FURNISHING STUDY
BENT'S OLD FORT
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
COLORADO

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PREFACE

The following furnishing study for Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site is submitted according to Contract # CX-2000-3-0019. The research for this study occupied eight months' concentrated effort, during which time no period of the fort's history was ignored in spite of the limited period called for in the reconstruction. Certainly, one of the most fascinating aspects of this study was the emergence of the various personalities that made up the history of Bent's Fort and of their influence on the larger world outside the fort walls.

As always, the major difficulty in reconstructing an environment such as existed at Bent's Fort lies in discovering the commonplace objects that constituted the largest part of the furnishings, historical and fictional accounts of the fort touching upon only the most unusual furnishings.

In the search for the "commonplace" items, several depositories and collections were useful. The Chouteau Collections in the Missouri Historical Society proved the richest and most detailed source for refurbishing the fort. The Collections of the Bancroft and Huntington libraries showed a much needed western influence and revealed several unexpected sources. Particularly illuminating were the Barclay Papers, currently undergoing publication at the Bancroft Library. But, the most unexpected
treasures encountered in the course of the research were the Native Sons Archives in Kansas City, the papers of Charles Hurd at the State Historical Society of Colorado, and the Notebooks of Francis Cragin at the Pioneer Museum in Colorado Springs.

My thanks to the many curators and librarians who contributed so much time and effort towards this study.

Enid T. Thompson
INTRODUCTION

Viewed in retrospect, Bent's Old Fort is often considered to have been the most important establishment of its kind to the mountain trade. It was, as phrased by Bernard DeVoto "a complete factory of the Indian trade ..." Contempory sources were not always so full of praise. While sometimes thought of as "classic ground"--the ideal and logical place from which to embark upon new ventures, conclude old ones, or rein-vigorate those in progress--certain isolated accounts refer to Bent's Fort as "merely" a traffic depot for the wild tribes of the desert.

Trade at Bent's Fort was three-fold: (1) the transportation of American goods to New Mexico; (2) the transportation of Mexican and Navajo goods back to Missouri; and (3) the Indian trade. In addition, Bent's Fort provided services to travelers and to mountain men operating independently. In time, it was also to serve as a military rendezvous point and storage depot for government supplies.


The military function constituted only a short parenthesis during the 17-year history of the fort. It was this function, however, along with the influence Bent's Fort may have exerted on the southern movement of certain Plains Indian tribes, that are responsible for the larger part of the fort's fame. The former event, at least, had little to do with the fort's trade operations.

Nevertheless, although its role as a trading post may have been less spectacular than its military function, Bent's Fort remained primarily a place of trade and should be interpreted as such. The interpreter, however, is faced with somewhat of a problem in that, were it not for the presence of the Army of the West and the chroniclers that came in its wake, the few descriptions we have of the interior of the fort would be considerably diminished. And, therefore, it is this period, 1845-1846, to which the fort is to be restored.
CHAPTER I--BACKGROUND

A. The Bents and the St. Vrains

... dressed like chiefs—in moccasins thoroughly garnished with beads and porcupine quills; in trousers of deer skin, with long fringes of the same extending along the outer seam from the ankle [sic] to the hip; in the splendid hunting shirt of the same material, with sleeves fringed on the elbow seam from the wrist to the shoulder, and ornamented with figures of porcupine quills of various colors, and leathern fringe around the lower edge of the body. And chiefs they were in the authority exercised in their wild and lonely fortress.¹

The above is Thomas J. Farnham's description of the proprietors of Bent's Old Fort. In reality, the three—Charles and William Bent, and Ceran St. Vrain—were very different men.

Lewis Garrard attributed Señor San Bran, as St. Vrain was often referred to in the Southwest, with the frankness of the mountaineer and Robert Glass Cleland characterized him as shrewd, impetuous, choleric, and intrepid.² But, one also finds descriptions of St. Vrain befitting


only a gentleman. The following may come somewhere near the truth:

He has a head as good as Daniel Webster's and had he been educated, would have made the greatest explorer and engineer living. . . . I never was go greatly deceived in a man in life—I took him for a bragadocio, but he is modest, says but little, does not drink, is kind hearted and brave as a lion. He has not an enemy here. 3

Born in 1802, Ceran St. Vrain was the fourth child in a family deriving from the French court of Louis XVI. The family was employed in St. Louis by the Spanish and, as French concerns became predominant in that city, the St. Vrain fortune began to flag. One is reminded of Ceran's exalted heritage by his frequent visits, in later years, to the Planter's Hotel in St. Louis, or by Garrard's impression of the undue comforts available in St. Vrain's Taos home. 4 More than once was Ceran described as a "wealthy man" and it is true that he died in better financial straits than either Charles or William Bent.

Any education Ceran may have received was acquired in the streets of St. Louis. He wrote what was considered a "barbarous" form of English, although he apparently spoke Spanish as well as French. 5

3. DeWitt Clinton Peters, Surgeon of the U. S. Army, to his family, Fort Massachusetts, April 5th, 1855, cited in; Grant, When Old Trails Were New, p. 312.


5. There is a letter written in French from St. Vrain to P. L. Chouteau, June 3, 1818, in; Bent & St. Vrain Papers, 1818-1924, Missouri Historical Society, Miss. Div. As for his Spanish, St. Vrain served as the interpreter at the trial of Charles Bent's assassins, Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 172.
Garrard also noted a large number of religious objects in St. Vrain's home\(^6\) and St. Vrain's Catholic heritage probably rendered him more tolerant of the bigotry and superstition so widespread in New Mexico at the time than would have the protestant background of the Bents. On the other hand, while Ceran may have felt a strong affinity for the Mexican race, he exhibited none of William Bent's compassion for the Indians, as testified to by Garrard during an outing with Ceran:

\(\text{He} \) made the party . . . a present of tobacco and ammunition—not through love of the guttural-toned warriors, but to influence them in his favor; for they belong to the Cheyenne Nation, with whom the firm of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. trade largely for robes.\(^7\)

"Jolly, black-whiskered Ceran" became almost a sobriquet on the frontier. There were countless instances of St. Vrain instructing novice mountaineers and telling tales of that heritage. The fact that Ceran St. Vrain was more of a legend in the Southwest—not specifically, however, in connection with Bent's Fort—than either Bent is fairly well established. This is partly due to his early and long-time residence there. According to LeRoy Hafen, St. Vrain set out for the Southwest as early as 1823, Charles and William Bent arriving some six years later.\(^8\)

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7. Ibid., p. 36.

8. LeRoy R. Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?" Colorado Magazine, XXXI, no. 3 (April, 1954), 108.
Both St. Vrain and Charles Bent were often found at the head of companies traveling between Westport, Missouri and Santa Fe. Indeed, the two senior partners of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. shared, if nothing else, a penchant for leadership and a keen eye toward business. It was the latter trait, especially, that was to bring Ceran St. Vrain and Charles Bent together.

Charles and William Bent hailed from a family of 11 children (7 boys, 4 girls), Charles being born in 1799 and William trailing him by nine and a half years. The family came to St. Louis when Silas Bent was appointed principal deputy surveyor for the Louisiana Territory. The date was 1806, coinciding with the celebrated return of Lewis and Clark, and the boyhood lives of the brothers were to be occupied more by waterfront tales of these adventurers and of others like Manuel Lisa, than by the aristocratic salons to which the family soon gained access. By the time he was 18 the elder Bent had ventured out upon the frontier, certainly as far as western Missouri, and in 1823 he was joined by 16-year-old William on more northern reaches of the Missouri River.

Formal education must not have been a major concern to the Bents although Charles did attend, for a time, Jefferson College in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. LeRoy Hafen quickly rejected the rumor that Charles graduated from West Point.9 Allowing for a rather "erratic method of spelling,"

he nevertheless achieved a respectable style of writing. There is no
evidence to the effect that William Bent could even write although he
proved himself adept at languages, mastering several Indian tongues.

The responsibilities of leadership were to weigh more heavily on
Charles Bent than on St. Vrain. In 1829 the former became Captain, by
unanimous election, of a caravan crossing the Santa Fe Trail, an unusual
responsibility for one who had yet to travel that route for the first
time. Years later Charles Bent became General Kearny's appointee as
governor of New Mexico.

... will anyone say that this young captain, reared in the little French village of St. Louis, was not a man of splendid nerve and power, and, as I have always believed, a military genius of no ordinary character? His caution was equal to his valor ... 10

While the "little French village of St. Louis" may have grown too sophisticated too quickly for William Bent, it almost seemed an ignoble beginning for his older brother Charles. Contemporary accounts dealt with the latter briefly and cautiously, almost as if treading on hallowed ground. Stated simply, there was not, in anyone's eyes, a nobler man on the frontier. But nobility often implies a certain humorlessness and, although perhaps not perpetually jolly, he was remembered for his

ebullience, wit, and love of sarcasm. James Hobbs, recalled hearing many "funny" stories about the office of governor from him just a few days before his death.\textsuperscript{11}

Regarding his physical appearance, Charles Bent was, according to Sabin, light complected and his hair "bleached" at a young age.\textsuperscript{12} However, he was not always grey:

\begin{quote}
I saw Charles Bent charge alone and check fifty Indians . . . . I can see him now as plainly as I saw him then, mounted on a large black horse, I think bare-headed, with his long black hair floating in the wind;\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

The above dates from 1829 and, on the same occasion, Waldo remembered William Bent riding a tall black mule with both ears split according to the Comanche tribal custom.

The split-eared mule was an appropriate partner for the so thoroughly Indianized William Bent. He was dubbed "Little White Man", or "Wa-si'cha'chishi-la", by the Sioux and Cheyenne. George Bent attributed the name to his father's young age at the time he first came among these


\textsuperscript{12} Edwin Legrand Sabin, \textit{Kit Carson Days, 1809-1868} (Chicago: McClurg, 1914), p. 188.

\textsuperscript{13} Waldo, "Recollections," 64, 73.
tribes" rather than to his short stature as was the standard explanation. The Kiowa referred to William Bent as "Hook-Nose Man." Similar appellations followed for the rest of the Bent family: as an acknowledged leader, Charles became "White Hat" to the Cheyenne; George, "Little Beaver"; and Robert, the most handsome member of the family, was called "Green Bird".

At the age of 23 William bore the pock marks that would remain with him forever, as a result of the smallpox epidemic that struck during the construction of Bent's Fort. Ceran St. Vrain and, supposedly, Kit Carson were also affected, the former so seriously that he was hauled away from the camp in a mule litter. And Grinnell recalled, via George Bent, the three being so badly marked that their Indian acquaintances didn't recognize them.

Whereas most of the mountain men of this era were very colorfully portrayed, there was a conspicuous lack of comment on the character of William Bent. While Garrard ranked Ceran St. Vrain among the best of friends--Wah-To-Yah and the Taos Trail was dedicated to St. Vrain--he

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15. Hafen disputes Carson's participation in the construction of the fort, in; Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?" 115. The St. Vrain incident is cited in; David Lavender, Bent's Fort (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1954), pp. 139, 387, n.

scarcely mentioned the youngest member of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. On one occasion Garrard and William Bent "travelled the entire day without ten minutes' halt, or scarcely a word of conversation. 17 Although this particular journey followed closely upon the assassination of Charles Bent, William throughout the story of Bent's Fort, best approximated Farnham's reference to the "grave owners". 18 William Bent was perhaps most typically portrayed seated cross-legged at the back of his Indian lodge, upon an outspread buffalo robe, "whiffing the long pipe".

As time passed, William became more and more uncomfortable among the company frequented by his older brother. The younger Bent was conspicuously absent from the glittering balls presided over by his brother at the governor's palace in Santa Fe, nor did William choose to spend his summers sipping mint juleps on the elegantly manicured lawns of St. Louis. He increasingly confined himself to the environs of Bent's Fort where he assumed the role, par excellence, of the disciplinarian.

His infrequent pronouncements were to the point and effective. And, at the same time, he treated his employees with consideration which was returned, in force, with their concern over the death of Charles Bent. Occasionally, harsh words ushered forth. Again, from Garrard, en route

17. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 120.

with William Bent to avenge his brother's murder:

After a searching cross-examination, Bent told him /a suspect in the assassination/ to 'vamos, prento!' ('go quick'), or he would send a ball through him, anyhow.¹⁹

Lavender attempted to explain William's supposed destruction of the fort into which he had put so much of his life's energy by describing the unevenness of his personality: "His life had been dangerous and austere, compounded of patience and quick flares of anger, of deep loyalties and touchy individualism, of courage and gruff sentimentality."²⁰ Of these, it is perhaps the deep loyalties and gruff sentimentality that best summarize the man. His family ties penetrated deeply. In 1848, one member of the Bent family wrote:

Mr. St. Vrain told me and I heard it from different sources that brother William was an entirely changed man since brother Georges death. Indeed, I could myself perceive a great change, he says he intends henceforth to devote his life to his brothers children they were now his children and he must work for them George left his two little boys to him and told him he must be a father to them which I have no doubt he will fulfill poor brother Charles had no time to leave many directions about his, his wife says he told her he had been a father to his brothers and he knew they would take care of his children /sic/ . . .²¹

¹⁹. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 120.


²¹. Dorcas Carr /Bent/ to brother /Silas Bent/, December 26, 1848, in; Carr Papers, 1848, Missouri Historical Society, Mss. Div.
Extra-familial loyalties were extended to such men as Kit Carson. While St. Vrain was Carson's early tutor in mountaineering and Charles Bent was Carson's brother-in-law, it was William Bent who became his lifelong friend. Upon Carson's arrival, in 1864 (1865?), at the Bent Ranch, "Bill Bent pulled Kit off his horse and they hugged and kissed like a couple of children." 22

There were other members of the Bent and St. Vrain families involved in the affairs of the company. Foremost among these was George Bent, whose orphaned children are mentioned above. He was William's junior by five years. Marcellin St. Vrain and Robert Bent, one and two years respectively younger than George, also found their way to the frontier. According to Cheyenne tradition, the three were present at the time of the fort's construction, 23 but it is more generally accepted that they first arrived in 1835, in a caravan led by Charles Bent.

The nature of their roles at Bent's Fort and in Bent, St. Vrain & Co. remains somewhat unclear. Robert was killed by Comanches in 1841. Of the three George was certainly the most visible at the fort and, by 1837, had probably become a member of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. 24 George's influence

22. In 1843 Kit Carson married Maria Josepha Jaramillo, the sister of Charles Bent's wife; Harvey Lewis. Harvey L. Carter, "George Bent." 23. Helen, Mountain Men and The Fur Trade, IV, 6. 24. In 1837 a claim was issued for Indian damages to a Bent, St. Vrain & Co. wagon train signed by George Bent as well as Ceran St. Vrain and Charles and William Bent. There was no evidence to the effect that Robert Bent and Marcellin St. Vrain were also members; Lavender, Bent's Fort, pp. 175, 421n.
with the Indians apparently approached that of William Bent. He described George as an enthusiastic drinker and fighter, not unusual among mountain men. He died in 1847 from a fever that William Bent labeled as consumption. Both George and Robert Bent were buried just outside the walls of Bent's Fort.

