



MARKER AND OLD-TIMERS, AT DODGE CITY.

Dodge Citians pose beside a Santa Fe Trail marker laid by the Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution and the state of Kansas in 1906. Photo originally published in Almira Sheffield Peckham Cordy's 1915 The Story of the Marking of the Santa Fe Trail by the Daughters of the American Revolution and the State of Kansas.

Myth and Memory: The Cultural Heritage of the Santa Fe Trail in the Twentieth Century

by Michael L. Olsen

"As long as the sunflower continues to bloom, and the prairie dog is not exterminated, the Santa Fe Trail will not be forgotten."

Hugh Estep, ca. 1906¹

French tourist Guy De Larigaudie took an extended trip across the United States in 1936. He traveled by bus from New York to Los Angeles; he went north to Seattle, then back east, finishing his tour in Québec, Canada. Part of this route took him along the old Santa Fe Trail, from central Missouri to Santa Fe, via the trail's Mountain Branch through Colorado. De Larigaudie recorded his adventures in a book, *Par Trois Route Américaines*, published in Paris in 1937. He remembered that after four days on the bus from Chicago he reached "Les villages mexicains," "the Mexican villages," of Pueblo, Colorado, and Las Vegas and Santa Fe, New Mexico. He was impressed by "des chapeaux immense," "the immense hats" of the cowboys, or perhaps of Mexicans in sombreros, he encountered. He experienced a "rodeo d'hier ou round-up de demain," a "rodeo one day and, two days later, a round-up." Evidently it was all that he had expected, for he exulted, "nous somme dans le Far-West," "we are in the Far West."²

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1. Hugh Estep, *The Santa Fe Trail, An Essay* (Logan, Kans.: *Logan Democrat*, [1906]), microfiche 575, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

2. Guy De Larigaudie, *Par Trois Routes Américaines* (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1937), 35–36.

Larigaudie was one of thousands of tourists who trekked the Santa Fe Trail in the twentieth century, for a full hundred years after it ceased to be the national highway of commerce it had been in the nineteenth century. So pervasive was the memory of the trail that eventually, in 1987, it would be designated by Congress as the "Santa Fe National Historic Trail." Just a year earlier, trail aficionados and history "buffs" had formed a national organization to promote and protect the history and heritage of the trail, the Santa Fe Trail Association.

The group had a lot of material to draw from, as the history of the Santa Fe Trail is well documented.³ A Missouri frontier entrepreneur and trader, William Becknell, blazed the Santa Fe Trail in 1821. It quickly became a commercial highway, linking frontier Missouri and the burgeoning American economy with New Mexico and old Mexico, recently independent of Spain. By the 1830s, over one million dollars in goods crossed the prairies of Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, and New Mexico every year, destined for the plaza in Santa Fe and points south along El Camino Real as far as Chihuahua and Durango, in old Mexico.

The U.S. military utilized the trail as well. The American Army of the West, under the command of Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearny, followed the trail in its conquest of New Mexico during the Mexican War in 1846. Soon thousands of wagons annually hauled freight down the trail for posts the U.S. Army established in the Southwest. Gold seekers followed, first to California in 1849 and then to the Colorado gold fields after 1859. But as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF) built west in the 1870s, the heyday of the trail came to a close. The AT&SF reached Las Vegas, New Mexico, in 1879 and a branch line was built from Lamy, New Mexico, to Santa Fe in 1880.

What kept the heritage of the Santa Fe Trail alive from 1880s to the 1980s, when it attained National Historic

