Francis, Sophia, and Joseph. The family removed with the “Council Bluffs” Pottawatomies to “Kansa” in late 1847, presumably. SIA, St. Louis, “Records,” v. 9, typed copy, pp. 821, 822 (for 1854 item).

July 15.—H. H. White received $1,975 for building a saw and grist mill for the Miami Indians. Henry L. Hicks was the miller appointed August 1.

(On August 30, 1851, Agent A. M. Coffey stated that the mill was “incomplete” when received from the contractor, and much of the work unsubstantial. As a result, “they [the Miamis] are unable to operate the saw, and the grinding is done slowly and imperfectly.”)


Early in August an eastbound party (which had left Santa Fe about July 10; and subsequently arrived at Fort Leavenworth August 15) met "Capt. Lovell, with a command of Lovell's Light Battery and Company K, [First] dragoons . . . at Jones's Fort[?], on their way to Big Timbers [the area originally designated for a new military post to protect the Santa Fe route]. . . ." (Evans and his First dragoons, on August 12, were detached to escort Santa Fe-bound government trains.)

It was on August 20 that Lovell's command joined Sumner. See August 8 entry.


From July 22 to August 5(?) an emigrating company of "Brewsterites" ("a society of dissenters from the Salt Lake Mormons" who planned to colonize in present Arizona, near the Gila river's mouth) camped on the Santa Fe trail, 20 miles west of Independence, Mo., making final travel preparations. There were (at one time) 98 persons (mostly women and children), with 27 wagons, about 200 head of cattle, and a few horses. On August 5 (or possibly as late as the 9th) these emigrants began their journey across "Kansas."

Coming overland from Illinois (Springfield; Fulton City) and Iowa (West Buffalo), separately, or in small groups, the Mormon "dissenter" families first had rendezvoused 10 miles south of Independence—the Royce Oatman family (of nine) arriving, in the van, June 29; and the James C. Brewster party (of 10), in the rear, July 13. Organizing on July 15, the company chose Jackson Goodale as leader (for one year). On the 22d the emigrants moved to the camp in "Kansas"—on the Shawnees' reserve. ("The Indians have farms about here, and raise things. . . . They bring string beans, green corn, blackberries and onions into camp," wrote one woman, on August 4. She stated, also: "We expect to start to-morrow for the plains.")

Apparently a signed-up member of the "Brewsterites" was Max. Greene (a roving Pennsylvanian; author, in 1856, of The Kanzas Region). In his book he stated: "In the close of the summer of 1850, I was [on the Santa Fe trail] one of a company bound on a gold-hunt, and the doubtful experiment of effecting a settlement among the pugnacious Jumass [Yuma Indians] at the head of the Gulf of California . . . [but] confess . . . I was personally merely on the lookout for novelty." Greene accounts for his
own midsummer travels in a table of "thermometric observations . . . made by myself" which indicates he was at Fort Leavenworth on June 21, and as late as June 30, 1850; at Big John's Spring on July 4; at Cottonwood Grove on July 6 and 7; at Bend of the Arkansas on July 11; at Pawnee Fork on July 13 and 14; traveling along the Arkansas from July 16 to 30; and at Bent's Fort from July 30 to August 15.

Elsewhere in Greene's book is mention of "coming into the Santa Fe road [in the Pawnee Fork vicinity]; in early September?," and of coming "to a halt within the white-tented circle of wagons of the party we[?] had arranged to join." He tells, also, of discord in the company; refers to the "untameable Wisconsian" Royce Oatman as "the nucleus of our troubles"; describes peacemaking efforts of a young printer, whose speech to assembled members (at, or near the Arkansas Crossing) helped patch up (for a time) a split in the company.

The "Brewsterites" camped on September 12 at Sand creek (where, according to James C. Brewster, the mail coaches from Santa Fe "attended by a guard of ten well armed men" came up to them about 10 P. M., and continued the night journey eastward because of pursuit by Indians). Emigrant Mary Ann Lane, aged 16, died at Middle Cimarron Spring on the 16th.

The long-brewing split occurred at Las Vegas, N. M., on October 9. The Goodale-Brewster company, reduced to 52 persons, went to Socorro, N. M. The Royce Oatmans and "other malcontents" (11 families totaling some 50 persons) crossed the Rio Grande on October 19—still bound for the original destination. In February, 1851, the Oatmans, traveling ahead of others in their party (left at Pima Village), were attacked by a band of Yavapai. Except for three children (Lorenzo—left for dead; Olive and Mary—taken captive) the family was massacred. Lorenzo was rescued; Mary later died of starvation (among the Mohave Indians—to whom the two girls had been sold); Olive was ransomed in 1856.

Max Greene (who left the "Brewsterites," perhaps at Santa Fe?) published in The Kansas Region his "own table of distances on the Santa Fe trail," taken "with my own viameter . . . 1850." The mileages are not compatible with those listed by Gregg and other travelers. (Examples: Council Grove 152 miles from Independence, Mo.; Little Arkansas 250 miles; Walnut creek 293 miles; Pawnee Fork 319 miles; Caches 388 miles; Old Fort Mann 402 miles; "Fort Sumner" [Fort Atkinson] 406 miles; Ford of the Arkansas 416 miles; Jornada to Sand creek 465 miles; Middle Spring on the Cimarron 513 miles.) For comparisons see Klf(), v. 31, between pp. 160, 161.

Ref: The Olite Branch, Springfield, Ill., v. 2-4 (February, 1850-September, 1851), passim (microfilm, courtesy Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City; from original file in the Huntington Library); Max. Greene's The Kansas Region (New York, 1856); R. B. Stratton's Life Among the Indians: Being an Interesting Narrative of the Captivity of the Oatman Girls, Among the Apache and Mohave Indians . . . (San Francisco, 1857)—microfilm of a copy in the Edward Eberstadt & Sons collection; California Historical Society Quarterly, San Francisco, v. 41 (December, 1962), pp. 309-317; New York Daily Tribune, February 19, 1851 (has brief letter by "N. S.", from "Socoro, Dec. 21, 1850"); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, May 9, 1851. Old Fort Mann and Fort Atkinson were not over one mile apart.
July 25-27.—Around 400 dragoon and infantry troops (329? of them recruits), bound for Santa Fe, debarked at Fort Leavenworth from the St. Paul and Anna. They brought with them cholera—which had become epidemic aboard both boats during the trip up the Missouri from Jefferson Barracks.

One man died on the St. Paul; seven (?) others succumbed after landing at the fort. Dragoon recruit James A. Bennett (a July 25 arrival) wrote: “Our sick [under the care of Asst. Surg. Elisha P. Langworthy] were placed in Hospital there while we moved 3 miles from Fort to Salt Creek and formed an encampment. We joined [two?] days later] by 200 [infantry] recruits from Newport, Ky.” He also recorded, under date of August 8: “Cholera raging to an awful extent among us. Men at active pursuits one day . . .; the next day they are a loathsome mass, thrown coffinless into the yawning pit. We wrap 4 to 5 daily in their blankets, and throw their remains in the ground with a blessing or a prayer. No stone marks their last resting place . . . desertsions continued in gangs from 3 to 8.” Asst. Surg. Rodney Glisan (who was on the boat carrying the infantry recruits), in his Journal of Army Life (published 1874), wrote that “nearly every man in the command [except the officers] was taken sick with it [cholera], in some of its stages, before our arrival at Fort Leavenworth” where “we found this pestilence in full force. . . . None of the cases, however, proved fatal until the night we reached the fort, when several died.” For a time, there was near-panic among the recruits.


July 26.—Government contractor David Waldo started a train of 45 wagons from Fort Leavenworth for Santa Fe. The army freight totaled 236,669 pounds.