Marcellin St. Vrain, according to Sabin, brought an education with him to the frontier. Marcellin—Garrard referred to him as Marcellus—was reputedly slimmer, handsomer, and even livelier than Ceran. Travelers often referred to his absence from the fort—he became an avid huntsman and fisherman and Garrard capitalized on the younger St. Vrain's unusual ability to attract antelope by standing on his head and waving his legs in the air.

Confusion on the subject, and likewise on the proprietorship of the fort runs rampant. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 179 confirms Lavender while Hyde, George Bent, p. 83 relates George Bent's opinion that neither Robert nor George were members of the company, although he does admit to George often being left in charge of the fort. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 37 rests the ownership of Bent's Fort on three brothers—William, George and Robert Bent. Sabin, Kit Carson Days, p. 189 lists as founders of the fort Charles, William and George Bent, and Ceran and Marcellin St. Vrain. And Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?" 106n, cites a news article that gives an identical list to Sabin's with the addition of Robert Bent. Edwards, A Campaign in New Mexico, p. 38 cites the owners of the fort as George and Charles Bent. M. B. Edwards, in Beiber, Ed., Marching with the Army of the West, p. 139 lists only one proprietor, Charles Bent.


26. The younger St. Vrain attended the Jesuit College of St. Louis University; Sabin, Kit Carson Days, p. 305.

Sometime after 1846 Marcellin St. Vrain became a trader in the employ of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. but his official tenure in the service of the company was short-lived as, in 1848, he was encouraged—probably by William Bent—to leave Bent's Fort after an impromptu wrestling match in which an Indian was killed.
B. The Formation of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. and

the Inception of Bent's Fort

The fur trade proved somewhat discouraging for Charles and William Bent and Ceran St. Vrain during their early years on the frontier. It was Charles Bent who first realized the need for a partnership whereby one member could remain relatively stationary, adjusting sales to the fluctuating market, and a second could spend his time on the trail securing goods. In December of 1830 he proposed such an arrangement to Ceran St. Vrain. Possibly the Bents and St. Vrains had been acquainted as boys in the streets of St. Louis.

Several sources implied that St. Vrain reacted to the proposal with less than unbounded enthusiasm, although the following reflects no such attitude:

I had maid all the necerry arragement to Start home by the 1st of the month, and should have Started had not Mr. Chs Bent proposed me an arragement which I think will be to our mutual advantage. the arragement is this, I have bought of Mr.Chs Bent the half of his Goods. for which I have paid him Cash. I am to remain here to Sell the goods, and Mr. Bent goes to St. Louis for to bring to this Cuntry goods for him and my Self, \{sic\} . . . 28

So began what was termed the largest and strongest merchandising firm

in the Southwest. By 1831 profits already seemed auspicious for the future of the company. Known first as Bent & St. Vrain, the firm officially adopted the title of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. Unofficially, it was known as any number of things, from Charles Bent & Co. to Bent & Savery.

At the outset, William Bent's major contribution was the conception of the fort itself. In 1828 he had built, for his own use, a wooden stockade at the mouth of Fountain Creek. Soon thereafter Charles visited the site and reacted to his brother's establishment by envisioning a more substantial adobe fort. By 1834, the fort had been erected for, on January 10, 1834, William Laidlaw wrote to Pierre Chouteau, Jr. from Fort Pierre:

I understand from the Sioux, that Charles Bent has built a fort upon the Arkansas for the purpose of trade with the different bands of Indians.

The exact date of construction, however, remains a topic of considerable debate. The most definitive source on the subject is LeRoy Hafen who has established the summer of 1833 as the date of the fort's construction.

The Bents had been advised by Yellow Wolf, Chief of the Hairy Rope clan of the Cheyenne, to situate their fort at Big Timbers, a point 25

29. This is the opinion of William Waldo cited in; Mountain Men and the Fur Trade, II, 37n.
30. Laidlaw cited in; Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?" 117.
31. Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?"
miles downstream from the mouth of the Purgatory. They located the fort, however, upstream from Big Timbers, a decision that they regretted in time. Wood and grass were never abundant here, as opposed to the Big Timbers area, nor did buffalo frequent the area as heavily. But the site did suggest a single, overuling advantage--its proximity to the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail, an understandable consideration for trading operations with the Southwest.

William became resident manager of the headquarters for Bent, St. Vrain & Co., while Charles and Ceran assumed the management of the company itself--St. Vrain operated primarily out of Taos and Charles Bent traveled between St. Louis, Independence, Mo., and New Mexico. Of the three, William was the logical choice to occupy the fort, due to his so-often-alluded-to "special connection with the Indians."
C. Trade

The chief items of trade for Bent, St. Vrain & Co. were buffalo robes and horses and both were supplied, for the most part, by the Indians. Buffalo were available throughout the spring and in early summer the company turned its effort toward the procurement of horses. In addition to horses, the company obtained from New Mexico mules, cattle, and sheep (Bent & St. Vrain livestock was branded with a quarter-circle B \( \text{B} \)), as well as Mexican blankets, silver dollars, and silver bullion. The brightly striped Mexican blankets were valued highly by the Indians, a single blanket bringing as many as 10 buffalo robes. The remainder of the New Mexican goods were shipped by wagon to Missouri.

A wagon train departed Bent's Fort each spring carrying goods to Independence or Westport, Missouri—by 1846, Westport was rapidly replacing Independence as a trade center. According to his son, William Bent accompanied the trade caravan each year from 1832 to 1852.\(^{32}\)

Matt Field reported that Bent, St. Vrain & Co. purchased its first fleet of wagons from the Independence merchant James Aull, who had had them made in St. Louis.\(^{33}\) A wagon train included, on the average, 25 wagons with 6 oxen to a wagon. On one occasion, James Hobbs remembered

\(^{32}\) Hyde, George Bent, p. 84.

William Bent fitting up 24 10-mule teams to haul $40,000 worth of furs to Independence.\textsuperscript{34} Incidentally, it was a Bent wagon train that was the first to cross Raton Pass, in 1845.

A large portion of the goods brought back from Missouri went for the outfitting of trappers. The latter paid dearly for the few supplies required to see them through a season and trappers, according to Garrard, were anything but lavishly equipped.\textsuperscript{35} At Bent's Fort Abert and company supplied themselves with:

- eight 'fanegas' of unbolted Mexican flour, also plenty of coffee, and as much sugar as, with economy, would last us for 2 months; 3 or 4 boxes of macaroni and a small quantity of rice were added as luxuries;\textsuperscript{36}

Both Inman and Edwards commented on the inferior quality and outrageous prices of goods received at the fort.\textsuperscript{37} Tobacco, for instance, cost

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Hobbs, Wild Life in the Far West, p. 102. On another occasion, Bent, St. Vrain & Co. was expected with 600 packs of robes and 10 of beaver; J. F. A. Sanford to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., June 1, 1839, Chouteau-Walsl1 Collection 1839, Missouri Historical Society, Mss. Div.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 262.
  \item \textsuperscript{36} U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, "Report of expedition led by Lieutenant Abert, on the upper Arkansas and through the country of the Comanche Indians, in the fall of the year 1845" (Washington, 1846), p. 7; Cited hereinafter as Abert, 1845.
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Col. Henry Inman, The Old Santa Fe Trail (Topeka: Crane & Co., 1916), pp. 395-96; and Edwards, A Campaign in New Mexico, p. 38.
\end{itemize}
$4 a pound and the most expensive item of course was alcohol that, even at $25 a gallon, was watered down.38

There were other, comparatively minor forms of trade going on at Bent's Fort, such as the ransom offered the Comanche Indians in 1838 for James Hobbs.39 In fact, every business transaction was, in essence, a trade arrangement. The relation of the Indians and Bent's Fort, however, was perhaps the most essential factor affecting trade.


39. Hobbs was captured early in his frontier career and he spent his adolescent years among the Comanches.
D. Indian Relations

Just as there are currents in the sea, so also were there regular currents of Indian migration in the plains. 40

Thus a portion of the Cheyenne, led by the Hevhaitanio or Hairy Rope Men, moved from the north to the south side of the Platte River. With the Cheyenne also came a large group of Arapaho. According to George Bent, the migration began in 1826. Probably a more reliable source is Joseph Jablow who moved the date forward to 1830. 41 Initially, the object of the migration was to reap the benefits of the ready supply of horses south of the Platte.

Although Bent's Fort was hardly responsible for the migration at its outset, it encouraged the continuation of the southern movement. In 1837 William Bent married a Cheyenne woman known as Owl Woman—a propitious marriage, indeed, as she was the oldest daughter of the priest Grey Thunder (also known as White or Painted Thunder) who, "Next to the prophet, was the most venerated man in the tribe." 42 According to David Lavender, Owl

40. Hyde, George Bent, p. 31.
42. Hyde, George Bent, p. 72.
Woman approached as nearly "a princess of dime-novel literature as the facts of Cheyenne social organization allowed." Although the following may not have referred specifically to Owl Woman, she must have resembled this description from Abert of a Cheyenne squaw:

Having a white man for her husband, she has not been obliged to work, therefore her hands are in all their native beauty, small, delicately formed, and with tapering fingers; ... She put on her handsomest dress in order to sit for me. Her cape and under garment were border with bands of beads, and her beautiful leggings, which extended only to the knee, were so nicely joined with the moccasin that the connexion could not be perceived, and looked as neat as the stockings of our eastern belles, and the modest attitude in which she sits is characteristic, ...  

During his stockade days, William Bent had protected three Cheyenne from a marauding band of Comanches. He had shown consideration for the Indians by warning them to avoid the small-ox-ridden construction site of Bent's Fort.

Travelers observations on the Indian portion of the fort's population varied. Few denied the superiority of the Indian to the Mexican. In the romantic vein common to many contemporary writers, Garrard busied himself drawing up comparisons among Indians, Hebrews, and Gypsies. Abert's

43. Lavender, Bent's Fort, p. 174.

44. Abert, 1845, p. 4. The woman described here was married several times and, therefore, was probably not Owl Woman.

reaction was more realistic. While full of contempt for Indians at other posts, he grew quite friendly towards those around Bent's Fort. He made careful studies of Indian dress and manners and the Cheyenne, particularly, returned his interest. They brought him botanical specimens and contributed what they could to his translation of the Cheyenne tongue. One, Nah-moust, submitted to Abert a looking glass frame he had made for critical inspection. The lieutenant reacted with astonishment at the meticulousness of the Indian craftsman. A white man would have thrown together in a half hour what had occupied Nah-moust for two days. Abert's admiration for the Cheyenne was, nevertheless, tempered with an honest recognition of their weaknesses—they "never fail to be present at meal times." In exchange for ponies, buffalo robes, deer and other skins, the Indians received "tobacco, beads, calicoes, flannels, knives, spoons, whistles, jewsharps &c. &c." But, as always, the item most in demand was liquor. The Dodge expedition of 1835 reported that "in arranging the good things of this world in the order of rank," whiskey came first to the Indian.


47. Ibid., p. 14.


And James Hobbs noted the Shawnees spending their mules on "choice brandies, wines, whiskies &c."  

Although the introduction of liquor into Indian country was considered an indiscretion, the proprietors of Bent's Fort exhibited few scruples in this area. Nor did William Bent generally question the origins of Indian goods and, more often than not, horses brought for trade to the fort had been secured illegally in New Mexico or from rival Indian tribes. On one occasion, William Bent refused black-market mules from the Kiowa and Comanche. These tribes, however, were often out of favor with the proprietors of the fort.

Although the Indians may have received more than their share of liquor and food at the fort, Bent, St. Vrain & Co. nevertheless maintained the financial advantage. Illustrative of this fact is Hobbs' report of William Bent sending $400 to $500 worth of goods to the Crows in return for $3,000 to $4,000 in fur and buffalo robes.

While trade was conducted primarily with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, a number of other tribes were involved, especially by the 1845-46 period. After all, in the eyes of Bent, St. Vrain & Co., even "those Ishmaelites


of the desert, the Comanches, represented a potential enlargement of the company's wealth. A license issued in 1834 to Charles Bent allowed for trade with the Arapahoes, Cheyennes, Kiowas, Snakes, Sioux, and Arickaras. The Comanches did not become active customers until sometime after the peace of 1840 and the best years for Comanche and Kiowa trade were 1842 and 1843.

Intertribal warfare, however, made it difficult to deal with all Indians on an equal basis and, from time to time, the company had to adjust its trade to the prevailing tribal relations. The Arkansas River, for instance, formed the northern boundary of Kiowa/Comanche territory and

54. This phrase was used by William E. Connelley, in, Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California (Topeka: by author, 1907), p. 178.

55. Such licenses were issued bi-yearly. Although the first was taken out in the name of Charles Bent, they were issued thereafter to Bent, St. Vrain & Co. The tribes listed for any two-year period were not necessarily the tribes with which the fort conducted trade during that time, but rather the licenses were declarations of intent at the time they were issued. The Snakes and Arickaras do not appear on the licenses from 1836 and 1838, although the Comanches do appear on the latter. This is probably an instance of intent that didn't materialize. According to Lecompte, the Comanches paid a visit to the fort in 1835 and, thereafter, William Bent began to actively seek their trade but, from 1836 to 1840, there was no evidence that the Comanches were actually trading at Bent's Fort. Hafen reported that arrangements for trade were being made with the Comanches and Kiowas in 1842, and a letter in the Drips Papers states that in 1843 Bent, St. Vrain & Co. had done nothing but look to their Comanche trade. Lecompte asserts that by 1846 Comanche hostilities were again such that trade with Bent's Fort was out of the question. In 1849 the fort witnessed the arrival of four delegations of Comanches for peace talks with Indian Agent Tom Fitzpatrick. Lecompte, "Bent, St. Vrain and Company," pp. 273-74, 278-79," 286, 290; Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?" pp. 117; Mountain Men and the Fur Trade, II, 41, 43; and W. D. Hodgkiss to A. Drips, Mar. 25, 1843 in Drips Papers.
difficulties were apt to arise when the Cheyennes and Arapahoes crossed into this area seeking horses. A second factor determining the volume of Indian trade at the fort was the occasional cropping up of small rival posts in the area. Concerns established by the American Fur Company, for instance, were sometimes more conveniently located for Comanche trade than Bent's Fort.