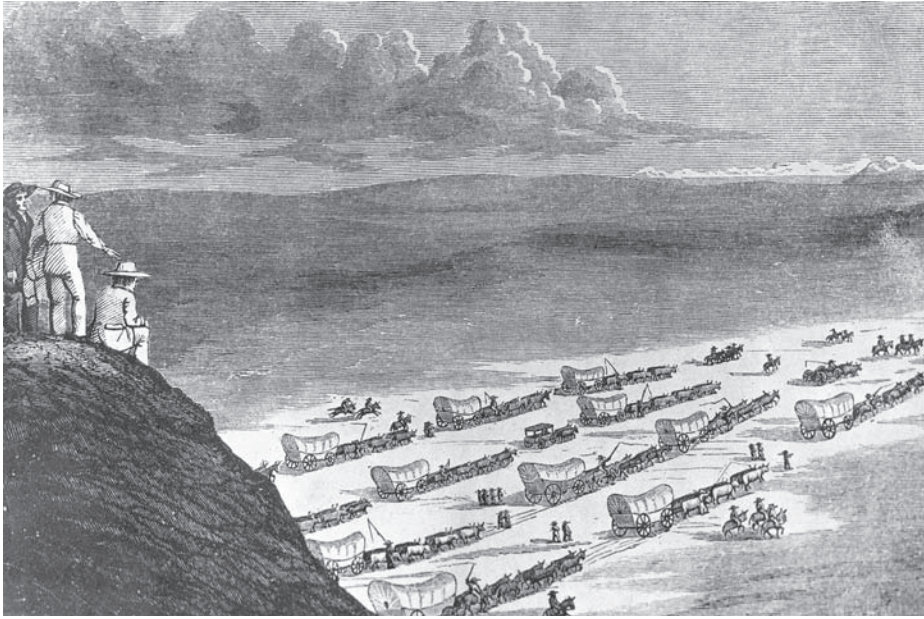
Trail status, and then on into the twenty-first century? Why was it not forgotten or relegated to a footnote in history textbooks? Why did interest in it revive in the last decades of the twentieth century? And, in a broader perspective, why have Americans treasured some events and episodes from their past yet consigned others to the dustbin of history? In other words, how does a particular cultural heritage persist?

The answers to these questions for the Santa Fe Trail lie in the realms of both myth and memory. Myths of the trail abound, beginning perhaps with William Becknell himself on his return to Arrow Rock, Missouri, on January 29, 1822, when he, so the story goes, slit open rawhide bags of Mexican silver, let the coins clatter to the ground, and boasted of the wealth to be made in trade with Santa Fe. Another myth, that the Santa Fe Trail was a highway for settlers seeking homes in the West, has persisted, replacing in cultural memory the reality that the trail was largely a prosaic commercial and freighting route. Such conflation of western trails, in particular with the Oregon Trail and its emigrants, often occurs in the minds of Americans. But most of all, the myth of the Santa Fe Trail has been fed by the enduring romantic allure of Santa Fe itself, an allure promoted by one of the early Santa Fe Traders, Josiah Gregg. His colorful depictions of the city and its Mexican inhabitants, notably the vanity of its *senoritas*, are given ample coverage in his justly famous account of his years on the trail, *Commerce of the Prairies*, first published in 1844. Myth has continued to promote commercial tourism, as the AT&SF discovered beginning in 1925 with its "Indian Detour" excursions, which enjoyed immense popularity. Today, the website of the Santa Fe Convention and Visitors Bureau proclaims, "There are arguably other cities as exotic as Santa Fe. Just not on this continent." Santa Fe has become an international tourist destination, hosting over one million visitors a year.⁴

Seymour V. Connor and Jimmy M. Skaggs, *Broadcloth and Britches: The Santa Fe Trade* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1977); and Stephen G. Hyslop, *Bound for Santa Fe: The Road to New Mexico and the American Conquest, 1806-1848* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002). A unique and invaluable source for activity on the trail up to 1854 is Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540-1854* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972). Anyone wishing to follow the trail in its modern setting should consult Marc Simmons and Hal Jackson, *Following the Santa Fe Trail: A Guide for Modern Travelers* (Santa Fe, N.M.: Ancient City Press, 2001). The most valuable source for Santa Fe Trail studies for the past twenty-five years has been the quarterly magazine of the Santa Fe Trail Association, *Wagon Tracks*.

4. For a popular version of the Becknell story see Robert L. Duffus, *The Santa Fe Trail* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1930),

3. The bibliography of Santa Fe Trail items is vast. Dozens of diaries, journals, letters, and memoirs have been published since the early days of the Santa Fe Trail. Some of the most readily accessible and comprehensive include Susan Shelby Magoffin, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and Into Mexico: The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin, 1846-1847*, ed. Stella M. Drumm (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Lewis H. Garrard, *Wah-to-yah and the Taos Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987); Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, ed. Max L. Moorhead (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990); and James Josiah Webb, *Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844-1847*, ed. Ralph P. Bieber (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995). These volumes have been reprinted in numerous editions. The major bibliographic source for Santa Fe Trail history is Jack D. Rittenhouse, *The Santa Fe Trail: A Historical Bibliography* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986). General scholarly histories of the trail include, William E. Brown, *The Santa Fe Trail: National Park Service 1963 Historic Sites Survey* (St. Louis, Mo.: Patrice Press, 1988);



A Missouri frontier entrepreneur and trader, William Becknell, blazed the Santa Fe Trail in 1821. It quickly became a commercial highway, linking frontier Missouri and the burgeoning American economy with New Mexico and old Mexico. By the 1830s, over one million dollars in goods crossed the prairies of Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, and New Mexico every year, destined for the plaza in Santa Fe and points south in old Mexico. The "March of the Caravan" is captured here in a drawing from trader Josiah Gregg's 1844 account of traveling the trail, *Commerce of the Prairies*.