Summer.—Two small Catholic chapels—out-stations of St. Mary’s (Pottawatomie) Mission—were completed during July and August, at sites south of Kansas river, in what is now Shawnee county. Thomas Macdonell superintended their construction.

One was on Mission creek, a little above its junction with Blacksmith creek (not far from the old Kansa Methodist Mission); the other—“St. Joseph’s” (also known as “Meghmiinak”) was only a few miles west of present Topeka, near the Kansas river—between it and the Pottawatomie Baptist Mission.


Summer.—Santa Fe-bound trains on the trail in the July-August period included the following:

Eastbound travelers who left Santa Fe in mid-July (and reached Fort Leavenworth in mid-August) met James J. Webb’s train only 30 miles from
Santa Fe; Samuel Wethered, James E. Sabine, E. Ross, and Hez. Harrison's train at Red river; McCauley's train at Rabbit Ear. Around August 1 they met Dr. Henry Connelly, James L. ("Squire") Collins, William C. Skinner, William O. Ardinger, and party, near Fort Mann; later met Connelly's train of wagons at Walnut creek; and Francis X. Aubry's train at Big Bend of the Arkansas. ("Messrs Crabbe and Edwards" were the "experienced" wagon masters of the Connelly and Skinner trains.)

The eastbound mail which left Santa Fe August 1 met Joseph Clymer's train at San Miguel; McCauley's near there; Cornelius Davy's, and Lofland's train, close to Las Vegas; the train of Wells & Gutierrez at Upper Cimarron Springs; Francis X. Aubry's wagons at Lower Cimarron Springs; and Dr. Connelly near Sand creek. (Aubry reached Santa Fe some time in mid-August, in 36% days from Independence. Of his round-trip it was reported: "The wagons were absent from Santa Fe 77 days being 21 days less than any previous trip.") For earlier mention of several trains above, see June entry, p. 82.

Another eastbound company (which included P. M. Papin), which left Santa Fe August 16, met Connelly's train (and Skinner's?), stranded at Cedar Springs, on August 28. (On the 23d Indian raiders had carried off 84 mules.) On the Cimarron this party met Joseph Clymer's "about 100[?]" wagons with government freight (see July 8 entry); and met Oldham's wagons on the Jornada. (The mail party which left Santa Fe October 1 saw "Oldham's train and Oldham's company" at "Old Pecos," or, as another report stated: "Oldham and Thomson's train" was met at "Old Pecos Church.")

Ref: The Daily Register, St. Louis, August 18, October 3 (for Thomas D. Russell's August 24 letter from "Cedar Spring"); 1850; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., August 30, 1850 (from St. Louis Intelligencer, August 19); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, August 18, September 3, November 1, December 7, 1850; New York Daily Tribune, August 27, September 16, 1850; New York Weekly Tribune, September 21, October 5, 12, 19, 1850; Calhoun, op. cit., pp. 255, 256.

* August 1.—As the Independence Occidental Messenger reported it: "On the 1st inst. commenced regular monthly [U. S. post office department] mail service between this point and Salt Lake. The mail is carried in light wagons drawn by mules. Under the management of its enterprising contractors James Brown and his associates [Brown, Woodson & Co.—as another account stated] . . . the undertaking will no doubt be conducted with energy and promptness. . . ." Manager "Thos. D. Scroggins" headed the "August mail" party. He reached Fort Bridger September 5, and Salt Lake City September 9; also he brought the first mail back to Independence—see October 24 entry.

James Brown (government freighter) had obtained U. S. mail contract No. 4965—which called for transport of mail "From Independence, by Union-town [the Pottawatomies' Kansas river trading post], Fort Kearny, Fort Laramie and Fort Smith [Bridger?], to Salt Lake City, and back, once a month, in four or six-mule or horse stages." The mail was to be "Leave Independence and Salt Lake first day of each month, and arrive at the other end of the route on the last day of the same month." (Annual pay for the contractor: $19,500.)
The September, October, and November mails (at least) departed Independence on schedule. Captain Stansbury met the September mail near Ash Hollow on October 17. Around the end of October, other eastbound travelers met the September mail at "Strawberry Creek" (a few miles this side South Pass), in difficulty because of mules giving out. (On November 22 this carrier reached Salt Lake City on foot, having lost all the animals.) The October mail carrier went out to the Platte's South Fork; decided the road was impassable; and returned (temporarily?) to Fort Kearny in November.


C August 1(?).—Freighter John S. Jones (see March 5 and May 21 annals entries), direct from Fort Laramie (left July 20), arrived at Independence, Mo., having performed "one of the quickest trips" ever made from that post. He had averaged over 50 miles per day on the 650-mile journey.

Aboard the St. Paul, Jones reached Lexington, Mo., August 1 (or 2?). He (as reported) had met straggling California-bound parties—about 200 persons in all—the first few days out of Fort Laramie (but by July 20 the main body of emigrants had passed that post); and he also had met trains of Mormon emigrants en route to Salt Lake City.

Ref: The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, August 3, 1850.

C August 1.—"The [U. S.] mail from the States" (including St. Louis newspapers up to July 23), which left Independence, Mo., this day (in Waldo, Hall & Co.'s. coach[es]), reached Santa Fe on August 28.

The U. S. mail which departed Santa Fe on August 1 (the first return trip under Waldo, Hall & Co.'s. contract) arrived at Independence on August 28. The carrier—Bertram Spratt—had made the round trip in seven weeks and three days, stopping two or three days in Santa Fe. The outgoing and incoming mail stages had met at Arkansas Crossing.

Ref: Calhoun, op. cit., p. 255; New York Daily Tribune, August 27, September 10, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, September 6, 5, 1850.

C August 3.—Isaac Preston obtained the contract (made with Capt. A. Morrow, AAQM) to furnish and deliver at Fort Scott, by September 10, 225 tons of "good, well-cured hay," for $6.90 per ton. (His sureties were George Douglass and A. F. Nelson.)


C August 8.—Bvt. Col. Edwin V. Sumner, First dragoons, and escort of 50 mounted Sixth infantry troops, arrived on the upper
Arkansas river—after a journey from Fort Leavenworth (left June 13—see p. 81), by way of Fort Laramie (reached July 6; left July 25).

Summer (according to mail carrier Bertram Spratt) subsequently arrived at the Arkansas Crossing on August 16 and “immediately moved the troops that were waiting [Capt. Mansfield Lovell’s command—see July 15-16 entry] higher up the river to the ‘big timbers’” where a new military post was to be erected. (See September entry, p. 100, for the establishment of “New Post on Arkansas”—Fort Atkinson.)

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, August 16, September 3, 1850; Fort Atkinson (“Kan.”) post returns, August, 1850 (from National Archives; microfilm in KHI).

’elle August 9.—Twelve wagons carrying a total of 50,978 pounds of government freight (Jones Creech, contractor) left Fort Leavenworth for “New Post Arkansas River”—or Fort Mackay (later Fort Atkinson).


’elle August 10-12.—Under command of 1st Lt. Henry B. Schroeder, Third U.S. infantry, a large contingent of infantry recruits left Fort Leavenworth (see July 25-27 entry) on the 12th, to march overland to Santa Fe. Two days earlier (it appears) 2d Lt. George H. Paige, Second U.S. infantry, and another detachment, had set out with the command’s 16-wagon, mule-drawn supply train (and 18 teamsters) —perhaps headed by Charles White, Independence, Mo.

Travelers from Santa Fe reaching Fort Leavenworth about August 15 had met the “detachment of recruits under . . . Capt. Schroeder . . . near Stranger Creek, and several detached parties along the route.” The “August” mail carrier from Santa Fe met (about the 23rd) “a company of soldiers at Council Grove”; and in the fore part of September, some 20 miles south of the Arkansas Crossing, another eastbound party “met a company of infantry on their way to Santa Fe, all in good health.”