The expansion of the Indian trade during the decade of the 1840's resulted in increased numbers of Indians within the walls of the fort. Hobbs stated that as of 1838 the "Colonel" (William Bent) displayed his goods at the back door, none being allowed to enter the fort but chiefs. 56 The following year Farnham described the Indians conducting their business in the plaza under bastion guard. 57 Grinnell corroborates this view of the early days of the fort; "when the Indians entered the fort to trade, cannon were loaded and sentries patrolled the walls with loaded guns. 58

Sometime after 1840 the guards were removed and the Cheyennes, at least, were given freedom to roam the fort. 59 The following testifies to

57. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 35.
58. Grinnell, Beyond the Old Frontier, p. 135.
59. Ibid.
this new era of Indian peace:

... a powerful and valorous people. but in our period [1846] they [the Cheyennes] were not troublesome, having been pacified by the Bent brothers ... 60

According to George Bent, however, the Comanches remained restricted to the trade room,61 with the exception of Chief Old Wolf who actually spent several nights within the fort's walls. Hobbs described Old Wolf's delight at the variety of cooked dishes and, when the Chief was under the influence of a little brandy, he was "immediately, the happiest Indian I ever saw." 32 During his stay at Bent's Fort, Old Wolf was frequently required to show himself on the walls of the fort, thereby assuring his uneasy warriors of his safety.

The chief's visit occurred in conjunction with the peace talks held at Big Timbers in the summer of 1840. The talks, arranged in part by William Bent, were intended to alleviate increasing Comanche-Cheyenne hostilities. The previous year the Cheyennes had procured Hudson Bay guns, flints, powder, and balls at Bent's Fort for use against the Comanches. Both Lecompte and Lavender are of the opinion that the peace talks provided, in addition, an opportunity to correct the enmity incited by a large scale


61. Hyde, George Bent, p. 72.

Comanche raid, in June, 1839, on horses belonging to Bent, St. Vrain & Co.

The frequent occurrence of such raids warranted elaborate comment from Farnham:

... for the insults, robberies; and murders, committed by this and other tribes, the traders Bent have sought opportunities to take well-measured vengeance; and liberally and bravely have they often dealt it out. But the consequence seems to have been the exciting of the bitterest enmity between the parties: which results in a trifle more inconvenience to the traders than to the Indians. For the latter, to gratify their propensity to theft, and their hatred to the former, made an annual levy upon the cavy-yard of the fortress, which, as it contains usually from 80 to 100 horses, mules, &c., furnished to the men of the tomahawk a very comfortable and satisfactory retribution for the inhibition of the owners of them upon their immemorial right to rob and murder, in manner and form as prescribed by the customs of their race. 63

The peace talks were concluded with the offering of a peace pipe and much celebration followed, including the liberal exchange among the various tribes of gifts secured in the traderoom of Bent's Fort. The treaty ground, in fact, was referred to by the Cheyennes as "Giving Presents to one another across the river." 64 For three days, Bent's Fort was taken over by feasting and dancing. Abert's description of an 1845 scalp dance probably approaches the nature of the 1840 celebrations:

I never in my life saw a happier set. The women laughed and jumped in rapturous delight, whilst their husbands and lovers

63. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 37.


28
were grouped around on the roofs of the fort, looking on most complacently... 65

According to Janet Lecompte, the Peace concluded in 1840 doubled the amount of Indian trade at the fort, for the moment at least. 66

65. Abert, 1845, p. 3.

66. Lecompte, "Bent, St. Vrain & Company Among the Comanches and Kiowa," 280. On January 16, 1841, Charles Bent wrote to Manuel Alvarez that he expected 1,500 lodges of Comanches and 1,500 lodges of Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Sioux combined near Bent's Fort in the spring; Lecompte, p. 280n.
E. Personnel

... I think I heard at one time, as many as six dif­ferent languages ... a perfect Babel of a place not only from heterogeneousness of tongues but from differ­ences of character ... from the polished gentleman down to the rough daring man of the mountains, as well as the untamed savage who seemed to be sneaking about as if in search of a good opportunity to scalp some body.67

Ranking just below the three bourgeoisie was a group of employees known as principals that included the traders, the free trappers, the hunters, the storekeeper, and the clerk or clerks. The complement of principals at Bent's Fort averaged 20, but the number varied according to the coming and going of hunting trips, especially during the winter. It can be assumed that, with the exception of Charles Bent's slave, Dick Green, the 23 men that accompanied William Bent to avenge his brother's murder in 1847 were principals at the fort.

Upon his arrival at Bent's Fort in 1846 Garrard enumerated as "con­stituting the quality and quantity of male inmates ... Captain Enos, assistant quartermaster, and his clerk, Dyer, Doctor Hempstead, Mr. Holt, the carpenter, blacksmith and a few fort and government employees."68


68. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, pp. 73-74.
Generally, however, the carpenter and blacksmith were not included in the principal group.

Doctor Hempstead probably succeeded Alexander Barclay as factor at Bent's Fort in 1839. 69 He came from an upper class St. Louis family and seems to have constituted, by himself, the intellectual population at the fort. Abert mentioned Hempstead bringing him "specimens" for his research and Gibson Described Hempstead recording the findings of a small party upon its arrival at the fort. 70 His private library earned repeated mention and, at one point, Garrard implied that Hempstead's scholarly pursuits prevented him from partaking in fort festivities. Garrard also mentioned that it was the "affable" Hempstead from whom he received his rations. 71

Holt was the storekeeper. Hatcher remembered "waiting for my possibles, which Holt was fixin' for me," and, late in 1846, Parkman mentioned Holt being in charge in the proprietors' absence. 72 Holt also took an interest in Abert's studies and, on one occasion, presented him with a

69. The length of Hempstead's tenure at the fort is uncertain. His presence in the 1846-47 period, however, was documented by both Abert and Garrard.


71. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, pp. 74, 248.

wildcat skin.73

The larger part of the business was carried on by the clerks and traders. The former were often sons of the well-born seeking adventure in the far West. Francis P. Blair, Jr., the nephew of Lincoln's postmaster-general, probably occupied the clerk's office during the summers of 1845 and 1846. George Bent recalled Blair in poor health; indeed, "the upper country (now Colorado) was beginning to gain a great reputation for healthfulness, and there were often several invalids at the fort ..." He also remembered Blair playing the banjo all night at fort "balls".74

The traders, on the other hand, were picked from those daring individuals known as mountain men, and it is this breed that was most typical of the fort's upper crust. To Francis Parkman, these men were half-savage.75 Nor was Edwards any kinder. The mountainmen spent their entire stay at Bent's Fort intoxicated and when the alcohol purchased was gone they would "... coolly shoulder their rifles and start off to do all the same thing over again ..."76 Garrard, however, became fascinated with these men:

Yet these aliens from society, these strangers to the refinements of civilized life, who will tear off a

73. Abert, 1846-47, p. 8.
74. Hyde, George Bent, p. 84.
75. Parkman cited in; DeVoto, Year of Decision, p. 62.
76. Edwards, A Campaign in New Mexico, p. 38.
bloody scalp with even grim smiles of satisfaction, are fine fellows, full of fun, and often kind and obliging.

At another place in his writings he described the mountaineer as:

... of seemingly unsociable dispositions, they are generous, even to a fault. The fewness of their numbers seems to create an interchange of kindly feeling... To judge by his frankness and reckless life, his sole aim appears to be freedom of person and speech in its fullest import. 77

Judging from the 1848 and 1849 trade licenses, there were nine to ten traders, at a time, in the employ of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. 78 The following were often mentioned as among the "best of Bill Bent's traders": Kit Carson, Lucien Maxwell, "Uncle" Dick Wootton, Luke Murray, Jim Bridger, Bill Williams, Jim Beckwourth, Shawnee Spiebuck, R. Fisher, John Hatcher, John Smith, Bill Boggs, and Tom Fitzpatrick. It is difficult to tell how many of these were present in the 1845-46 period. Unfortunately, the trade licenses for these years did not include a list of the traders and, of the above, only Fisher appears on the 1848 license and Hatcher on that from 1849.


78. Lecompte, "Bent, St. Vrain and Company Among the Comanches and Kiowas," 290. By this time, the licenses were taken out in William Bent's name, Ceran St. Vrain having quit the company. Traders listed for 1848 were: John Smith, Charles Vashen, Alexis Mason, John Hatcher, William Peterson, Andre (black), E. Longlade, Alexis Duran, Blas Garcia, and M. Derosia; those for 1849: John Smith, Charles Vashen, P. Carboni, Marsin, Charles McCue, J. Denison, R. Fisher, B. Riter, and J. Sanders.
Kit Carson had probably left Bent's Fort by 1843 when he is known to have been in the company of Frémont's 2nd Expedition. And Tom Fitzpatrick had abandoned his duties at Bent's Fort at least by 1846 when he was appointed Agent for the Upper Platte and Arkansas Indian Agency. Only John Smith can be place with any certainty in the fort's employ during the 1845-46 period. He was mentioned by both Abert and Garrard for his remarkable facility with Indian languages.

The most stable portion of the fort's population was the work force which included the cook, carpenter, blacksmith, gunsmith, wheelwright, and sometimes a barber and a tailor.

The identification of individuals within this group is difficult. We know that the "little French carpenter" was Ed Rice. His wife, Rosalie, cooked for the fort. She was a halfbreed—that "most diabolical compound" of French and Indian. But the chief cook, famous for her slap jacks and


George Bent remembered Carson in charge of timbering during the fort's construction which Hafen, however, refutes. According to Waldo, Carson hunted for the fort continuously from 1834 to 1842, but Carter does not place him in this role until 1836 and Sabin, not until 1839. Sabin stated that although Carson supplied the fort with meat, he operated out of Taos rather than out of the fort itself. Hyde, George Bent, p. 63; Hafen, "When was Bent's Fort Built?" 115; Waldo "Recollections," 78; Harvey Lewis Carter, 'Dear Old Kit' The Historical Christopher Carson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), p. 80; Sabin, Kit Carson Days, pp. 189, 195.

80. Abert, 1846-47, p. 17; Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, pp. 63 ff.

81. Ibid., p. 249.
pumpkin pies, and furthermore "de onlee lady in de dam Injun country" was Black Charlotte.\textsuperscript{82} She was the wife of Charles Bent's slave, Dick Green. The latter may, in fact, have served as the fort blacksmith who was described only as a large Negro.\textsuperscript{83} Both Hobbs and George Bent recorded the Indian admiration for black skin. Dick Green was known as "Black White Man" and one Cheyenne even adopted that name for himself.\textsuperscript{84}

In addition to the work force, there was a drifting population of herders, teamsters, bullwhackers and horse wranglers—sometimes American, sometimes Mexican.

The latter, to Farnham, were "hardly more civilized than Indians," and were characterized by their unusual "noise and shoutings."\textsuperscript{85} The Mexican employees at Bent's Fort were identified on a first name basis only, among them One-eyed Juan, considered by George Bent the champion breaker of wild horses.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{82.} Blanche C. Grant, \textit{When Old Trails Were New} (New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1934), p. 52.

\textsuperscript{83.} Charlotte and Dick Green were freed as a result of the latter's valorous participation in the revenge of the Taos Massacre; Garrard, \textit{Wah-To-Yah}, p. 262.

\textsuperscript{84.} Hobbs, \textit{Wild Life in the Far West}, p. 30; and Hyde, \textit{George Bent}, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{85.} Farnham, \textit{Travels in the Great Western Prairies}, p. 35.

\textsuperscript{86.} Hyde, \textit{George Bent}, p. 70.
Finally, there were the guests to be found at the fort each summer. All told, the population of Bent's Fort probably averaged 100 and when operating at full scale, conditions approached the dirt and noise level of a Medieval city. Judging from practices at Fort Laramie, the social hierarchy at Bent's Fort may have been preserved by charging for meals, bar privileges and the billiard saloon, and by the arrangement of tables in the dining room. 87

Some of the employees had families in residence. Although William Bent's family resided, primarily, at Big Timbers, sometime between late 1846 and the spring of 1847, Garrard found the Indian wives of both William Bent and Marcellin St. Vrain at the fort. 88 There was no evidence to the effect that Ceran St. Vrain's Mexican wife ever visited Bent's Fort, nor was Ignacia Bent, the wife of Charles Bent, a frequent visitor. The latter, along with the wives and children of Kit Carson (Ignacia Bent's sister) and George Bent arrived at the fort for a 4th of July celebration in 1842. 89 They may have attended other such celebrations there.

There was only one mention of polygamous activities on the part of the fort's owners; "... the proprietors are at the same time owners or

88. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 42.
89. Carter, 'Dear Old Kit', p. 96.
proprietors of several mistresses each . . ."90 The presence of any woman, regardless of race, was greatly appreciated. Susan Magoffin, in fact, was probably the only white woman ever to step foot inside these adobe walls.

As for children, George Bent recalled all four of William Bent's children being born at the fort.91 There was one report of several children at the fort92 but, it is difficult to tell whether they were actually residents. Very few of George Bent's Indian playmates lived within the fort walls. Abert observed a continual stream of squaws and their children bathing along the river93 and there was certainly a large number of Indian children to draw from in the area. Indian girls were always clothed whereas boys to the age of six went "dans costume à l'Adam" with only a string of beads around their neck.94

90. Bieber, Ed., Marching With the Army of the West, p. 139.
91. Hyde, George Bent, pp. 83-84.
92. Flynn cited in: Cleland, This Reckless Breed of Men, p. 157.
93. Abert, 1845, p. 4.
94. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 49.
F. The Army of the West and the War with Mexico

Bent's Fort was never intended as a military post. Only Hobbs mentioned the continual presence of a military company here and he is generally considered inaccurate on this point. In the summer of 1846, however, the Army of the West, en route to New Mexico and California, transformed Bent's Fort overnight into a military depot. During this time, the fort saw more activity than it ever had or ever would again.

There had been scattered visits from the military prior to 1846. In 1835 an expedition—essentially a peace-making venture with the Indians—passed through Bent's Fort under the command of Col. Henry Dodge. In 1843, William Waldo reported the arrival of from 200 to 300 uniformed Texans. And in 1844, John Charles Frémont's 2nd Expedition disbanded at Bent's Fort.

Activities related to the Mexican War began as early as 1843 when the federal Government drew up a contract with the proprietors of Bent's Fort for the storage of government supplies. In 1845, three separate expeditions led by Stephen Watts Kearny, Frémont, and Lt. James W. Abert, passed through Bent's Fort.