’elle August 14.—Contractor John Dougherty (sutler at Fort Kearny) started three wagons of government supplies (11,255 pounds) from Fort Leavenworth for Fort Kearny.

He forwarded (also under contract) one wagon with 3,058 pounds of freight on September 1; another with 4,465 pounds on September 24; and on October 14, a load of 2,284 pounds. Another contractor, E. Harrington, on September 18, started six wagons, with 28,177 pounds of supplies, from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Kearny.


Weightman (senator-elect under New Mexico’s provisional government) was bound for Washington, D. C., but did not reach St. Louis till August 23; Plympton, Tyler, Allen, and Edwards were aboard the St. Paul arriving at St. Louis on the 16th.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, August 19, 1850, or New York Daily Tribune, August 27, 1850; The Daily Reveille, St. Louis, August 18, 24, 1850; St. Joseph Gazette, August 21, 1850; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., August 30, 1850 (from St. Louis Intelligencer, August 19); New York Weekly Tribune, September 7, 1850; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, August 22, 1850.

In mid-August 2d Lt. John L. Tubbs, trader John S. Tutt, “Mr. Ward,” and four or five others, who had left Fort Laramie on July 6, arrived at Fort Leavenworth.

Aboard the Kansas, Tutt passed Glasgow, Mo., August 20. He reported they had met “Brown’s express mail for Salt Lake” (see August 1 entry) on the Little Blue.

Ref: Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, August 22, 1850; L. R. Hafen and F. M. Young’s Fort Laramie . . . (1838), p. 168 (for quote from a July 11, 1850, letter by John S. Tutt).

August 14.—Missionary Jotham Meeker (in present Franklin county) wrote: “For the last ten days the mercury has risen every day to from 104 to 110 deg. above zero. On to-day it was to 108.”

Ref: Jotham Meeker’s “Diary,” in KHi ms. division.

August 15.—Expressman “Ormsby” set out from Fort Leavenworth for Santa Fe; reached his destination on the 30th with news from Washington, D. C., “as late as the 3d inst.” (According to P. M. Papin, who met him at Cedar Springs on August 13, Ormsby had received a bonus of $300 to make the trip in 15 days.)

On August 14 or 15 an express from Santa Fe had reached Fort Leavenworth. It was reported “They brought sealed dispatches, and orders for 2,000 stand of arms” (for use in case of trouble with Texas over the disputed boundary matter).

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, August 18, 1850; Calhoun, op. cit., p. 257; New York Weekly Tribune, October 12, 1850 (from St. Louis New Era); Boonville (Mo.) Observer, August 22, 1850; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, August 22, 1850. “Ormsby” possibly was “Owensby.”
In mid-August around 500 Seventh U. S. infantry troops arrived at Fort Leavenworth, aboard Missouri river steamboats, en route to Santa Fe.

On August 13, at St. Louis, contracts had been made with Joseph La Barge, Jr., of the St. Ange, and W. C. Jewett of the Kansas, to transport seven officers and 250 men, each, upriver to Fort Leavenworth. Other August St. Louis-Fort Leavenworth steamboat contracts were for small detachments (perhaps not all related to the Seventh infantry): the Pocahontas, August 5, "a detachment of U. S. troops" (one cabin, and four deck passengers), and 50 horses; the St. Paul, August 10, 125 horses, forage, and hired citizens; the Highland Mary, August 20, one officer, 14 men, and baggage; on the 22d the El Paso and the Robert Campbell each contracted to take five men, 40 horses, and 20 mules; on the 23d the Anna took aboard three officers and 70 men; etc.

In mid-September the Seventh infantry left Fort Leavenworth to march overland to New Mexico. The troops (and a 100-wagon supply train) had proceeded some distance down the Santa Fe trail when, about the end of September, an express arrived with an order cancelling the expedition. The secretary of war's report stated that the change of plans was due to the loss of a Missouri river steamboat (the Julia?) carrying supplies for the Seventh infantry, and to the "advanced state of the season."

See, also, October 11-12 entry.


From Fort Leavenworth these contractors' trains set out with government freight for "New Post Arkansas River"—or Fort Mackay (later Fort Atkinson): on August 21, A(mrickstead) Dawson with six wagons (totaling 24,759 pounds); on the 22d Perry & Young's 10 wagons (with 46,146 pounds).


Bvt. Capt. Abraham Buford, First U. S. dragoons, and a large force of dragoon regulars and recruits marched out of Fort Leavenworth en route to New Mexico. Trooper James A. Bennett wrote: "Today our long cavalcade was put in motion. 250 men, over 1000 animals, and 70 wagons [40 drawn by eight mules each; 30 pulled by five yoke of oxen each] makes quite a show. . . ." Many of the wagons carried freight for "New Post on the Arkansas."
On September 5 Bennett recorded in his diary: "Cholera [see July 25-27 entry] has all disappeared from us. Arrived at Council Grove and Indian Mission. . . . 6 houses only. The Mission was established for the Caw or Kansas Indians. . . ." (See September 4 entry—the Kansas Methodist Mission building had been started the day before Buford's command reached Council Grove.) In mid-September, at Little Arkansas Crossing, eastbound travelers came up to the camp of Captain Buford's dragoon command "of two or three companies." Several officers were "on the sick list," but none dangerously ill; Buford was "awaiting the arrival of Brown's train" and its dragoon escort. A day or two later the States-bound party met Brown's train at Lost Spring. "He carried out machinery for the construction of a saw mill, provisions, &c. for Govt." About three miles west of Council Grove the same travelers met a second government train "freighted with building implements, building materials, and provisions destined for Mann's Fort" (i. e., for the "New Post"—Fort Atkinson—located about a mile west of old Fort Mann).

Bennett, in a September 25 diary entry, wrote: "Arrived Fort Atkinson [he must have supplied the name later], garrisoned by 1 company." Buford and his dragoon command reached Las Vegas, N. M., on October 13. There, on the 22d, the recruits were assigned to companies. James A. Bennett joined Company I, First dragoons.

Ref: New Mexico Historical Review, v. 22 (January, 1947), pp. 61-67 (for James A. Bennett diary entries); New York Weekly Tribune, October 5, 12, 19, 1850; 32d Cong., 1st Sess.,Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1 (Serial 611), p. 295 (shows that James Brown's train departing the fort on August 23, consisted of 30 wagons carrying 143,897 pounds of army freight), p. 298 (shows that Capt. A. Buford, on August 24, was assigned 30 teamsters, 10 horses, 138 mules, 23 wagons, one ambulance, and one traveling forge).

September 1.—In charge of Jacob Hall (see July 1 entry), Waldo, Hall & Co.'s. mail coach (with "an exceedingly heavy" mail) left Independence, Mo., for Santa Fe. The Independence Common-wealth commented: "This is already an important branch of the U. S. mail service. . . . The Mail to the Salt Lake [see August 1 entry] is as yet a small one, though it is much needed."

On September 24, six days before due, the "September mail" from Santa Fe reached Independence.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 1, 1850; St. Louis Intelligencer, November 1, 1850; Jefferson Inquirer, Jefferson City, Mo., September 28, 1850; New York Weekly Tribune, October 12, 19, November 9, 1850. The "October mail" from Santa Fe met Jacob Hall's "two trains" (see July 1 entry) in New Mexico—one at Wagon Mound; the second at Cottonwood. Hall, and the mail coach, presumably had arrived at Santa Fe before the end of September.

September 4.—At Council Grove, Allen T. Ward, and a crew of about 25 men, began work on the Kansa Methodist Mission and manual labor school—a short-lived institution operated by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (but paid for, and supported by the government).

By mid-December masonry work on the 35 by 50-foot, two-story, eight-room stone building was completed. Before the middle of February, 1851, carpenters finished the interior. (An accounting
by the Rev. Thomas Johnson, of Shawnee Methodist Mission, dated February 11, showed that $3,102 had been expended on the mission—paid to B. T. Kezar and Allen T. Ward. Of this amount $3,000 was for the stone building; $25 for a log work-shop, 18' x 20'; $50 for a hewn log smoke-house, 15' x 15'; and $27 for a 27'-deep well.

Operating under supervision of Shawnee Mission’s Thomas Johnson, the Kansa manual labor school was placed in charge of Thomas Sears Huffaker (b. 1825; from Clay County, Mo.; Shawnee Mission employee since 1849). “1, with H. W. Webster, took the contract for the management of the school and farm,” Huffaker stated (in 1905). “Webster was married; I was single [then—but was married, at the mission, in May, 1852]. Webster and family remained one year; he in charge of the farm, I in charge of the school. . . . I continued the school until 1854. . . . [It] averaged about thirty pupils, all boys. The branches taught were spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic. None of them received instruction in the trades. The boys worked well on the farm.” Huffaker also started a free elementary school for white children of the Council Grove vicinity in May, 1851; and continued it “for three or four years.”

Agent F. W. Lea, in September, 1852, wrote: “Much cannot be expected from the Methodist mission among the Kanzas Indians, as it will take time to operate on their prejudices against schools.” In August, 1855, Agent John Montgomery reported: “At present they [the Kansa] have no school, and it seems that what they have had has been only a dead expense to the government; those who have enjoyed the privilege of the school heretofore are now no more than common Kaws in dress, manners, and everything else.”

About 1906—some 55 years after the Kansa Methodist Mission was built—George P. Morehouse wrote: “The building is of stone, with two large fireplace chimneys in each gable. The walls are very thick, and the general appearance of the structure is solid and quaint and the surroundings are romantic. . . . [It] is still in good condition and is occupied as a dwelling. It has been used . . . as a schoolhouse, council-house, meeting-house, church-house, and during the Indian raids and scares of the old frontier days . . . [as] the place of refuge and stronghold. . . . It will always be pointed out as one of the oldest and most historic buildings in Kansas.” (See views of the mission, facing p. 65.)

In 1951 the Kansas legislature authorized purchase of the 100-year-old “Old Kaw Mission” building and grounds; and since that time the property has been administered as a museum by the Kansas State Historical Society.

Ref: Allen T. Ward’s September 1, December 21, 1850, and February 23, 1851, letters (in KHi ms. div.); 32d Cong., 1st Sess., H. Ex. Doc. No. 102 (Serial 847), p. 974; KIC, v. 9, pp. 201, 202, 231-234; Comm’r of Indian affairs, Reports, 1850-1855; KIC, v. 20, pp. 24, 25. Though Huffaker stated (1905) that the school was discontinued in 1954, J. R. McClure, who took the census in that area in February-March, 1855, later wrote: “I was . . . entertained by . . . Huffaker [in a two-day stay at Council Grove] and was interested in observing his method of teaching the Indian children who attend his school.”—KIC, v. 8, p. 234.

September 4.—Agent Luke Lea forwarded a contract, made with Frederick Kesler, for the erection of a $5,000 corn and flour mill,
propelled by water power, on the Pottawatomies’ reserve; and notified the Indian department that he had authorized Kesler (who had already hired laborers and ordered materials) to begin work, so as to have the milldam completed before winter. (Kesler received payment of $1,000 on November 15.) This “permanent” mill gave Mill creek (in present Wabaunsee county) the name by which it since has been known.

Agent Lea, in a July 20 letter, had described the chosen millsite (selected by him) as located about four miles (west) from Union Town on the south side of the Kansas river, and about three miles (west) from the Pottawatomies’ national ferry (see July 10 entry). The site was within a few miles of Mill creek’s mouth, in what is now Maple Hill township, Wabaunsee co.

Jake (or Jabez?) Durfee was employed as grist miller in 1851; in 1852 “Jabez” Durfee was listed as “grist miller,” and Jude W. Bourassa (a mixed-blood Pottawatomie) was paid as “Keeper of the grist mill.” It was Bourassa who subsequently ran the mill. The Whitman & Searl 1856 map of eastern Kansas shows the Indian settlement “Bursaw’s Mills.” In 1856, during his autumn tour of eastern Kansas territory, Gov. John W. Geary (coming downriver from Fort Riley, Manhattan, and Wabaunsee) on November 5 entered the Pottawatomie reserve “and [his executive minutes read] traveled rapidly through it, crossing Mill creek, a beautiful clear stream, abounding in fish. Stopped at Jude Bourassa’s, an enterprising Indian, having a good mill [i.e., it belonged to the Pottawatomies], and cultivating a rich farm.

... They [the Indians] have quite a thriving town called ‘Uniontown’.

...” Max. Greene, in his *The Kanzas Region* (1856), under the heading “Notes on the Kansas River,” wrote: “Next we have Uniontown, a village of log cabins, a mile to the south of the river. Then, Red Bluffs, taking name from the peculiar bright brown of the soil. ... Darling’s [Pottawatomie] Ferry is passed; and Mill Creek comes plashing and leaping in, like a little mountain river. ... on it the Pottawatomies have erected a grist mill.” Greene also remarked on the lovely scene in this area.


*September 4.—Brown, Russell & Co. (James Brown, William H. Russell, John S. Jones) signed a contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden, AQM) to transport government freight from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, in the amount of at least 600,000 pounds, for $14.33¢ per hundred pounds. (Bond: $200,000; sureties: James W. Renick, W. H. Ewing, and E. C. McCarty.)

(This late-in-the-year large-scale movement of supplies over the Santa Fe trail—see, also, next entry—was necessitated by failure of an attempt to get
army stores overland to Santa Fe by way of Texas; and because of the build-up of troop strength in New Mexico.)

Brown, Russell & Co.'s first train (30 wagons carrying 148,612 pounds) set out from Fort Leavenworth on September 14; a second 30-wagon train (total load 150,300 pounds) started on the 19th; a third 30-wagon train (with 154,875 pounds) left on the 22d; a fourth train (30 wagons; 151,979 pounds) departed on the 30th; and a fifth train (15 wagons; 78,868 pounds) got under way October 2. Many of the teamsters (it was said) were "Yorkers" bound for California. Senior partner James Brown headed the expedition. The first (?) train (met by eastbound travelers at Lost Spring in mid-September) carried "machinery for the construction of a saw mill [at New Post on Arkansas], provisions, &c. for Gov't." (See September 19 entry.)

The "September mail" from Santa Fe, nearing Independence (in the latter part of the month) met "one of James Brown's government trains." ("Mr. Kephart, a Missionary sent out [to Santa Fe] by the Presbyterian Board of Missions," and his family, were traveling with this train.) The "October mail" from Santa Fe met "one of Brown & Co.'s. [trains] at Big Bend of the Arkansas"; another at Turkey creek; and a third beyond Cottonwood Crossing. "Brown's train" (?) was reported to have passed "Fort Mann" (i.e., "New Post on Arkansas") on November 2; and up to then had lost "about 20 cattle."

About November 25, at Pecos pueblo (within 45 miles of Santa Fe), a severe snowstorm stalled some of the trains. Brown, Russell & Co. subsequently suffered heavy loss of animals. James Brown (going in advance to Santa Fe) became ill; died on December 5. Charles O. Jones (brother of John S.) took charge, and, under army ultimatum, force-marched the supplies to their destination during December.