―95. Hobbs, *Wild Life in the Far West*, p. 51. Hobbs arrived in the company of a Comanche War party and may, therefore, have sensed an unusually defensive air about the fort that persisted in his memory.

96. Waldo, "Recollections," p. 78. The Texans were en route to an abortive invasion of New Mexico.
through the fort. Ostensibly, they were mapping and compiling scientific data on the Southwest but, in actuality, these were intelligence gathering ventures anticipating a war with Mexico.

Hostilities began in April of 1846. By May 13 President Polk had officially recognized the existence of a state of war. At Fort Leavenworth, Kearny's orders to protect traders on the Santa Fe Trail changed within a few days to performing a "bloodless" conquest of New Mexico. According to George Rutledge Gibson, Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain were also at Fort Leavenworth during this period. By June the first Army supplies rolled into Bent's Fort. As of August 28, 50 commissary wagons, in all, had arrived at the fort.

It was only at Bent's Fort that the Army of the West came together in its entirety. On July 30, 1846, Susan Magoffin recorded: "The Fort is crowded to overflowing. Col. Kearney had arrived and it seems the world is coming with him." Only the highest in command slept within the

97. Actually, the orders were to carefully monitor the activities of the traders rather than to protect them. With the advent of the war and the resultant blockade, traders were over anxious to take advantage of the competitor-free situation. In addition, a need was felt to sell out before the arrival of the Army. The Army was particularly interested in catching up with the wagons of Albert Speyer which were loaded with goods for Governor Armijo; DeVoto, Year of Decision, p. 230.


fort. The balance of the Army, stationed at various points around its walls, were left to:

swim in the river, guzzle Taos lightning and other liquors at twenty-five dollars a gallon, exhaust the firm's supply of clothing, and gape at Mexicans, mountain men, Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute.101

And the Indians, at least, gaped back. They "had never supposed there were as many men as this in the whole white tribe."102 Connelley reported the tops of the fort's walls teeming with Mexican girls and Indian squaws at the passage of the Army.103

By August 2, the majority of the troops had left the fort, having been there only five days (the first troops had arrived on July 28). In Parkman's words, the fort was again "a scene of dull and lazy tranquility;" to Susan Magoffin, it was "desolate."104

But, although the calmor of troops had passed, Bent's Fort retained certain obligations to the Army. William Bent, for one, and six of his


103. Connelley, Doniphan's Expedition, pp. 181-82.

104. Parkman, The Oregon Trail, p. 264; and Magoffin, Down the Santa Fe Trail, p. 68.
men were enlisted as a "spy guard" to precede the Army. Among the six
was Francis Preston Blair, Jr. During William Bent's absence the employees
of the fort were required to care for some 75 sick left behind by Kearny.
And until at least late in 1847, when the Army quartermaster departed,
Bent's Fort continued to serve as a government supply depot. The quartermaster, as described in Parkman, had "a face as sour as vinegar, being
in a state of chronic indigestion because he had been left behind the army."106

It is difficult to evaluate the effect of the Army's passage on the
Indian clientele of Bent's Fort. Indian raids upon the Santa Fe Trail
decreased during 1846, the Indians concentrating their efforts to the south
where Texans and Mexicans were suddenly very vulnerable. And, as already
mentioned, traders were overeager this season. Taken together, such conditions made a prosperous year for Bent's Fort, profits tripling those in
any previous year.107

But, following the Army's passage, Parkman reported an increase in
Indian hostilities and a heightened attitude of defense around the fort.
Indeed, the Indians' resources had been reduced to a bare minimum; "It

105. Due to the insufficient compensation, Bent at first refused
his services as a spy; H. S. Turner, The Original Journals of Henry Smith
Turner, ed. and introd. by Dwight L. Clarke (Norman: University of Okla­
seemed as if a swarm of locusts had invaded the country. The grass for miles around was cropped close by the horses of General Kearny's soldiery..."108

On August 18, 1846, Kearny entered Santa Fe and achieved the "bloodless conquest" ordered by Polk. A message announcing Kearny's intentions had previously been transmitted to Governor Armijo from Bent's Fort. In order to secure the conquest Kearny appointed as governor, Charles Bent, and as attorney general, Francis Blair.109

Celebrations were in order and, on August 27, a ball was given in Kearny's honor at the newly occupied governor's palace:

... Mexican musicians--music execrable, a great many Americans--several genteel men and many rowdies among them. Everybody smoking--women and men. Clouds of smoke all the time. General goes to bed sick in consequence... Americans and Mexicans harmonious.110

Sometime between September 25 and September 28 Kearny departed for more important business in California. Within a few months the Mexican-American harmony had grown quite brittle and, on January 19, 1847, Charles


109. Kearny's appointments were considered somewhat extra-legal. National Archives, RG 107, Microfilm 6.

Bent's home in Taos was stormed by a band of Pueblo Indians. Bent was killed along with 20 other Americans in the area.

Sympathy for the victims of the Taos Massacre developed quickly into vengeance towards the assassins. William Bent, declining Cheyenne offers to set a massive war party upon New Mexico, set out from Bent's Fort with 23 of his own men, the object being "... to travel as far as we could toward Taos; kill and scalp every Mexican to be found, and collect all the animals belonging to the Company and the United States."\(^{111}\)

Meanwhile, a combined military force and group of volunteers, the latter led by Ceran St. Vrain, had set out from Santa Fe. Reaching Taos before William Bent, they claimed revenge for all concerned--200 Pueblo Indians dead and Francis Blair left with the task of prosecuting any of the guilty still abroad. The magnitude of the revenge won only emphasized further the fact that the mainstay of Bent, St. Vrain, & Co. was dead. The death of the company itself was to follow gradually after him.

The Carr Papers suggest that, upon the older Bent's death, William Bent, Ceran St. Vrain, and George Bent formed a new partnership. George died in October of 1847 and the company gradually dissolved as the two remaining partners began, more and more, to go their separate ways.\(^{112}\)

\(^{111}\) Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 123.

\(^{112}\) Dorcas Carr to brother, December 26, 1848; Carr Papers, Missouri Historical Society, Mss. Div.
At one point, St. Vrain tried, unsuccessfully, to sell Bent's Old Fort to the federal government for use as a military post. William Bent was outraged at the action and proceeded to turn down subsequent government offers to buy the fort. And, in 1849, the fort met with destruction, supposedly at the hands of William Bent himself.\footnote{Lavender, \textit{Bent's Fort}, pp. 413-14 n. Two sources believed the fort to have been destroyed by Indians, which Lavender refutes. Quoting from Calhoun's \textit{Official Correspondence}; "One of the owners of Bent's Fort has removed all property from it, and caused the fort to be burned' (.... was St. Vrain still a partner? It seems unlikely.)" Lavender relates still another version of the story which claims that, when the government refused to buy it, the fort was burned in order to keep the Indians from moving in.}
CHAPTER II--THE FURNISHINGS
OF BENT'S OLD FORT

A. The Sources

Hopefully, a study such as this is able to trace at least some furnishings directly to the structure it is dealing with or even to particular rooms within that structure. Unhappily, this is impossible in the case of Bent's Old Fort.

Appendix A contains the Chouteau Trade Ledgers from 1834 to 1841 which list the goods bought by Bent, St. Vrain & Co. during those years. The ledgers from later years are too brief to be of use here. Although the Chouteau records are the most direct source we have for the furnishings of the fort, they have their pitfalls. In the first place, there is no way to tell which of the items that appear on the ledgers merely passed through Bent's Fort, the largest part of these lists being trade goods, and which were designated for fort use. There are exceptions such as the hat and halter tagged specifically "for Wm. Bent" and the single, unusual entries--violin strings for instance--that were probably special ordered by someone at the fort. Secondly, very few items of furniture were listed on the Chouteau Ledgers. Rather, what appears here is a large variety of foods, yardgoods, clothing, blankets, soaps, dyes, paper, tobacco, alcohol, beads and other decorations, household utensils, farm equipment, weapons, and accoutrement for the trail. The only pieces of
furniture listed were trunks—"1 leather trunk", "2 Morocco trunks", and 2 of no particular description. Again, owing to their limited numbers, these must have been ordered with a specific destination in mind.

Similar in value, and in its limitations, is the list of goods bought in 1838 by Bent, St. Vrain & Co. from Ft. Jackson when the latter concern went out of business. Of particular interest here is the section headed "Unpacked Goods" which included used goods that probably remained at Bent's Fort rather than being traded. Appendix B contains this list.

Unfortunately, the account books of Bent's Fort disappeared with the fort's destruction. For comparative purposes the accounts of Elbridge Gerry's and Lancaster Lupton's Platte River forts were consulted. Lupton was an Army officer and trader at Bent's Fort and Gerry had many dealings with the Bent family. Also extant is the Prowers Account Book which, although too late to be of use in furnishing Bent's Fort, is of interest as it contains Bent family accounts.

As for furniture, it can be assumed that quality varied according to the immediate circumstances of Bent, St. Vrain & Co. The first furniture at the fort was, no doubt, homemade—split log bench remains were uncovered by the archeological survey—and may even have been rendered by the timbering crew during the process of the fort's construction.

LeRoy Hafen based his diorama of Bent's Fort in the State Historical Society of Colorado on Taos furniture, and any homemade furniture at the fort was probably based, however unconsciously, on Spanish Colonial models.

Large luxury items were brought to the fort only as there was available space in caravans heading west. Departing St. Louis in 1832, for instance, Charles Bent was able to accommodate a billiard table. A wide selection of furniture was available in St. Louis, as testified to by entries in the City Directories. For example, Colburn and Coolidge publicized their specialties as "wooden ware and chairs, seives, brushed and brooms." An illustration of a painted "fancy chair" accompanied their advertisement. Associated with this firm was Morris Colburn, a Santa Fe trader often at Bent's Fort between 1845 and 1849. A furniture-maker, George F. Lewis, specialized in cabinets, upholstery and venetian blinds and Lynch Trask & Co. advertised chairs, mattresses, bedding and upholstery—constantly on hand or made at short notice—mahogany veneers and varnish. An American Empire sideboard was sketched in the latter advertisement.

Aside from the material cited above, we must rely almost entirely upon furnishings from related structures. These include other Bent


family homes, Bent, St. Vrain & Co. related institutions, and Southwest homes that the company owners might have frequented. A brief explanation follows of material that is considered germane but by no means definitive to this study. The most pertinent items are illustrated at the back of this report.

Sometime before 1842, William and Charles Bent bought a farm at Westport and selected their nephew, Angus Boggs (son of Julia Bent and Lilburn Boggs) to manage it.\(^4\) And, just across the river from Westport was Shawnee Mission, Kansas. The Mission itself was bisected by the Santa Fe Trail and was built during the earliest days of Bent's Fort. The farm with its house—William Bent added onto the house twice—and the Shawnee Mission are both standing today in Kansas City.

Also associated with Westport is the will of Thomas Fitzpatrick who was often at Bent's Fort.\(^5\) Two items in the latter—a walnut wardrobe and a liquor case—may be of interest here.

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\(^4\) When Boggs left the farm, A. G. Boone, the grandson of Daniel Boone and a merchant related to Boggs by marriage, was hired to run the farm and to educate the children. Upon Boone's departure, the management of the farm was assumed by Robinson Moore, who was married to Mary Bent, William's oldest daughter. Native Sons Archives, Kansas City Public Library.

Today, the house is known as the Ward House, being owned by the Seth Ward family from 1872 to 1942. It was added onto once during that time. For the relation of Seth Ward to Bent, St. Vrain & Co., see History of Mountain Men and the Fur Trade, III, pp. 362 ff.

\(^5\) Will of Thomas Fitzpatrick, 1853, Native Sons Archives, Kansas City Public Library.
There are several wills in the New Mexico State Archives belonging to upper class citizens in the Southwest. Although there is no reason to suppose a particular connection with the Bent establishment, they are perhaps indicative of the type of private home with which Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain were familiar.

Between 1929 and 1944, Mrs. H. L. Lubers, the granddaughter of Mary Bent Moore, gave a number of items to the State Historical Society of Colorado, including photographs, one of the three family Bibles, and a silver tea and coffee service that was a wedding gift to Mary Bent from her father.

On loan to the Bent House Gallery in Taos are the following possessions of Charles Bent dating from the time of his residence in Santa Fe. These items were in the home of Charles Bent's granddaughter, Tessie Berry, and are now owned by her daughter, Mrs. Charlene Kesler.

- 1865 Account book, St. Vrain & Santistevan Co.
- Cable and Nelson box piano (the first piano in New Mexico)
- Wall clock (date stamped on face as November 30, 1870)
- Sampler made by Teresina Bent Scheurich
- Chest
- 2 iron muffin pans (1 oval, 1 round)
- Large 2 spigot coffee urn

6. The best of these are the wills of Maria Micaela Baca, 1832; Severino Martinez, 1828; and Manuel Sanchez, 1839.

7. The Historical Society was unable to locate the service--Acc. #H1451--at the time of my visit there.
Large covered server
Black Victorian dresser
Empire mahogany and leather arm chair
Leather trunk
Victorian table
Small table
Small books with tooled Morocco bindings
Inlaid wooden cribbage board

Of the above, the leather trunk is the only piece that is documented as having belonged to Charles Bent.

In 1940, Charles Hurd observed the following Bent pieces in the home of Tessie Berry:

Marble top black walnut bedroom suite
Brussels carpet
Lace curtains
Horse hair sofa
Marquetry table
Elegant china
Silver
Bric-a-brac

The following items given by Mrs. Berry in 1940 to the Kit Carson Museum are more fully authenticated than Mr. Hurd's list:

Small cast iron pot with bail handle
Plank kitchen table (primitive New Mexican style)
Large framed mirror

Finally, there is a painted primitive style New Mexican chest, reputedly owned by Charles Bent, that was acquired with a collection of Santos by the Fine Arts Museum of Colorado Springs.

The Kit Carson Museum contains the following Carson possessions dating from the 1833 period:
Hickory basket
Wooden clothes wringer
Handmade candle sticks

Additional Kit Carson material in this Museum includes a primitive green painted washstand and a game table with a checker-board top. The museum of New Mexico owns a similar game table reputedly owned by Carson. There is also, at Fort Garland, a folding style camp chair with carpeting seat which supposedly was one of Carson’s favorite chairs.9

Much of the Carson furniture was kept in the Boggsville ranch home of Thomas Boggs, who married Charles Bent’s step-daughter.10 And in the Yale manuscript of Boggs’ trip west in 1844-45 is a description of Charles Bent’s Taos home; "Bent assigned me a nice comfortable room well provided with a bed and warm Mexican blankets, and a servant."11

Finally, illustration No. is a photograph of "Uncle" Dick Wootton in his Raton Pass home, dating from sometime between 1849 and 1864. Wootton is seated upon a painted chair before a marble fireplace. Included in the

8. CWA Interviews, No. 359/18, State Historical Society of Colorado.

9. Wilbur H. Stone who donated the chair to the State Historical Society of Colorado claims Carson told him of his affection for the chair in 1867; notes on Kit Carson in Hurd Collection, State Historical Society of Colorado.

10. Article by A. W. Thompson in; Ibid.

11. William M. Boggs, "Narrative of a Journey to Santa Fe in 1844-45," Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
photograph are a coal grate, a spittoon--both brass--a clock, several books and photographs, an armoire of ceiling height, and a table with turned legs.
B. The Fabric of the Fort

While the Historic Structure Report for Bent's Old Fort\textsuperscript{12} serves as a guide to the materials present in the fort, a brief run down follows of the most visible colors and textures and of certain structural details such as windows, doors, and fireplaces.

The adobe bricks composing the fort were finished with mud plaster, varying in color from a rich red, to ochre, to white. Interior ceilings were composed of peeled sapplings while floors, for the most part, were of clay or dirt. Susan Magoffin remarked that the floors around the plaza, and in the second-story room where she stayed, were dirt and required sprinkling with water several times a day.\textsuperscript{13} Farnham identified the floors as clay and he too described the process of moistening the floors and then beating them with large wood mallets.\textsuperscript{14} In addition, Field's doggeral mentioned "sanded" floors\textsuperscript{15} and Paul Horgan's \textit{The Heroic Triad} described the polishing of black earth-and-sand floors by rubbing with

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\textsuperscript{14} Thomas J. Farnham, \textit{Travels in the Great Western Prairies} (New York, 1843), p. 35.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{15} John Sunder, Ed., \textit{Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail}, collected by Clyde and Mae Reed Porter (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), p. 44.
\end{flushright}
the flat of the hand. These, combined with Webb's reference to San Joaquin black adobe as being a frequent alternative, in the process of acobe construction, to Santiago silt loam suggest the presence of a blackened type of floor at Bent's Fort.

Floor coverings were undoubtedly used in the more elaborately furnished rooms. Jerga, a hand woven twill produced by the Indians of New Mexico, was the most common variety available. Susan Magoffin remarked upon this type of rug in Santa Fe homes. The collection of jerga at the International Folk Art Museum in Santa Fe is predominantly pink, incorporating blue, brown and white into their designs. It is possible that this latter, more decorative form of jerga also found its way into Bent's Fort. Red and blue dyestuffs were particularly in demand as trade items and, according to the Chouteau Ledgers, the Bents purchased vermillion, verdigris, and indigo.

Interior walls were plastered with geso, or yeso. Often, fabric was applied in conjunction with the geso in order to prevent it from rubbing off, especially on the lower portions of walls where contact was most


18. Magoffin, Down the Santa Fe Trail, p. 103.
frequent. This method of decoration was used throughout the Southwest.\(^{19}\)

Burlap was readily available at the fort as goods destined for the Santa Fe Trail were generally wrapped either in burlap or gunny sacks. Its use at Bent's Fort, in rooms N5, N6, and N7, was confirmed by the archeological report.\(^{20}\)

In those rooms where decoration was more of a concern, the upper portion of a wall was often white while the lower or wainscot portion was red or yellow—tierra amarilla and tierra de oro. The archeological survey revealed alternating layers of red, yellow, and white plaster on both the walls and floor of S2—William Bent's room. S4 combined white and red plaster while the rooms on either side were plastered entirely in white. Room E2—the cook's room—was originally plastered entirely in yellow, then in brick red.\(^{21}\) Plaster was available on the Taos trade market, or at Nambe Pueblo where colored clays were pre-baked and ground.

What few windows there were in the fort were small. The only exterior windows were in the upper west wall and two on the north wall—in UW1 and the watchtower.\(^{22}\) Vertical wooden bars with wooden shutters, or possibly

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21. Ibid., pp. 28-35.

mica, were installed. 23 There was some evidence of glass, three boxes of 8' x 10' panes appearing on the Chouteau Ledgers between 1839 and 1842. Allowing for a dozen panes per box and four per window, this amounts to, at best, nine glassed windows.

According to the Spanish architectural mode of the day, doorways were small and had sills as much as a foot off the floor to protect against drafts and vermin--the latter were formidable enemies of wood doors. There were at least 20 doorways and 36 windows in the fort.

The traditional Spanish Colonial fireplace was a corner one that operated most efficiently with small pieces of wood stood on end. While this type was in evidence at the fort, so was the H-shaped fireplace, the latter being of English design and, indeed, Jackson W. Moore observed the fort's architecture, on the whole, as being rather eclectic. 24

There were 14 fireplaces in Bent's Fort--five on the north side of the fort, six on the south, and three on the east. Some of these underwent considerable alteration which may testify to the ethnic preferences of particular occupants. Nine fireplaces were of the flush or wall variety, capable of burning either coal or wood. Of these, two were corner fireplaces but parallel to the wall while the remaining five were at a 45° angle to the wall. 25 Probably there were fenders of either

23. Moore, NPS, Archeology, p. 5.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 3.
sheet iron or brass, according to the status of the room involved. During this period, fenders and grates were made in St. Louis by Burd, Telden & Burd and, from 1819 on, Henry Shaw both designed and imported fireplace file in St. Louis for Minton & Co.\(^{26}\)

Wood was scarce. There was, however, a seam of bituminous coal mined primarily for the Westport market by the Shawnee Indians on Coal (Cole) Creek, a tributary of the Wakarusa.\(^{27}\) Lieutenant Abert noticed the use of coal in Bent's Fort and, furthermore, claimed he could trace William Bent's route on trading expeditions by the bright black flecks in the soil.\(^{28}\)

\(^{26}\) St. Louis City Directory, 1840-42; and Dorothy A. Brockhoff, "A Study of Henry Shaw and His Houses," typed manuscript, Shaw House, St. Louis, 1962, p. 50.

\(^{27}\) The coal seam was noted by both Abert and Emory in June and July, 1846; Louise Barry, The Beginning of the West, foreword by Dale L. Morgan (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), p. 619.

\(^{28}\) Abert, 1846-47, p. 423.
C. The Furnishings

The following evaluation of furnishings and room use begins with the northwest corner of the fort on the ground level. The reader will find it helpful to refer to the diagram of Bent's Fort at the back of this report (illustration no. 1).

The occupation and use of each room is based on the documentation found in the Historic Structure Report and the furnishings will be documented here only by author. Certain items that were common to more than one room will be discussed in only one place. A list of suggested furnishings follows the discussion for many of the rooms. Most of the items listed under "Speculative" were taken from the Chouteau Ledgers and many of those under "Documented" were established by the archeological report.

NW1, NW2, NW3, NW4--Quarters

All evidence pointed to NW1 and NW2 once having served the blacksmith. In fact, they were probably one room, NW1 later being partitioned off as the smith's quarters. In our period, however, all four of these rooms were probably living quarters, on a short-term basis, for travelers or the lower level employees.

Tête Rouge may have been referring to one of these rooms when he spoke of:

... a little mud room, where he and a companion
... were laid together, with nothing but a buffalo
robe between them and the ground... saw his /the
companion's/ eyes fixed upon the beams above... 30

Gibson also mentioned an interior apartment, the confined air of which
offered no relief to his poor state of health.31 And Robinson noted
"good mattress beds" being spread on the floor.32 Wherever these men
slept, these four rooms approached their descriptions--each room providing
very spartan-like accommodations for at least two, with roll out mattress
beds being the most substantial pieces of furniture present.

NWl can claim one certain occupant, if for no more than a day. This
was an Indian woman who bore a child directly below the room in which
Susan Magoffin stayed--NWl. The delivery coincided with Susan's own mis-
carriage.33

UNI--Watchtower and Belfry

Sometime between early spring and August of 1845, Bent's Fort underwent

p. 268.

Doniphan, 1846-47, ed. by Ralph P. Bieber (Glendale, Calif: Arthur H.

32. Jacob S. Robinson, A Journal of the Santa Fe Expedition Under
Colonel Doniphan, introd. and notes by Carl L. Cannon (Princeton: Princeton

33. Magoffin, Down the Santa Fe Trail, p. 68.
considerable alterations. Abert at first thought the change to be only an apparent one caused by his own delirium:

... my disease had obtained such an influence over my senses... Even my sight was affected, and when I gazed on Bent's Fort, the buildings seemed completely metamorphosed; new towers had been erected, the walls heightened, and, as I then thought, everything put in readiness to resist an attack of the New Mexicans. 34

Although defense had been a consideration at the time of the fort's construction, early fears had centered on Indian attacks and Farnham, visiting in 1839, assessed the fort as defensible only through the ignorance of the Indians. 35 But, by 1845, fear of attack had shifted toward New Mexico. It was with this new enemy in mind that the main gate was altered in order to accommodate a watchtower (UN1) and belfry.

The watchtower was square with windows on all sides and, according to Flynn, who was Cleland's major source, there were loopholes in the walls. Flynn was also the only visitor who observed weapons hanging on the watchtower walls. A chair and bed were noted in this room by both Grinnell and Flynn and a mounted telescope was documented by Grinnell, Flynn, Hobbs (Hobbs was Inman's major source), and the archeological survey.

34. Abert, 1846-47, p. 7.

35. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 35.
The telescope had a range of seven miles and was mounted on either a surveyor-like tripod or on brass feet. 36

American made telescopes were available in St. Louis through wholesalers Charles F. Hendry and John H. Mott. 37 And English made instruments could be ordered from Henry Shaw who imported them through an Uncle James Hoole in Sheffield. 38

**Furnishings--Watchtower**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>telescope</td>
<td>small table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed</td>
<td>brazier or stove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>shelf with books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paper and pencil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candlestick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The belfry was peak roofed and extended five feet above the watchtower. Although probably intended as an alarm system, the bell served in the end only to sound out meals. It was documented by Grinnell and Flynn and a 27½ pound bell appeared on the Chouteau Ledgers. Extending from the top of the belfry on an ash pole was a large United States flag, documented by Grinnell, Emory, Johnston, Connelley, and Hyde.

Finally, the belfry contained one of the Fort's chief novelties--two bald eagles:

... two eagles, of the American bald species, looked from their prison. They were 2 years old, but their

36. Moore, NPS, Archeology, p. 16.

37. St. Louis City Directory, 1840-41.

38. Shaw Papers, Missouri Botanical Gardens, St. Louis, Mo.
heads do not become bald until attaining the age of 3. Antelope and other fresh meats were scarce, and the eagles had to starve 2 days. One evening they were let loose; one escaped unharmed, the other flew a short distance, and a Cheyenne shot him for the feathers, to adorn his own ugly head. "Enfant de garce!" muttered I. How I wanted to retaliate on the savage. 39

N5, N6, N7--Traderooms

Also added during the 1845 alterations, these were traderooms, one or two of them probably serving as quarters and office space for the principal trader. Of the three rooms, N7 seems to have been the most important as reflected by the materials used in its construction. Evidence of what may have been rattan and willow office baskets was found here. 40 N5 contained a hatch leading to the sallyport.

It is conceivable that these rooms served primarily the Indian trade. It was during the period just following the alterations that defenses against the Indians were relaxed and certain tribes permitted to carry on their trade inside the fort, and George Bent remembered the traderoom always full of Indians. 41 The only other possible candidate for this reference is E4 and, during this period, the latter probably served a more generalized form of trade.


40. Moore, NPS, Archaeology, pp. 7-8.

The Chouteau Ledgers are an invaluable source for the refurnishing of the traderooms.

**Furnishings--Traderooms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shelves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian trade goods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tools for moulding bullets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fireplace tools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candlesticks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quarters for the Principal Trader**

- beds
- chests
- table
- chairs
- striped, ticking mattress, straw filled buffalo robes, Rio Grande blankets
- wall cupboard
- wall shelves, books
- clothes, clothes pegs or Spanish clothes rod
- fireplace grate (wall fireplace)
- coal bucket or scuttle
- fireplace tools
- candlesticks
- mirror
- guns and accompanying equipment
- earthenware dishes
- cutlery

**Northeast and Southwest Bastions**

Within these "little towers", as Wislizenus referred to the watchtowers.
in 1839, 42 armaments were kept in readiness. The larger southwest bastion had an additional function. It held the horse furniture and agricultural implements that were at the fort. A "coal hole" through which liquor was passed to the Indians was noted in the Northeast bastion by Boggs, by was probably never put into use, and certainly not in the 1845-46 period. 43

Small cannon and additional light field pieces were observed by Farnham, Garrard, Hobbs, Field, Flynn, Dodge, Fremont, Cooke, and an anonymous employee; pistols, swords, lances, and flintlock muskets by Grinnell; and whetstones were uncovered by the archaeological survey.

The numbers and placement of the artillery, however, remain uncertain. At least one 6 pound howitzer is thoroughly documented. This is one that, upon the arrival of Kearny, burst in the plaza from being overloaded. There was also record of a 6-pounder being purchased from Bent's Fort in 1848. 44 Presumably, the burst canon was not sold later and this was a second canon. The Historic Structure Report evaluated


44. Barclay, Doyle & Co. bought the canon on May 1, 1848; Trinidad Chronicle News, April 12, 1881, in; Hurd Collection, Colorado State Historical Society.
the situation as follows: until mid-1846 there was a 6-pounder on top of each bastion and a number of light swivel guns at undetermined points around the walls of the fort; the burst canon sat in the plaza from mid-1846 on; from 1847 to 1849, a canon sat outside the main gate of the fort.  

Rifles on the frontier were Hawken rifles, several of which appeared on the Chouteau Ledgers. Jake and Sam Hawken ran a partnership out of St. Louis from 1822 to 1844. The barrels were made of Massey Furnace iron, smelted at St. James, Mo., and the stocks were maple. Most Hawken rifles were .54 calibre and used a ½ ounce ball with 100 grains of black powder. By the 1840-50 period, Hawken rifles often came with their woodwork extended to the muzzle--full stock.  

Chouteau had several sources for weaponry. In 1827 he ordered, through Ramsey Crooks, 60 rifles from Jacob Gumph of Lancaster, Pa. Other gunsmiths, producing between 1834 and 1842 specifically for the mountain and Santa Fe trade were John Brandt (succeeded by Jack Fordney), Henry Gibbs, Henry E. Leman--all of Lancaster, Pa.--and J. J. Henry of Boulton, Pa.