Later, "Russell & Jones" memorialized congress to obtain remuneration for the losses incurred. On July 29, 1854, an act was passed "for the relief of John S. Jones and William H. Russell, surviving partners of the firm of Brown, Russell, and Company." It stipulated that claims allowed should total not more than $38,800.


* September 6.—David Waldo signed a contract (made with Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden, AQM) to transport government freight from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, in the amount of 150,000 pounds at $14.33% per 100 pounds. (Bond: $50,000; sureties: Jabez Smith and William McCoy.)
One David Waldo train of 30 wagons (carrying 156,050 pounds) left Fort Leavenworth for Santa Fe on September 18; and a second train (30 wagons; 153,725 pounds) started on October 4. The "October mail" from Santa Fe met the first "Waldo & McCoy" train at Big Bend of Arkansas; and the second at Lost Spring.


September.—On the Santa Fe trail, west of present Dodge City, "New Post on Arkansas" (later—June 25, 1851—officially named Fort Atkinson) was located by Bvt. Col. Edwin V. Sumner (who since August 8—see p. 92—had been on the upper Arkansas to accomplish this mission). The chronology below gives some perspective on the founding of short-lived Fort Atkinson ("Kan.").

The first week in September, eastbound P. M. Papin (and party) "met Col. Sumner, encamped about 4 miles from [abandoned-in-1848] Fort Mann." He and "several companies" were "awaiting the arrival of a company on detached service, who were escorting the train containing the building materials for a new Fort."

September 10—Bvt. Col. E. V. Sumner wrote the War Department that he had selected the place on the Arkansas where he then was encamped (and evidently he had moved a little downriver—see below) as the location of "New Post on Arkansas." (The site, by present survey description, is within the "SW1/4, Sec. 29, T 28 S, R 25 W, about two miles west of Dodge City and just south of U. S. 50."

About mid-month the "September" mail carrier from Santa Fe (who passed Sumner and troops on the Arkansas) reported, at Independence, Mo.: "Col. Sumner has located the post just one mile from Fort Mann, instead of [at] the 'Big Timbers' [in eastern Colorado], and calls it Fort Mackay." (An army officer who traveled the Santa Fe trail in May-June, 1852, provided corroborative evidence on the relationship of the two posts: "Three-fourths of a mile below Fort Atkinson are still seen the ruins of old Fort Mann, which was also built of sods . . . ," he wrote.)

The fourth (?) week in September, contractors' trains, freighting construction equipment and supplies for "New Post on Arkansas," from Fort Leavenworth, began to arrive. (See August 9, and August 21-22 entries.)

September 24—Colonel Sumner turned over command at "New Post" to 2d Lt. Henry Heth—whose Company D, Sixth infantry (around 80 men) would garrison the fort.

September 25—Sumner, escorted by Bvt. Capt. Mansfield Lovell and his Fourth artillery troops (see July 15-16 entry) set out for Fort Leavenworth.

September 25—James A. Bennett (in Buford's command—see August 25 entry) wrote in his diary: "Arrived Fort Atkinson [he must have supplied the name later!] garrisoned by 1 company . . . The company is in constant fear of an attack from a nearby camp of 1500 hostile[?] Indians. This company has to send 35 miles for firewood and are obliged to send 12 to 15 men in company to get it. Passed in sight of the Indians and crossed the Arkansas River . . . ." (Asst. Surg. Aquila T. Ridgely, stationed at
Fort Atkinson in 1851-1852, wrote: "It [the fort] is 26 miles below the 'crossing of the Arkansas,' and 74.07 miles above the crossing of the Pawnee fork."

About October 1 passing eastbound travelers found the troops at "New Post on Arkansas" "progressing with their buildings pretty well."

In October's second week a party eastbound met the Santa Fe-bound "October" mail at "Fort Sumner"; and reported (on arrival at Independence) that "The troops were building pretty rapidly at the new fort, in preparation for winter." [Ridgely—quoted above—wrote: "The quarters . . . built of sod . . . were thrown up hastily (though not until one snow had whitened the uncovered walls), in order, as was supposed, to obtain shelter from the storms of one winter."

In mid-October 54 wagonloads of supplies reached the new fort—freighted from Fort Leavenworth by Jones Creech, Charles McCarty, and Alexander Majors (see September 14 and 19 entries).


December 16—The War Department's General Order No. 44 gave approval to the post site selected by Colonel Sumner, and to his recommendation that one-story stone buildings be erected. (But Fort Atkinson was constructed entirely of impermanent materials. One of the best descriptions was written by an army officer who saw it in June, 1852: "Our eyes were first girted some ten miles distant from the post with a sight of the stars and stripes, waving over and among what appeared to be a close encampment of huge tents, but on nearer approach proved to be buildings of earth, the roofs of which were covered with tent canvas or duck, to keep out the drifting snow in winter and the dust in spring and summer. All the buildings at this post are constructed of heavy sods laid carefully with mortar of common surface soil, and are substantial and comfortable. All the defensive arrangements are constructed of this rude material, which gave it at first the name of 'Fort Sod.' The site of this post struck me as being exceedingly dreary and desolate; scarcely a tree is to be seen near it; all the fire-wood for the troops, and timber, are cut upon the upper branches of Pawnee Ford, twelve miles north of the Fort. . . .")

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, October 12, 19, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 1, 25, November 1, 1850; "Fort Atkinson" (a one-page government circular; no imprint); Fort Atkinson post returns (from National Archives; microfilm in KHI); New Mexico Historical Review, v. 22 (January, 1947), p. 62 (for Bennett); 34th Cong., 1st Sess., Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 96 (Serial 827), pp. 163-167 (for Ridgely); New York Daily Tribune, February 4, 1853 (for quotes by the army officer, 1852); KIQ, v. 15, pp. 329, 330 (has an account of the "relocating" of the Fort Atkinson site), v. 25, p. 131 (for survey description); KHC, v. 4, pp. 363, 364 (has statement by P. G. Lowe: "The soldiers dubbed it [Fort Atkinson] 'Fort Sod,' and later on, 'Fort Sodom.' The walls were built entirely of prairie sod, partly covered with poles and canvas, and partly with poles, brush, and sod"). Lowe (a dragoon sergeant) first saw Fort Atkinson in 1852. See, also, Lowe's Five Years a Dragoon, op. cit. From the evidence given above, Fort Mann and Fort Atkinson were not on the same site (as has been stated in the past). Presumably it is the Fort Atkinson site that is known (and Fort Mann's location that remains to be found)!
September 10.—At “Delaware,” on the north side of Kansas river, at the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Scott military road crossing (the Grinter ferry location, in present Wyandotte county), a post office was established, with James Findlay as postmaster.

An Oregon-bound emigrant of 1853 called the settlement on the Delaware crossing’s north bank “Little St. Louis.”

In mid-1854 Delaware was reported to contain “two or three trading-posts, a blacksmith shop, etc.” The same writer stated the post office was 10 miles from the Kansas river’s mouth. A contract for Star Mail Route No. 8909, let April 29, 1854, listed Delaware as 16 miles from Kansas City, Mo., and 24 miles from Fort Leavenworth. The name was changed February 1, 1856, to “Secondine” (James Findlay still the postmaster). Secondine post office was discontinued on April 14, 1859.