47. Chouteau Collection, Missouri Historical Society, Mss. Div.  
Archeologists found two of the 1840-50 type Hawken rifles at Bent's Fort plus one wall gun, and three Hudson's Bay or Leman rifles. Also recovered were parts of seven musket rifles, all flintlocks.49

**Furnishings--Northeast Bastion**

**Documented**

- lances
- sabres
- rifles
- pistols
- light field pieces
- whetstones

**Speculative**

**Furnishings--Southwest Bastion**

- saddles
- bridles
- circingles
- harnesses
- agricultural tools--scythes, spades, plows, hay forks, rakes

**E5--Councilroom**

The archeological report described this as one of the more comfortable rooms in the fort. Indeed, evidence was found of glass panes for windows.50 E5 served as a combination parlor, councilroom, and barracks. Susan Magoffin called it a parlor and observed a cushion next to the

49. Moore, NPS, Archaeology, pp. 116 ff.

50. Ibid., p. 5.
wall on two sides of the room. In addition, she observed a "table on which stands a bucket of water, free to all. Any water that may be left in the cup after drinking is unceremoniously tossed onto the floor." Abert spoke of buffalo robes rather than cushions; "We were all seated on buffalo robes upon the ground, so ranged around the council chamber that our backs could be supported against the wall." Abert was describing the Indian peace talks held in 1845.

**Furnishings—Councilroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>table</td>
<td>mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bucket</td>
<td>crucifix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tin cup</td>
<td>6 to 8 rolled mattresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adobe bench on east and north walls, covered with blankets</td>
<td>T-bar chandelier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fireplace grate, fender, tools, and coal bucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shelf above fireplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candlesticks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**E4—Traderoom**

The archeological report established the presence of a counter running along the west side of this room. Prior to 1845 this was the only traderoom in the fort. After that time it probably serviced all forms of trade except the Indian trade. Vestal's *'Dobe Walls* contains an inspired, albeit fictional account of the Bent's Fort traderoom:

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52. Abert, *1845*, p. 5.

Hatcher looked around the familiar walls of the long low warerooms, at the bales and boxes stored there. The outer wall was pierced with loopholes and near these open spaces were left so that movement would be unhindered... Shelves were piled with fooferaw, boxes of beads, flints, buckles, finger rings, paints, silver "hair-money", hawk bells, tubular bone Iroquois beads, steel bracelets, fire steels, hand axes, tin pans, awls, green river knives, pigs of galena, powder, powder horns, beaver and bear traps, looking glasses, combs, needles, thread, pins, ribbons... piles of blankets--both trade and Navajo--a few bales of buffalo robes... harness, ropes and saddlery, tobacco in great brown twists, chewing tobacco, fringed Spanish shawls, and States doin's... bags of coffee, sugar, raisins, flour, boxes of water crackers, salt pork in barrels, bottles of pepper sauce, saleratus and spices of all sorts. On the lower shelves were stacked bales of calico flannel, domestic cotton, blue and scarlet strouding, dressed buckskins, 3 paint Nor-West blankets, kettles, saddles. Hardware was in the middle of the room; axes, kettles, spare parts for wagons, horseshoes and ox shoes, hoop iron for arrow heads, lance heads, trade guns, Nor-West fusils, and many a short keg of Pass Brandy, rum and Taos lightning, and kegs of blackstrap molasses.54

Farnham spoke of the traders weighing "wugar; coffee, powder &c. in a Connecticut pint cup; and measuring red baize, beads &c."55 Garrard commissioned Hatcher to get him three shirts at Bent's Fort and, in another place, Garrard spoke of such rarities being available there as pepper and pepper sauce.56 Having been a boy at Bent's Fort, it was


55. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 37.

56. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, pp. 154, 249.
the rarities in the traderoom or the "store" that he remembered most of all:

... such luxuries as butter crackers, Bent's water crackers, candies of various sorts, and, most remarkable of all, great jars of preserved ginger of the kind which fifty or sixty years ago used to be brought from China ... 57

The Native Sons Archives has a number of items that show trade goods, among them a brochure by Carl Russell with drawings of equipment for travel and trapping, and knives. There is also a Hudson's Bay Co. catalogue of historical materials, including capots, arms, and fur presses, both beam and wedge.

Outfitting trappers was an important function of the traderoom.

In 1849 William R. Goulding went to California, following Josiah Gregg's trail in the company of Kit Carson. His accounts of goods traded in Santa Fe are as follows:

SOLD:

2 wagons and harness for 8 mules $120.00
1 mule 25.00
1 trunk 3.00
1 small valise 1.00
3 seives 6.25
1 basket .50
1 monkey wrench 2.50
1 rifle 15.00
lots of garden seeds 2.00
1 tin box .25

2 shovels $1.50
2 picks $1.00
20# shot $2.50
3 bottles medicine $1.00
lots of glass beads, chains and rings of brass $4.50
3 pairs common shoes $1.50
1 g e /sic/ bed $10.00
1 gun case, medicines & medical instruments given to Dr. Edwards

PURCHASED:

1 blanket $5.00
1 camp kettle $2.00
1 watergoard $.50
7 sircinges $7.00
3 pack saddles $9.00
5 lariats $7.50
1 pair fring $6.00
1 holster $3.00
1 gal native brandy $3.00
100# biscuit $17.00
50# flour $12.00
54# sweet flour $14.65
shoeing horses and mules, extra shoes and nails $7.00
tea, coffee, sugar, rice $9.00

According to Ruxton, a trapper's outfit consisted of:

2 or 3 horses or mules
6 traps (in trap sack)
ammunition, tobacco, dressed deer skins for mocassins in possibles sack
hunting shirt of buckskin
pantaloons
flexible felt hat
mocassins

long rifle
powder horn
bullet pouch, containing balls, flint, steel belt carrier
sheathed butcher knife chained to belt, and whetstone
tomahawk
pipe holder around neck

And the following is a description of a trapper from Marryat's Adventures of Mr. Violet:

... our savant had suspended on his saddle horn a thermometer, a rum-calabash, and a coffee boiler, while behind hung a store of pots and cups, frying pan, a barometer, a sextant, and a long spyglass.

Finally, the Reed manuscript described the ever present mess kit as including:

1 dutch oven
1 frying pan
2 camp kettles
coffee pot
coffee mill
6 or 8 tin cups
6 or 8 tin plates
10 & 15 gallon kegs (water and whiskey)
wash basin

The mess wagon also carried supplies of flour, sides of bacon, sugar, some dried fruit, rice, beans, salt, soap, saleratus, pepper, medicines, tools,


61. Rees Manuscript, Kansas Historical Society.
tallow and rosin, some extra yokes and chairs, and extras for repairing wagons and ox shoes.

**Furnishings--Traderoom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Speculative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>counter</td>
<td>shelves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pint measures</td>
<td>bench</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chandelier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>barrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>trade goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ledgers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pen, ink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>broom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>brown paper and burlap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>traps, chains, furs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**E3--Dining Room**

This was the best remembered room in the fort for, not only was hunger satiated here but also men's needs for music and dancing.

E3 was the largest room in the fort. Garrard spoke of the "long, low dining room." From the southwest corner of the room a circular stairway gave access to the room above that Captain Moore ascended in order to share a "few nips of rye" with one of the proprietors.

Parkman observed the table--described by Farnham as a "rude" table--laid with a white cloth, set with casters, and with chairs around it.

62. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 73.
64. Parkman, The Oregon Trail, p. 265, and; Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 37.
It seems unlikely that the white table cloth was an every day occurrence. The oil cloth that appeared on the Chouteau Ledgers probably replaced it for daily use.

Garrard, after many days on the trail was delighted to find knives, forks, and plates at Bent's Fort.\textsuperscript{65} It is difficult to tell how standard the use of such utensils was. The Indians and Mexicans, at least, ate seated upon the ground around large tins of dried meat and water.\textsuperscript{66}

The table had to accommodate anywhere from six to 20 principals. It may have been a trestle table or perhaps two tables combined, as it was regularly removed for dancing. The Chouteau Ledgers showed the delivery, in 1840, of a table bell which may well have been set upon this table.

Additional dining room ware included glass bottles which were of more value in themselves than the variety of drinkables they held and they were refilled again and again. The archeological survey uncovered, in this room, a barrel containing five bottles, two of which carried labels reading, "Pouillac-Medoc".\textsuperscript{67} And the Chouteau Ledgers showed entries for "blown 3 mold tumblers" and "flint wines".

Any glass that found its way to Bent's Fort most likely originated in Pittsburg. In may, 1839, Henry Chouteau placed a large order with

\textsuperscript{65} Garrard, \textit{Wah-To-Yah}, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{66} Farnham, \textit{Travels in the Great Western Prairies}, p. 37.

\textsuperscript{67} Moore, NPS, Archeology, pp. 11-15.
C. Ihmsen of Pittsburg. The latter probably drew on the skills of a Stourbridge or a Bakewell:

The glass of Pittsburg and the parts adjacent is known and sold from Maine to New Orleans. Even in Mexico they quaff their beverages from the beautiful white flint of Messer's Bakewell, Pages and Bakewell of our City. 68

By 1842 St. Louis had a flint glass works run by one James B. Eads, a bridge-builder. 69

The following ceramic ware, in order of its frequency, was revealed by the archeological survey: Queen's Ware, Pearl Ware, Crinkle-edged Ware, Transfer-printed Ware of a variety of colors, Sprig Patterned Ware, Spatterware, Rilled Cream Ware, Blue Mocha Ware and Trail-slip decorated Mocha, and Porcelain. Found exclusively in the dining room was salt glazed stoneware, a water olla, and a wooden churn with dasher. 70

Meals were served twice daily on the frontier, mid-morning and mid to late afternoon. The standard meal at Bent's Fort consisted of dried meat of "buffler", bread made of unbolten flour, and tea or coffee. While Barclay complained bitterly about a steady diet of dried meat, Matt Field


69. St. Louis City Directory, 1840-42.

70. Moore, NPS, Archeology, pp. 78-93.
was moved to put the merits of the buffalo to verse:

Buffalo being brave support
To the gay dwelling of the Fort
Buffalo fresh, buffalo dried
Roasted, boiled, stewed or fried
Buffalo serves in every stead
For poultry and pastry, for meat and bread;
And a buffalo skin, neatly spread
Is bolster and blanket and bedstead and bed.
In summer time or in the snow
Wrapped in the skin of a buffalo
In fair moonlight or in the storm
The desert dwellers slumber warm.
They make their boats of buffalo hide . . .
Of fine good skins a boat can be made.
Boats, coats, ropes, candles, all things glow
Out of the useful buffalo. 71

And from Barclay:

The dry meat retains its hard quality when cooked . . . cut in thick slices like steaks before urying. Vegetables they have none--farinaceous matters, wheat flour and Indian corn, coffee, milk is plentiful having 4 cows, and a great many goats . . . the bread is f\textsuperscript{mss. damaged}, and the dried meat put into a skillet and fried in fat, invariable way of cooking, and they have no desire to learn any other. With the addition of potatoes, I would be reasonably content. 72

The Comanche Chief Old Wolf assessed the bread at Bent's Fort as


suited only for making a smoke-fire with which to color buckskins. The measure for flour used in the preparation of bread was a wooden box with slanted ends called a fanega. Three fanegas equaled about seven bushels. The rising agent was saleratus.

Chouteau shipped coffee beans by the bag to Bent's Fort which were then boiled in a kettle or a "boiler" (coffee pot). Sometimes, the beans were green and required roasting. According to Cragin, the trapper's favorite coffee was made on fires of greasewood.

There were exceptions to the standard buffalo meat/bread meal. The above quote from Barclay, for instance, cited a few "extras" and there was also "bischoche", a hard, porous sweet biscuit made in New Mexican homes and valued highly as a trade item. It was probably imported rather than produced at the fort. More than one observer was impressed by the variety of food at Bent's Fort:

Our style of living is superior to that of ordinary Indian traders, having an abundance of substantials. Flour, corn, beans and whiskey from the Spanish settlements; milk, poultry, butter, eggs, are indigenous; all we lack are murphys. 12 cows kept at the Fort, and 30 that could be requisitioned.


Barclay, it will be remembered, also longed for potatoes. And in 1845, W. M. Boggs wrote: "Capt. St. Vrain ... presided at the table which was always provided with the best of food, and well cooked ..."77

Special occasions were duly reflected in the meals. On July 4, 1844, George Bent presided over an elaborate dinner given in honor of John Charles Frémont. Carvalho was at the fort with Frémont in 1847 and breakfast, at least, remained rather unelaborate—bread made from maize, dried buffalo, venison steaks and hot coffee.78 But the 1844 Independence Day feast probably resembled one given in 1843 at Fort St. Vrain, where the menu included: macaroni soup, buffalo, ice cream (made of goat's milk and snow), fruitcake from St. Louis, preserves, and coffee.79 One Christmas, the clerks at Bent's Fort feasted on dried apple pie with cream and Garrard mentioned having eaten dried pumpkin there.80

Vegetables and fruits were scarce but must have cropped up on the menu from time to time. Dried vegetables were noted at Fort Sedgewick during Oregon Trail days—onion, cabbage, beets, turnips, and green peppers.81


79. Rocky Mountain Herald, July 5, 1913.


And although one traveler commented on the conspicuous lack of sweets and condiments in the fort meals, there was some evidence of these delicacies. Panoach (or panACHE), the local sugar, was derived from the heating, pressing and boiling of corn stalks. The process was observed by Abert and Gibson commented on the flavor; "... the sugar is pleasant--was mistaken by us for maple sugar." Sugar was also imported. Havana sugar, New Orleans brown sugar, white sugar and New Orleans molasses appeared on the Chouteau Ledgers.

Wine seems to have been the standard alcoholic beverage accompanying meals. Upon the depletion of the brandy supply, James Magoffin and Philip St. George Cooke, the two gourmets in the fort's history, were forced to resort to claret, of which there was always plenty. In addition there was mention of champagne, fresh cognac, stirrup cups, juleps--Magoffin and Cooke made the ice house and mint juleps first on their agenda at the fort--"hail storms" and such non-alcoholic beverages as sarsparilla and shrub. Susan Magoffin particularly relished the latter. But, such drinks were few and far between. From Gibson, "I heard of


85. Ibid., p. 251.
juleps, lemonades, etc., but saw none..."86

The existence of the ice house, however, was well documented. In addition to servicing the appetites of gourmets--according to George Bent, there was even wild mint available just across the river for juleps--it provided storage for fresh meats and a cooling off place for children in the summer months.

Finally, at the end of a meal, tobacco was always available, as was alcohol, in the traderoom. Ordinarily, tobacco came in plug form. It was cut, often on a moose horn board, and mixed with willow bark or kinnikinnik.