Ref: Robert W. Baughman’s Kansas Post Offices (c1961), pp. 84, 156, 299; KHC, v. 1-2, p. 266; F. R. Holdesmer letter (from National Archives) of July 14, 1950 (in KHi ms. div.); KHO, v. 28, pp. 180, 181 (for the Grinter ferry). Whether Delaware was the fourth post office location in “Kansas,” or the third, depends on the site of Crawford Seminary within the Quapaw reserve—see KHO, v. 31, p. 179. “Secondine” was the name of a Delaware chief—see ibid., p. 145. The 1860 census of Jackson county, Mo., p. 192, shows that two children (James W. and Maggie C., aged 8 and 7, respectively, in 1860) of James and Juliette Findlay were born in “Kansas.” Probably their birthplace was Delaware. Transactions of the Forty-Sixth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association, Portland (1918), for Celinda E. Hines’ 1853 “Diary”—May 5, 1853, entry.

September 14.—The nine-wagon train of Jones Creech, and Charles McCarty’s four wagons left Fort Leavenworth for “New Post Arkansas River”—Fort MacKay (later Fort Atkinson), carrying, respectively 38,714 and 22,240 pounds of army supplies.


September 16.—Nine persons reached St. Joseph, Mo., from California—the first overland party of 1850 to arrive.

In the company were Alexander Johnson (of St. Joseph?), Barnet Furnish and Pleasant Wilson, of Howard county, Mo., Squire Griffith and Henry Swaringen, of Nodaway county, Mo., Dr. Clemens, of Pike county, Ill., James and Aaron Anglin, of Arkansas, and Mr. Moore, of Kentucky. They had left Weaverton July 1; and reached Salt Lake City on August 8. Their trip was made in 78 days.

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, September 18, 1850; Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, September 26, 1850.

September.—A westbound William Bent train of eight wagons “on its way to trade with the Camanches,” was met at Rock Creek (east of Council Grove) in mid-month by a party en route to Missouri.

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, October 12, 1850 (from St. Louis New Era). P. M. Pappin, one of the Missouri-bound travelers, reached St. Louis about September 27. William Bent, at, or near Fort Laramie in the early part of July, left (for the States?) prior to July 11—see Hafen and Young’s Fort Laramie, p. 166.
September 19.—Alexander Majors’ train of 20 wagons (transporting 103,644 pounds of government freight) left Fort Leavenworth for “New Post Arkansas River”—Fort Mackay (later Fort Atkinson).

Majors (in his memoirs) stated: “I arrived in good time, with everything in good order, and when the Govt. freight were unloaded he [2d Lt. Henry Heth, then commanding officer] expressed a desire that I should take my entire train and go south about 25 miles, where there was some large timber growing near a stream called Cottonwood[?], for the purpose of bringing him a lot of saw-logs to make lumber for the building of his post. . . . I made the trip and brought him a fine lot of cottonwood and walnut saw-logs. . . .” Majors returned home (Jackson county, Mo.) “without losing any men or animals” on this trip.


September 24.—Henry Hardy, “bearer of despatches to New Mexico,” left Fort Leavenworth on, or about, this day. He had four teamsters, four horses, 12 mules, and two wagons. (Of his journey to Santa Fe, no mention has been found.)


September.—Around the 25th L. N. Ross’ train, returning from Santa Fe, reached Independence, Mo. Other incoming trains arriving at the Missouri border shortly thereafter included those of Joseph Clymer, Westport, Mo., and McCauley, of Independence.

P. M. Papin, of St. Louis, who reached home September 27 or 28, had left Santa Fe August 16, and traveled east “with a train of 30 wagons [not further identified], and in the company of Mr. Robert Ewing and other gentlemen.”

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, October 5, 12, 19, 1850; The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., October 4, 1850 (from St. Louis Intelligencer); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, September 28, 1850 (from St. Louis New Era).

September 30.—The contract for U. S. mail route No. 4887 was transferred from Z. L. Price to John Frink. (It was to run till June 30, 1854; annual pay $750.) Originally this contract called for the carrier to start from Independence, Mo., at 6 A.M., tri-weekly (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), go by way of Westport, to Kansas, Mo., by noon; and back between 1 and 7 P.M. Round-trip distance: 34 miles.

Apparently it was combined with another contract prior to July 1, 1850. An Independence resident wrote on June 17: “In a few days we shall have a tri-weekly mail stage to Fort Leavenworth”; and when, on November 12, 1851, more service (“Three additional weekly trips . . . in two-horse coaches”; Frink’s allowance increased by $750) was ordered for route No. 4887, it was stated that this contract was for an “Independence to Fort Leavenworth” 46-mile route—to be covered “Three times a week with certainty, celerity, and security.”
September 30.—James Wells left Fort Leavenworth with three wagon-loads (6,709 pounds) of government freight for Fort Scott.

On October 19 William Wells started out with three wagon-loads (6,708 pounds) also for Fort Scott. (The rate of pay, in each case, $2.00 per hundred pounds.)


Hoffman subsequently went out to “New Post on Arkansas”—Fort Atkinson, Wharton returned to Fort Kearny, and Thompson to Fort Scott—each as commanding officer.

October 11-12.—The recalled Seventh U. S. infantry regiment (numbering around 500 men), coming in from the Santa Fe trail (see p. 95) arrived at Fort Leavenworth on the 11th. On the 12th the St. Ange and the Anna were chartered to carry some of the troops, their baggage, etc., downriver to Jefferson Barracks, Mo.

The steamboats (each carrying about 150 men, and between 30 and 40 tons of freight) had a difficult trip on the low-stage Missouri. It was October 22 when the Anna reached St. Louis. (She had struck a snag on the 19th.) Her passengers, besides Seventh regiment personnel, included Lt. Col. Gustavus Loomis (Sixth infantry), 2d Lt. John L. Tubbs (Sixth infantry), 2d Lt. Charles H. Ogle (First dragoons), and 2d Lt. Thornton A. Washington (First infantry). The St. Ange, detained by broken machinery, after going aground in Howard’s Bend, finally arrived at St. Louis on October 25.

Four companies of the Seventh infantry, under command of Bvt. Maj. Theophilus H. Holmes, remained overwinter at Fort Leavenworth.
pointed in the place of Charles N. Handy, as head of Osage River Subagency. (See p. 111.)

In a February 3, 1851, letter, Mrs. Robert Simerwell (wife of the Miamis' government blacksmith) wrote: "Mr. Chenault . . . with his wife and two small children board with us for a little while until they can get a house to live in."

Ref: 32d Cong., 1st Sess., H. Ex. Doc. No. 103 (Serial 647), pp. 622, 624; Simerwell Collection (in KHi ms. div.); St. Joseph Gazette, November 13, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 16, 1850.

October.—Waldo, Hall & Co.'s. mail stages, setting out from Independence, Mo., and from Santa Fe, N. M., on October 1, passed each other at "Fort Sumner" (the "New Post on Arkansas"—see p. 101) in mid-October.

Passengers leaving Independence with the mail on October 1 included the Rev. E. C. Nicholson, his wife, and daughter. Nicholson was going to New Mexico as missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, to the Indians and Mexicans of Santa Fe and vicinity.

The mail from Santa Fe, in charge of Bertram Spratt, arrived at Independence October 26—five days ahead of schedule.

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, November 1, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, November 1, 1850; New Mexico Historical Review, v. 50 (October, 1964), p. 310, for Nicholson's initials.


The "September mail," en route to Independence, Mo., had overtaken "Messrs. Wm. S. Messervy, Jerry [Jared W.], Folger, and party . . . ." on September 3, near Moro, N. M.—then in company with Colonel May's detachment—but (as the mail carrier reported it) "For greater safety and certainty of trip, they [the civilians?] come by the 'Bent Fort route.' . . . ."

A Las Vegas-bound military force which included dragoon recruit (and diarist) James A. Bennett, on October 4, while on the Cimarron route (having crossed the Arkansas September 26) "Met Col. May and several other officers returning from [New] Mexico. Stopped one hour. The colonel got pretty drunk: our officers also felt their brandy. . . . ." (Bennett did not mention the presence of civilians with the military party.) Messervy, Folger, and companions—via Bent's Fort—probably reached Missouri before month's end.