There was evidence of clay pipes on the Chouteau Ledgers and several turned up in the course of the archeological survey.88 The corn cob pipe was invented in St. Louis in the 1820's and may have been in use at Bent's Fort.89 Many of those present at the fort probably had their own wooden pipe boxes or racks that, in the permanent quarters, probably hung beside the mirror.

How self-sufficient, then, was Bent's Fort with respect to its food supply? It was hardly necessary to import meat and farming was undertaken

87. Hyde, George Bent, p. 85.
88. Moore, NPS, Archeology, pp. 95 ff.
89. Missouri Historical Society Collections--pipes.
on a small scale but, the large part of the food supply was imported from St. Louis or New Mexico.

As for farming, the site of the fort had been recommended at the outset by the possibility of producing meadow hay out of the abundant meadow grass in the area, and several noted haymaking there. Agricultural implements, such as were housed in the southwest bastion, appeared on the Chouteau Ledgers. Garrard mentioned the purchase by Bent, St. Vrain & Co. of "several American plows" and by December, 1845, such additions were beginning to soften even the discontented Barclay:

This part of the country is beginning to wear a vestige of civilization and my imports bear more upon the wants of a life of agriculture than heretofore--ploughs, spades, harness and carts being in my supplies supplanting Indian goods.  

At one point, William Bent and John Hatcher made extensive preparations for the cultivation of bottomland between the fort and the Arkansas River. The farm had been in operation barely two months, however, when it was destroyed by Indians. There was an acequia, fully documented, just outside the fort that may have served in connection with the aborted farm.

In spite of the minimal success achieved in this area, the proprietors of Bent's Fort must have held a reputation with the Indians and

90. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 178.

91. Barclay Papers
Mexicans for being agriculturally minded. Yellow Wolf, for example, confided in Abert that he would give several mules in exchange for instructions on land cultivation. 92

There is no better place under which to discuss music and dancing at the fort than the dining room. Garrard described a "... rudely-scraped tune from a screeching violin ..." 93—the entry on the Chouteau Ledgers for violin strings is recalled here—and Farnham was continually hearing the "sweet notes of a flute." 94 "Way Down in Mexico" was the favorite song of the Army of the West. Garrard remembered singing with John Smith, "The days when we went gipsying," "The mellow horn," and "The minstrels returned from the war," and François des Montaignes noted the rapture with which "Old Dan Tucker" and "Lucy Neal" were sung. 95

While various forms of singing and strumming were heard throughout the fort on any given day, dancing was restricted, for the most part, to the dining room and celebration days. The fandango was the southwestern equivalent to the square dance. A more raucous dance was the "chachina"

92. Abert, 1846-47, p. 10.


94. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 37.

and a more formal one, the baile. Dancing, however, was not the only activity that occurred on a day of celebration. A 4th of July in Vestal's "Dobe Walls included: "foot races, shooting matches, gambling, shinny, hoop and sticks, bull-tailing, cock fights, billiards, greased pig, mule race, slow race, obstacle race, greased pole, chicken race, liquor, molasses candy, feast, and fandango."96

Furnishings--Dining Room

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>table</td>
<td>closed cupboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chairs</td>
<td>sideboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tablecloths</td>
<td>wine cupboard, under stairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cutlery</td>
<td>three small tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>castors</td>
<td>linen chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plates, cups, tumblers</td>
<td>benches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pipes and pipe racks</td>
<td>trays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water olla</td>
<td>two chandeliers, wrought iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wooden churn/ wooden dasher</td>
<td>on pulley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candle sconces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candle sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wall cupboard containing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>checkers, paper, books, ink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>violin and guitar, tombe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E2--Cook's Room

The furnishings of E2 and of the kitchen area--SE1 and SE1-A--overlap with those in the dining room. One class of archeological objects restricted to E2 were backless books and pieces of slate. One piece of

96. Vestal, 'Dobe Walls, p. 197.
slate even retained a partial drawing of a trapper. 97 This leads one to believe that the children at the fort may have spent considerable time in this room under the care of Charlotte Green.

E2 served primarily, however, as quarters for the cook and her family, and as a serving pantry.

Furnishings--Cook's Room

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slates</td>
<td>cupboards, free standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books</td>
<td>wall cupboards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chest with linen and cutlery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>high chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>small table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wash stand, wash basin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexican settee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>narrow Mexican bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>towels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paper, ink, pencils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SE1, SE1-A--Kitchen

While SE1 served as the kitchen, the small room off of it, SE1-A, was either a root cellar or a pantry.

The question of ovens and the concomitant issues of lighting and heat come up here. It is possible that the fireplace in E2 contained an oven but it is more likely that there was an adobe oven, or horno, outside the kitchen in either the plaza or the alley. Such exterior ovens were common in the Southwest.

George Bent recalled the making of candles with buffalo tallow in tin molds. Homemade candles were the most economic solution for lighting the fort. In Santa Fe Matt Field observed 12 such candles being traded for one rusty thimble.

Candle wicking, candle molds, tallow pots, and candle snuffers appeared on the list of goods acquired from Fort Jackson and these same items, plus candlesticks—both tin and japanned—also showed up on the Chouteau Ledgers. At from 17¢ to 25¢ a piece, the candle snuffers must have been the simple hog scraper or chamber type.

The common form of tin sconce in New Mexico was the 12-inch circle, quarterfolded into a corner. Miners’ candle holders were occasionally used as was a more elaborate sconce made of strap iron. Although tin goods did appear on the Chouteau Ledgers, this was a relatively scarce material in the Southwest until the Army, with their tinned oysters, passed through the area.

Lanterns used candles rather than lamp oil and lanterns of no particular description appeared on the Chouteau Ledgers. Lamp oil, made from pinon nuts, was available, but at prohibitive prices.

The chandelier was also standard equipment in the Spanish Colonial house. At Bent’s Fort one might imagine either the circular wrought iron

variety or the more truly Mexican T-Bar chandelier. Vestal described a
chandelier in the billiard room consisting of plug and bobeches fastened
onto the end of elk antlers and hung upon the wall.\textsuperscript{101}

Although lucifer matches were common by 1845, there was no mention
of their use at Bent's Fort. Oval fire sticks, however, appeared on the
1839 ledger.

A number of means of heating were available in the 1845-46 period.
Braziers were found in contemporary California adobe houses and also in
New Mexico. Tin stoves, iron stoves, and Franklin stoves were all avail-
able after 1830 and, after 1842, several of these appeared along with tin
stove pipe on the Chouteau Ledgers. The 1829 ledger listed a number of
Canadian stoves and, in 1840, Henry Chouteau had 48 stoves to sell at Liberty,
Missouri.\textsuperscript{102} Finally, the Ward House contains a small round iron stove
with green ceramic medallion. Although the exact provenance remains
unknown, it is speculated as having belonged to the Bent family.

Furnishings--Kitchen

\begin{tabular}{ll}
Documented & Speculative \\
--- & --- \\
large table & \\
chairs & \\
benches & \\
shelves & \\
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{101} Vestal, "Dobe Walls," p. 5.

\textsuperscript{102} Chouteau Collection, Missouri Historical Society, Mss. Div.
cubboards
pots, pans, griddles
hearth tools
chandelier
cal bucket
wood box
candlesticks
candle molds
foodstuffs
dishpans
coffe grinder, boilers
iron cooking implements
dry sink
dishes
cutlery
bread trough

SE1-A
pots, pans
pint, quart, gill measures
barrels and kegs
shelves
stool
foodstuffs

S2, S3--William Bent's Quarters

Originally, S2 and S3 were one room. The small size of S3 was probably suitable for little else but an office and it is reasonable to suppose that the main proprietor of the fort kept at least some of the fort records within his own quarters.

There was also a short partition wall in S2 that served as some sort of a closet. Possibly, there was a commode here.

Farnham reported that the owners of Bent's Fort "laid on pallets of straw" and Spanish blankets. If there was not an actual bedstead in William Bent's quarters, it is unreasonably to envision such in other

103. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 37.
quarters at the fort.

Parkman's description of the factor's room at Fort Laramie is also worth consideration in connection with William Bent's quarters:

... rather more elaborately furnished than a barn. For furniture it had a rough bedstead but no bed; two chairs, a chest of drawers, a tin nail to hold water, a board to cut tobacco on ... a brass crucifix and a scalp. 104

Boggs remembered William Bent doing "his own doctoring" and that he had an ample medicine chest which was periodically replenished from St. Louis and Westport. 105 The following medicines were purchased by Bent, St. Vrain & Co. through Chouteau between 1838 and 1842. Some of these must have gone into William Bent's own medicine chest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calomel</td>
<td>Sugar of Lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laudanum</td>
<td>(3) Laucets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castor Oil</td>
<td>½ Blistering Ointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee's Pills</td>
<td>½ doz. Basilicon Pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipecac</td>
<td>(10) Sal Erebus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epsom Salts</td>
<td>(1) Manna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Petre</td>
<td>½ doz. Lunar Costic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seidlitz Powder</td>
<td>Vial and Cotton Balls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Chapman Mix&quot;</td>
<td>2# Pulu Rhubarb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By our period, there may have been an Army surgeon in residence,

104. Parkman, The Oregon Trail, Chapter IX, passim.

105. Boggs, "Recollections of Bent's Fort ..."
especially considering the large number of sick left behind by the Army of the West. Tête Rouge was visited once a day by the "assistant-surgeon's deputy", delivering nothing but a "huge dose of calomel."\textsuperscript{106}

Occasionally, Indian medicine men were also called upon. In 1845 William Bent contracted diphtheria and was nursed back to health by Owl Woman and a Cheyenne medicine man.

**Furnishings--William Bent's Quarters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iron safe</td>
<td>iron safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desk, writing equipment, office supplies</td>
<td>desk, writing equipment, office supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coal burning grate</td>
<td>coal burning grate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed, Cheyenne bridal bed dressing</td>
<td>bed, Cheyenne bridal bed dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahogany table, fancy chairs</td>
<td>mahogany table, fancy chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>easy chairs</td>
<td>easy chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wardrobe</td>
<td>wardrobe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>washstand, chamber set</td>
<td>washstand, chamber set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fine Spanish saddle</td>
<td>fine Spanish saddle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wall cupboard, dishes</td>
<td>wall cupboard, dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mirror, pipe rack</td>
<td>mirror, pipe rack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medical chest, stocked</td>
<td>medical chest, stocked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**S4, S5, S6, S7--Shops**

Prior to our period these rooms were probably traderooms. S5 and S6 may originally have been one room. The chief functions operating here in 1845 and 1846, however, were carpentry and blacksmithing.

The locus for a small forge was found in the west corner of S5 and the doorway of S7 had a stone stoop facing on the plaza. At one point,

\textsuperscript{106} Parkman, *The Oregon Trail*, p. 268.
the alley side of S5 was open, providing easy access for wagons and ani-
mals. 107

Other services related to carpentry and blacksmithing were offered
in this area. More than one function, in fact, was probably performed by
the same person and with the same tools, many of which were made on the premises.

A late addition may have been a gunsmith's shop. Gibson mentioned
gun repair at Bent's Fort as did James J. Webb:

I traded a gun to Mr. Doan--history given by Mr. Bent.
I traded for it on an expedition to the Blackfoot. At the
Fort I had it restocked (full length) and altered from
flint-lock to percussion, and used it for a target rifle.
In 1846, I had it newly-grooved, half-stock, and added a
new lock and breech pin. 103

Just as the activities of the blacksmith and gunsmith were closely inter-
twined, so were those of carpentry, wheelwrighting and cooperage.

In addition, Susan Magoffin mentioned a barber and George Bent, a
tailor. 109 If present at all, these were only short lived services that
were probably provided in a client's own quarters.

The inventory of goods bought from Fort Jackson in 1838 included

107. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 264, and; Moore, NPS, Archeology, p. 35.

108. Gibson, Journal of a Soldier under Kearny and Doniphan, pp. 167-68,
and; Webb, Journal of a Santa Fe Trader, p. 117.

109. Magoffin, Down the Santa Fé Trail, p. 60, and; Grinnell, Bent's
Old Fort and Its Builders, pp. 51, 61.
some smithing tools that were probably put into use at Bent's Fort.

In 1840 Bent, St. Vrain & Co. purchased an anvil and, as anvils were not produced in this country before 1845, this one must have been of English, German, or Swedish origin. It weighed 123 pounds and was most likely mounted upon a heavy cottonwood stump. A leather strap may have been tacked around the stump to hold tools. A farrier's tools were traditionally kept in half of a small wooden keg, divided into compartments of varying size. 110

Every smith had a pile of scrap iron behind his shop. One or more large plank benches were used to hold vices and there was probably a split log bench for visitors. Tubs were an essential part of a blacksmith shop. These were either cottonwood canoes or were devised out of the lower halves of barrels. Presumably, the fuel used in the forge was coal.

Furnishings--Blacksmith

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>forge</td>
<td>bellows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anvil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>swage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bench, vice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>work bench</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

slack tub
cutter
hammers, pein and sledge
tong
files
drills
tempering tub
chisels
punch
coal pile
pokers
shovel
rake
sprinkling can
hardies
fuller
scrap iron pile and piles of
bundles of iron
small anvil
pincers
buffer
hoof cleaning knives
rasps
hoof parer
shoeing hammer
case of nails, compartmented
barrels of shoes--ox, horse,
and mule

**Gunsmith**

gun screws
lead and copper hammers
rifling machine
guns worms
bullet molds
cherry
pliers

**Carpenter**

bench
large plank table
Due to its small size and relative isolation from the rest of the rooms in the fort, this room was probably either a smokehouse or a powder magazine.
W6—Washhouse

Traveling with Frémont in 1848 and 1849, Richard H. Kern recalled washing with hot water just outside the walls of Bent's Fort and Gibson especially anticipated his arrival at the fort in order to get his laundry done. 111

The archeological report places the washroom in W6. A pit was uncovered here which could be construed as a cistern and there was also a narrow doorway by this room that probably led to the tules, the latter being a suitable location for latrine and bathing facilities. In addition, archeologists see the area surrounding W6 on the southeast and southwest as possibly having been a paved stoop or patio. 112

The cannoa, a trough made from a single cottonwood trunk with a slight drain at one end, was the standard New Mexican washing tub. Brown soap and shaving soap were invoiced on the 1839 Chouteau Ledger and a soft form of soap was probably produced in the kitchen area of the fort. Yucca would have been used on finer items.

Although not specifically with reference to Bent's Fort, Dewitt Peters wrote that a wash basin and clean towels were a standard gesture of Southwestern hospitality 113 and the washhouse seems the most appropriate place


113. DeWitt Clinton Peters Papers, 1849-56, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
under which to mention this item that would have been found throughout
the fort. The Chouteau Ledgers carried entries for wash basins and even
for painted chamber sets. There is a simple wash stand, of the $3 a
dozent variety that appeared on the ledgers, illustrated in the Kit Carson
Museum in Taos.

Furnishings--Washhouse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cistern</td>
<td>cannoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tub, oak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>water barrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shelf with wash basins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>towels on pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mirrors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>soap--bar, brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>soap--soft, bucket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>soap dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clothes lines, baskets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clothes pegs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>washboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candle sconces, candles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

W5, W4, W3--Warehouses

... producing a rusty key he [the quartermaster] opened a
low door which led to a half subterranean apartment, into
which the two disappeared together. After some time they
came out again, Tête Rouge, greatly embarrassed by a multi­
plicity of paper parcels ... 114

All the rooms along the lower west side of the fort were storage
rooms. W4 was the largest and contained a split level pit that, according

114. Parkman, The Oregon Trail, p. 270.

94
to the archeological report, was lined with shelves that held barrels of wine, spirits and vinegar.\textsuperscript{115}

It is likely that arms and ammunition were stored and sold in the same place and, by 1846, W4 probably served this purpose. Judging from Tête Rouge's encounter, above, with the quartermaster and Robinson's reference to a "government room",\textsuperscript{116} W4 is also the most likely candidate for the storage of Army supplies.

W5 showed evidence of a sub-floor pit that was probably not in use during our period and W3 was unique for once having been open on the plaza side. This probably reflects a function that required frequent carrying of large objects in and out of this room.

**Furnishings--Warehouse (W4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shelves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ledgers, pen and ink</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candlesticks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trade goods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{W2--Well Room}

Both Susan Magoffin and Gibson mentioned an inside well at Bent's

\textsuperscript{115} Moore, NPS, Archeology, p. 44.

Fort with "fine water," Archeological evidence was found in W2 of a well shaft containing a wooden pump with iron straps and a wooden piston, presumably with a leather gasket.

Although W2 contained the only interior well during our period, there was some evidence of a second well outside the east gate for the watering of stock. And there was one mention made of a dairy at Bent's Fort, the location of which cannot be substantiated. It is only speculation that this function operated out of the well room.

**Furnishings—Wellroom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pump</td>
<td>tub for water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shelves around walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>small table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>churn and dasher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>milk pans, cream pans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>butter crocks, tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tin buckets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wooden buckets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skimmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>milk jugs, cream jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candlesticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>store of tallow candles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vegetable bins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>three-legged stools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


118. Moore, NPS, Archeology, pp. 41-42.

119. Seeley speech in *Hurd Collection*.

Plaza

This area was referred to as the plaza, corral, yard, patio, or court. According to George Bent, it was gravelled. This was the busiest and most colorful area of the fort. In addition to fort personnel and visitors, it was frequented by a large number of animals--horses and mules, barnyard fowl, and other sundry "creatures of the prairie." Abert observed a number of bird cages with magpies and mocking birds scattered about, and it was from the plaza that he noted blooming cacti along the coping of the fort walls.

The two items in the plaza most thoroughly documented in our period were the fur press and the burst cannon. The former was mentioned by Abert, Garrard, Ruxton, Hobbs, and Sabin and it was established by the archeological survey as operating on the rotary screw principle. The cannon was observed by Garrard, Hyde, and Hobbs.

Furnishings--Plaza

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fur press</td>
<td>water barrel, tin cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burst cannon</td>
<td>horno oven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bird cages</td>
<td>flower pots</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Wagonhouse

Prior to our period, it was possible to bring from 12 to 15 wagons directly into the plaza. The wagonhouse dates from the 1845 alterations and it not only provided separate accommodations for the wagons, but also a storage place for all the accoutrement for the trail.

The Chouteau Ledgers carried extensive entries in the area of transportation. There was an especially large variety of saddles and a large number of lassos. According to Webb, the latter were generally made of horsehair or seagrass and occasionally of fine braided leather.

Wagons were either Dearborns or Conestogas. William Bent, in fact, is said to have introduced the Dearborn to the plains. In addition, George Bent remembered both a goat cart and a horse cart at the fort for the pleasure of the fort residents. Children were especially delighted with the former.

Owing to the large amount of hay in the wagonhouse, the use of candles was prohibited here and we must, therefore, envision lanterns.

124. Farnham, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, p. 35.


126. Barclay Papers.
Comparative sources for caravan supplies listed the following: tents or canvas covers, water barrels, calico, knives, mirrors, beads, blankets, powder, lead, tobacco, flour, coffee, biscuits, salt, sugar, molasses, medicine, soap, salt pork, rice, corn, tea, dried beans, and whiskey.\textsuperscript{127}

Additional transportation materials can be catalogued from a letter in the Lupton Papers:

Please deliver to A. B. H. McGee, 3 yoke oxen, 4 log chains, 1 wagon, 1 box tools, 1 drawing knife, 1 hand saw, 6 setts mule harness with double treez and single treez and for a 6 mule team. Also a 2 year old steer taken by Brown.\textsuperscript{128}

\textbf{Furnishings—Wagonhouse}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textit{Documented} & \textit{Speculative} \\
- carreta & -
- Dearborn wagon & -
- Conestoga or freight horse cart & -
- ox yokes and chains & -
- mule harness & -
- mule packs & -
- saddles & -
- ladies' saddles & -
- saddle blankets & -
- harness for horse cart & -
- bridles & -
\end{tabular}


\textsuperscript{128} Lancaster Lupton to N. Wilson, Sept. 2, 1844, Lupton Papers, State Historical Society of Colorado.
lariats and lazos
hay, oats
curry combs, brushes
lanterns
goat cart

US1---Billiard Room

Ranking second in pleasure only to drink and tobacco was gambling; "The love of gaming seems inherent in our very natures." And the billiard room was, at once, the most unusual and most popular feature at Bent's Fort; "... and who could have supposed such a thing, they have a regularly established billiard room!" Complementing the billiard room, Susan Magoffin went on to report a "regular race track. And I hear the cackling of chickens at such a rate some time I shall not be surprised to hear of a cock-pit." Garrard described the billiard room in a "... small house on top of the fort, where the bourgeoisie and visitors amused themselves."

Spanning the alley, the billiard room was among the late additions to the fort. In addition to its gaming function, there was some evidence that it may have served as quarters for travelers. We know that Lieutenant Abert stayed in one of the second story rooms. US1 can be ruled out as his visit overlapped with Susan Magoffin's. While it seems unlikely that Abert stayed in US1--did he sleep on the billiard table?-- on


130. Magoffin, Down the Santa Fé Trail, p. 61.

131. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah, p. 43.
more than one occasion he mentioned his Indian subjects posing on the billiard table.\textsuperscript{132}

The billiard table was documented by Garrard, Abert, Magoffin, Robinson, and Grinnell, and the latter described a bar or counter across one end of the room where drinkables were served. Other gaming materials included decks of cards that appeared by the dozen on the Chouteau Ledgers and Ruxton noted decks of euchre and seven up. The playing of cards, however, was not necessarily confined to the billiard room. Finally, among Garrard's personal belongings was a backgammon board.

While hardly functions of this room, mention should be made here of other recreational activities observed at Bent's Fort. These included hunting, fishing, archery, skating on the Arkansas, shinney in the snow in the Indian fashion, Mexican rodeos and chicken races, and finally, there was the race track mentioned by Susan Magoffin.

\textbf{Furnishings--Billiard Room}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>billiard table</td>
<td>cues, balls, chalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bar</td>
<td>back bar, shelves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) tavern tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18) chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bench</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bookshelves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>glasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>whiskey barrels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{132} Abert, 1846-47, pp. 8, 17.
cards
checker board and checkers
spittoons
chandeliers
sconces and candles
fireplace tools
stool back of bar
chess board and set
backgammon board
wine and whiskey bottles
decanters
clay pipes
books
slates
ice bucket
pitchers
towels
cutting board for tobacco

UW6--Clerk's Office

Our only source for this room was Garrard. It remains unclear whether he actually slept here or merely spent much of his time sitting before the fire. It has been suggested that Garrard was stationed, along with several other men, in one of the lower level rooms. It is certain, however, that UW6 served not only as an office but also as quarters for the clerk. There was, at a minimum, some sort of bed, a chair, and, as described by Garrard, a "first-rate spyglass".

UW5, UW4, UW3, UW2, UW1--Quarters

These were sleeping quarters. As UW4 was the largest, it was probably a dormitory providing space for 4 to 6 men. Some of these rooms,

such as Dr. Hempstead's, may have been private. Forsyth described "neatly fitted up" rooms at Bent's Fort with "Maps, Books, & lounges."\(^{134}\) He must have seen, as did Garrard, Hempstead's well-stocked library.\(^{135}\)

With all due respect to Dr. Hempstead, it is appropriate to mention here the reading material available at Bent's Fort. The only book listed by title on the Chouteau Ledgers was Scott's *History of Naval Warfare* and, each year, Chouteau apparently sent an almanac to all his frontier posts.\(^{136}\)

Among Garrard's private possessions was a book on the heavenly bodies from the Harper's Family Library series and, among Abert's, a copy of *Horace* and a Greek Testament.\(^{137}\) According to Fynn, newspapers and letters came to Bent's Fort at regular intervals and, after being read at the fort, Charles Bent requested that the newspapers be passed on to him in Taos.\(^{138}\)

There is little question that Susan Magoffin stayed in room UWI. She brought her own furniture—a bed, chairs, a wash basin, and table furniture—and took all her meals in this room. It had a dirt floor, was "roomy", and had the unusual advantage of two windows. The day before Susan's departure, her own furniture was moved out and she was

\(^{134}\) Forsyth cited in; NPS, Historic Structure Report, p. 75.

\(^{135}\) Garrard, *Wah-To-Yah*, p. 74.

\(^{136}\) Chouteau Collection, Missouri Historical Society, Mss. Div.

\(^{137}\) Garrard, *Wah-To-Yah*, p. 248, and; Abert, 1846-47, p. 7.

\(^{138}\) Fynn, "Furs and Forts," *Colorado Magazine*, IX, no. 2. p. 45, and; Charles Bent to Manuel Alvarez in, Read Collection, no. 52, New Mexico State Archives.
left with "borrowed property".\textsuperscript{139} It is impossible to tell whether UEl normally served as private quarters or was furnished, dormitory-style, with several mattress beds.

\textbf{Furnishings--U4}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textbf{Documented} & \textbf{Speculative} \\
\hline
(6) Mexican style beds & chest, painted Mexican \textbf{wall cupboard} \\
& \textbf{table} \\
& \textbf{iron stove and stovepipe} \\
& \textbf{(4) chairs} \\
& \textbf{bench} \\
& \textbf{coffee pot} \\
& \textbf{tin plates, cups} \\
& \textbf{kettles} \\
& \textbf{cards, checkers} \\
& \textbf{cutlery} \\
& \textbf{books on bookshelf} \\
& \textbf{guitar} \\
& \textbf{mirror} \\
& \textbf{candlestick} \\
& \textbf{cutting board} \\
\end{tabular}

UEl--Ceran St. Vrain's Quarters

When in residence, Ceran St. Vrain lived in UEl. During his absence, the room was undoubtedly occupied by others, but probably not more than one at a time. One anonymous employee, for instance, referred to this as his "sanctum".

\textsuperscript{139} Magoffin, \textit{Down the Santa Fe Trail}, pp. 61, 70.
### Furnishings--Ceran St. Vrain's Quarters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented</th>
<th>Speculative</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bed</td>
<td>bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wardrobe</td>
<td>wardrobe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chairs, fancy</td>
<td>chairs, fancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahogany table</td>
<td>mahogany table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chest of drawers</td>
<td>chest of drawers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>armchairs, 2--American Empire</td>
<td>armchairs, 2--American Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desk, Spanish Varguello</td>
<td>desk, Spanish Varguello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahogany washstand, china</td>
<td>mahogany washstand, china</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chamber set</td>
<td>chamber set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book shelves on wall, books</td>
<td>book shelves on wall, books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish tea service in wall cupboard</td>
<td>Irish tea service in wall cupboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquor case</td>
<td>liquor case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French style silver</td>
<td>French style silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mirror</td>
<td>mirror</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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Illustration #1, (2 sheets.) Ground floor and upper floor plans of Bent's Fort, 1846. based upon the ground plans produced by Dr. Herbert W. Dick as the result of his excavations in 1954.
DIAGRAM #2

Main Corral
Chair and trunk belonging to Charles Bent, Governor Bent House, Taos.
Mirror and kitchen table belonging to Charles Bent, Kit Carson Museum, Taos.
Governor's Office 1845-6, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe.
Mirror--Taos property of Charles Bent, Kit Carson Museum, Taos
Chairs in New Mexico: details of chairs made before 1845 in Santa Fe, from Governor's Palace. Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe.
St. Louis made chairs, 1835-1840. One at Tower Grove House, property of Henry Shaw, the other in Missouri Historical Society Collections, Jefferson Memorial.
Pre-1845 New Mexico made beds, Kit Carson Museum, Taos.
Cannoa or cottonwood washing trough, Kit Carson Museum, Taos
Stove in Bent-Ward House, Westport, No. 141
Jerga, Spanish Colonial period, New Mexico State Museum
Rag rug, Campbell Whittlesey House, 1840, Rochester N.Y.
Jerga from the Rio Grande Valley, State Historical Society of Colorado
Jerga in Governor's office, Palace of the Governors
Lariats, rawhide and horsehair, from the Museum of New Mexico.
New Mexico hanging rack, pre-1845. New Mexico State Museum collections.
"UNCLE DICK" AT HOME.
Illustration 16
Lariats, from rawhide and horsehair, the Museum of New Mexico
Illustration 13
Cutlery from Museum of New Mexico, crash toweling from Brooklyn Museum
Illustration 14
Unbleached domestic, and ticking, from Brooklyn Museum
Illustration 10
Stove in Bent-Ward House, Westport, Mo.
"UNCLE DICK" AT HOME.

Illustration 11
Uncle Dick Wootton, from UNCLE DICK WOOTTON, Conard, p. 33.
Illustration 5, a and b
Chair and trunk belonging to Charles Bent, Governor Bent House, Taos.
Illustration 5, c and d.
Mirror and kitchen table belonging to Charles Bent, Kit Carson Museum, Taos.
Illustration 6
Desk belonging to Kit Carson, Kit Carson Museum, Taos.
Illustration 7
Governor's Office, 1845-6, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe.
Illustration 8
Candleholder, New Mexico State Museum, 2 views