Ref: New Mexico Historical Review, v. 22 (January, 1947), p. 63 (for James A. Bennett); New York Weekly Tribune, October 19, 1850 (from Missouri Republican); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 28, 1850.

October 18.—Isaac Lightner, Independence, Mo., "Mr. Domingo," of Chihuahua, and their small party, arrived at Independence from El Paso (left August 28), via Santa Fe (left September 13).

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 25, 1850.
October.—On the 21st the Highland Mary, which had been up to Weston, Mo., reached St. Louis “with both her larboard and starboard guards much torn by snags encountered on her passage down. . . .” (The Missouri was said to be in the worst condition possible for navigation."

On October 25 the Robert Campbell (which had left St. Joseph, Mo., on the 19th) returned to St. Louis. She had met the Eureka at Fort Leavenworth, the Hamburg at Parkville, the El Paso at Wayne City—all on the 19th; the Lightfoot and Sacramento on the 21st; and the Saranac, at Rocheport, on the 23d.

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, October 22, 26, 1850.

October 24.—“Thos. D. Scroggins,” and four companions, with the first (Brown, Woodson & Co.) U. S. monthly mail (“a heavy one”) from Salt Lake City, reached Independence, Mo.—24 days behind schedule (see August 1 entry).

“Scroggins” had delivered the “August mail” from Independence at Salt Lake on September 9; started back to Missouri on the 11th; reached Fort Bridger (110 miles) on the 15th; got to Fort Laramie on the 29th, and Fort Kearny on October 8. He had been delayed eight days (six by illness; two by shoeing mules, etc.).

This eastbound mail had met the “September mail” from Independence on September 28, 65 miles beyond Fort Laramie; and the “October mail” from Independence on October 10 at Fort Kearny.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, November 1, 1850; St. Louis Intelligencer, November 1, 1850, or, St. Joseph Gazette, November 6, 1850.

Married: William Thorp and Zerelda Roberts, on October 28, at the Osage River Agency (present Franklin county), by the Rev. Jotham Meeker.

Ref: Jotham Meeker’s “Diary,” in KHi ms. division.

October 30.—Edward B. Horner’s five-wagon train arrived at Independence, Mo., from Santa Fe. His party (12 men) included Samuel Wethered (“an old and wealthy trader”), of Baltimore, Newton Williams, of Boonville, Mo., Murray J. Tuley, George W. Martin, and Elias Brevoort.

They had left Santa Fe on October 2. Some 35 to 40 discharged government teamsters were in the party as far as “Cottonwood” (N. M.)—200 miles out. While encamped there, the night of October 12, Kit Carson, Capt. R. S. Ewell, and some 40 troops arrived with news of, and in time to forestall execution of, a plot by a teamster named Fox (and some cohorts) to rob and kill Wethered, Williams, and others. Horner’s party, separating from the teamsters after this incident, pushed on ahead for the States.

Ref: The Weekly Tribune, Liberty, Mo., November 8, 1850 (from Occidental Messenger, Independence, Mo.); St. Louis Intelligencer, November 6, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, November 7, 1850.
November 1.—The Ottawas’ Baptist missionary, Jotham Meeker ("Kansas" resident for some 17 years) recorded in his diary: "Think I have never known so dry a season as we have now had."

He added: "The last rain we have had to swell any of the streams was early in May. In June the creeks stopped running, and have been gradually falling ever since. The holes in our creek are now about one foot lower than I have seen them since we came into the country."

Ref: Meeker "Diary," loc. cit. The Meekers came to Kansas in 1833.

On November 1 Waldo, Hall & Co.'s mail coach left Independence, Mo.; met the eastbound mail at Arkansas Crossing; reached Santa Fe the evening of November 26.

Ref: New York Weekly Tribune, February 8, 1851 (from National Era); Missouri Republican, St. Louis, December 7, 1850.

November 6.—Capt. Howard Stansbury (U. S. topographical engineers) and party, returning from the expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah (begun in 1849—see KHO, v. 31, pp. 312, 313), arrived at Fort Leavenworth. From Fort Laramie (left October 12) to the Missouri, the train had been in Lt. John W. Gunnison's charge. (Stansbury, incapacitated by an injury, made the trip in a wagon.)

They had reached Fort Kearny on October 26; and arrived at the Big Blue crossing (the future Marysville) on November 2. Subsequently they followed the new military road laid out by Bvt. Maj. E. A. Ogden seven months earlier (see p. 44) in to Fort Leavenworth. These are some notes on the last section of their homeward journey from Captain Stansbury's report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediate distance</th>
<th>Day's march</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 2 [After traveling over 30 miles they came to the] Big Blue—Rolling country. Stream at low stage; 160 feet wide by 2½ feet deep. Thence a long ascent.</td>
<td>31.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 2 Vermilion—Cross a small branch half a mile from Big Blue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 3 Junction—The old road, to the north is near the Vermilion; the new track keeps on the ridge, having the heads of streams frequent, with timber on either hand, at a short distance from the road. Branch—Supposed tributary to the Big Nemaha, 10½ feet wide by 2 inches deep.</td>
<td>24.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creek—Runs south, into the Nemaha; the road passing between branches</td>
<td>12.08 36.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 4 Nemaha Branch—We ascend, from the tributary to high ground; good road.</td>
<td>19.57 19.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nov. 5 Cheek—Runs south. .......................... 7.60
  Cheek—Runs south; has fine timber and grass in vicinity. .......................... 4.66
  Cheek—Rising a long slope, and then descending from the ridge. .......................... 5.46
  Independence Cheek—Road sinuous; on the dividing ridge between affluents of Kansas and Missouri Rivers. .......................... 14.89 32.61

Nov. 6 Fort Leavenworth—The road winds on the “divide” till within fourteen miles from the fort, and then descends and crosses several small streams, affluents of the Missouri. .......................... 22.74 22.74

In traveling from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Kearny in 1849 (by the “old” military road then in use), Stansbury recorded a journey of 311.013 miles. On the return trip the distance was set down as 289.68 miles. Ogden’s road, shortening the section east of the Big Blue, by assumption, accounted for most of the nearly 21-mile improvement in 1850.

See, facing p. 64, the eastern “Kansas” segment from “Map of a Reconnaissance between Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri River, and the Great Salt Lake in the Territory of Utah, made in 1849 and 1850 . . . by Capt. Howard Stansbury . . . aided by Lieut. J. W. Gunnison. . . .” (The map was drawn by Lieutenant Gunnison and Charles Preuss.)


November 8.—The “new and elegant steamer Isabel” (W. B. Miller, captain), making her first trip up the Missouri, arrived at St. Joseph. She had left St. Louis October 28; and carried nearly 100 tons of cargo upriver despite a low stage of water.

On November 14 the Isabel returned to St. Louis with “a fair freight and a goodly number of passengers.”

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, November 13, 1850; Adventure, St. Joseph, November 15, 1850; St. Louis Intelligencer, November 15, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, October 28, 1850. The Isabel had a 210-foot deck length; three boilers, 28 feet long, 40 inches in diameter.

November 12.—Dr. Wilson Hobbs, his wife Zelinda (Williams) Hobbs, and family (Orville, aged 2½; Mary Z., 1 year old) arrived at Kansas (City), Mo., by steamboat, en route to Shawnee Friends Mission (reached on the 13th) where the Hobbs would serve, for two years, as teachers.

(In June visitor John O. Wattles had written: “The Friends Mission is . . . sustained entirely by that body.—Thomas Wells is Superintendent. This Summer there are but 18 or 20 children in attendance. In the Winter it is much larger.”)
Hobbs, in reminiscences, wrote: "We landed at Kansas City late in the afternoon. There was standing near the landing a large brick building which had the appearance of a hotel. I afterward learned that it was built for such use during the more prosperous days of the early California emigration, and had for some time [since spring?] been abandoned. We soon learned there was but one hotel in the 'city.' This was a double, hewed-log house on the bluff, a few hundred yards to the left of the old brick hotel. My present recollection is that the population of the place did not exceed 500 or 600. It was a mere port for the debarkation of goods to Western points of trade. In the suburbs we passed the saw mills of Mr. McGee, and from there to Westport, four miles the way led through almost unbroken forest. Westport was then a village quite as large as its more pretentious neighbor, Kansas City, and had much the advantage in stir and business-like appearance. [From Westport, Mo., it was six miles to Shawnee Friends Mission.] We passed to the right of the elegant residence of [Shawnee] chief Jo[seph] Parks, near [Shawnee] Methodist mission, leaving it on our left; near the [Shawnee] Baptist mission and church, leaving them to our right, to the edge of the timber which skirted Turkey creek where [Shawnee Friends Mission lay]."


In the latter part of November, a company of some 16 persons, overland from California, passed through Weston, Mo. They had left Sacramento City around September 1.

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, November 30, 1850 (from Weston [Mo.] Reporter).

November 25.—The U. S. mail (Waldo, Hall & Co.) stage from Santa Fe (left November 1) reached Independence, Mo. "Mr. Caldwell, of Cincinnati," who had departed Santa Fe around October 20, traveled most of the way to Missouri as a passenger. (Caldwell debarked from the Mary Blane at St. Louis December 2.)

Five out-bound trains had been met—the last one ("Russell & Co.'s of Lexington, Mo.") was at "Fort Expedient, near the crossing of the Arkansas" (still another name for "New Post on Arkansas"—subsequently Fort Atkinson). Incoming trains passed were three belonging to Waldo & Co.—one at Big Bend of Arkansas; another at Turkey creek; and the third at 114-mile creek.

Ref: St. Louis Intelligencer, December 6, 1850; Missouri Republican, St. Louis, December 7, 1850.

Married: Thomas Nesbit Stinson (Union Town trader), aged 32, and Julia Ann Beauchemie (daughter of Mackinaw Beauchemie), aged 16, on November 28, at the home of the bride's brother, Alexander Beauchemie, by a missionary of Pottawatomie Baptist Mission.

Ref: Statement by Julia Ann Stinson, April 21, 1896 (in KHi ms. div.); KHC, v. 9, p. 212; Bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society, Topeka, v. 2 (December, 1948), p. 114. Mrs. Stinson's statement is that she was married "in Auburndale" (within present Topeka). An account says the Alexander Beauchemie house was on what is now Franklin street. For other information on Stinson, and the Beauchemie family, see indexes to KHC, v. 29 and 30, also, see v. 91, pp. 142 (1849), for Stinson.
December (?)—Late in the year, “Mr. Martin” (a newcomer to the Santa Fe trade) left the Missouri border with “an ox train heavily laden with merchandise.” By extraordinary good luck he made a “very successful” winter trip, reaching Santa Fe in January, 1851.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, March 12, 1851.

December 1.—William H. Arnall (Brown, Woodson & Co. employee) left Independence, Mo., with the U. S. mail (in a wagon) for Salt Lake City. Though he got to Fort Kearny in 17 days, it was not until March 7, 1851, that he reached his destination (with over 200 pounds of mail matter).

An account stated Arnall had been detained several weeks in all, at several points, by storms and snow; that he lost a portion of his mules, but “persevered,” and finally got through. West of Fort Laramie he used pack mules.

Ref: New York Daily Tribune, February 25, 1851 (from The Frontier Guardian, Kanesville, la.—which referred to the mail carrier as “Mr. Arnold . . . an old mountaineer”); Glasgow (Mo.) Weekly Times, June 5, 1851 (from an interview with Arnall); L. B. Hafen and F. M. Young, op. cit., pp. 171, 172 (from “Journal History,” March 12, 1851, Mormon church archives).

December 13.—Southwestern “Kansas”—the section south of the Arkansas river, and west of the 100th meridian—came under formal United States control. (Until 1822 it had been claimed by Spain; Mexico’s claim was extinguished by the Mexican War settlement in 1848; from 1835, till November 25, 1850, Texas laid claim to the area.)

President Fillmore, in a special message, December 13, to congress, announced the acceptance by Texas (on November 25) of propositions offered in the act of September 9, for establishment of her northern and western boundaries, and relinquishment of her claims to lands exterior to those in the agreement.

Ref: J. D. Richardson, comp., . . . Messages and Papers of the Presidents . . . (1905), v. 5, pp. 94, 95; W. C. Binkley’s The Expansionist Movement in Texas 1836-1850 (Berkeley, Calif., 1925), pp. 207-218.

December.—Fifteen men (including “Mr. Miligan’s” U. S. mail party of four) arrived in the States this month, after a tedious, difficult (due to snow and cold weather) trip overland from Salt Lake City by way of South Pass, Forts Laramie and Kearny, and the Old Fort Kearny road to the Missouri.

In advance of Miligan’s party (left at Scotts Bluff), 11 reached the Missouri together: Messrs. Livingston and Kincaid (whose destination was Council Bluffs), Oscar Middleton, Jeff. Thompson, W. E. Horner (these three in the employ of Middleton & Riley, St. Joseph), Mr. Cogswell, Doctor Barnes, of St. Louis, Mr. Waldon, Mr. Sledge, and Antonio Selman—who arrived at St. Joseph on December 17. It was reported they brought from $75,000 to $80,000.
“Miligan” and his companions, who had reached Fort Kearny before the 11 others departed that post, were expected at St. Joseph around December 21 or 22—they, too, traveling the Old Fort Kearny trail “it being impossible to get to Independence by the usual route along the Blue.” This “October” mail from Salt Lake reached Independence on December 26—see next entry.

Ref: St. Joseph Gazette, December 25, 1850; Advencture, St. Joseph, December 29, 1850; Frontier Guardian, Kanseville, Ia., December 25, 1850, January 8, 1851; St. Louis Intelligencer, December 28, 1850.

December 26.—Two U. S. mail parties (one delayed by snow, ice, and bad weather) from Salt Lake City, and the December U. S. mail from Santa Fe, arrived at Independence, Mo.

Two or three of the Salt Lake mail carriers (as reported) were “badly frost-bitten.” James E. Sabine, trader, brought the Santa Fe mail to the States (the scheduled carrier, “Mr. Borland,” having died). “Mr. Moore,” who joined Sabine’s party at “new post at Arkansas” (Fort Atkinson), got “badly frosted” on the journey.

Ref: Missouri Republican, St. Louis, January 5, 1851.

Employed in “Kansas” by the Indian Department during all, or part of the year were the following persons:


Osage Subagency [Osages]—Subagent Henry Harvey (A. J. Dorn of the Neosho Subagency was acting subagent till Harvey’s arrival in April); Interpreters Charles Mongrain and Antoine Penn; Blacksmiths John R. McKinney (“removed”), Elijah Pennington, and George Tinker; Assistant smiths Joseph Captain (to July) and Francis Mitchell; Millers Augustus Captain (to July 11) and E. K. Howland (from July 11); Assistant millers Dodridge Barnaby, Peter Chouteau, and Joseph Captain (from July).

Wyandot Subagency [Wyandots]—Subagent Thomas Moseley, Jr.; Interpreter William Walker; Blacksmith Charles Graham; Assistant smith Guilford D. Hurt.


(Part Twenty Will Appear in the Summer, 1966, Issue.)