Somewhat incongruously, it is a more difficult task to account for the communication of memory than of myth when considering the legacy of the Santa Fe Trail. On a local level the trail's direct impact is easy to trace, being enshrined in the names of city streets and commercial establishments, notably restaurants and motels, high schools, and parks. Also, farmers and ranchers in a given area can often point to trail swales and ruts on their land. Regional or national consciousness of the trail throughout the twentieth century, the subject under consideration here, is another matter. At that level, myth alters memory and memory, often faulty, feeds myth. Nevertheless, a century of interest in and awareness of the Santa Fe Trail can be documented. Combined with myth, it kept the cultural heritage of the trail alive and transmitted it into the twenty-first century.

Las Vegas, New Mexico, has celebrated the Fourth of July with a city-wide fiesta for over 120 years. The party in 1910 was more lively than usual, since it featured both an "old trailers' reunion" and the dedication of a bridge over the Gallinas River, where the Santa Fe Trail had forded the river on its way to the Las Vegas plaza. A

dedicatory stone, which carried the dates of the old trail and featured a relief of a team of mules drawing a stagecoach, graced the bridge, as it still does today. The *Las Vegas Daily Optic* reported that over 450 veterans of freighting on the Santa Fe Trail attended the reunion. Many of them joined the day's "grand parade," some walking and others riding in carriages. Mr. Valerio Baca, the paper noted, "drove an old stagecoach which traveled the trail in the forties," and the Romero Drug Company of Las Vegas, "had an ox team hitched to an old fashioned cart such as was used in lieu of other means of transport in the days of the old trailers."⁵

Celebrations such as these were not uncommon in communities from Missouri to New Mexico in the decades following the end of the trail. They served as a bridge from the past to the present and became especially important as "old trailers" all along the trail died. Civic pride sometimes played a role, as in Westport, Missouri, in 1912. There, "The Westport Improvement Association" held a "Santa Fe Trail and Battle of Westport Reunion and Carnival" for an entire week, from August 31 to September 8, in part to raise funds "for the benefit of the Pioneer Monument Fund on Santa Fé Trail at the Site of City Hall in Westport." The association published a booklet commemorating the event, *Westport—1812–1912*, which listed the dozens of people and organizations supporting the cause, including "Descendants of Old Settlers of Westport," "Descendants of Soldiers of the Mexican War," the "National Old Trails Road Association," and the "Kansas City Historical Society." In a brief narrative section the pamphlet noted, "'Meet me on the trail,' is the slogan of the Westerner[s] as they meet in old settlers' reunion[s] now to mark with suitable emblems in stone and bronze the important points along the way."⁶

68–69; Gregg's account has been reprinted numerous times and is available in full text online at kancoll.org/books/gregg/; see also, santafe.org/Visiting_Santa_Fe/.

5. *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, June 27, 28, 30, July 2, and 5, 1910. See also Michael Olsen, "The Fourth of July 1910 in Las Vegas, New Mexico: Was It the Last Roundup for Santa Fe Trail Veterans?," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 8 (May 1994): 9–12. This article reprints over 350 names of "old trailers" as published in the *Optic*.

6. *Westport—1812–1912* (Kansas City, Mo.: Press Franklin Hudson Publishing Company, 1912), 6–9.



Many myths persist about the Santa Fe Trail, including the notion that it was a highway for settlers seeking homes in the West rather than a prosaic commercial route. Such myths can be traced, in part, to fictional recreations of life on the trail by authors and filmmakers throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As one example, Henry Inman, long a U.S. Army officer at posts along the Santa Fe Trail and in retirement a resident of Topeka, Kansas, became a prolific author of books highlighting adventures along western trails. This 1896 map of the Santa Fe Trail bears his name.

Other links with the “old trail days” through the last decades of the nineteenth century into the early twentieth include coverage of the trail in national magazines and in travel and history books and tourist promotion of the trail by regional railways. Most notably and importantly, the placing of Santa Fe Trail markers by the Daughters of the American Revolution was a heroic effort that not only recalled the past but set in stone the route and memory of the trail for future generations.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine was the premier periodical that stimulated and fed American interest in the West in the decades after the Civil War. Issue after issue of *Harper's* presented articles written by correspondents who traveled from the Great Plains and the Rockies to California and the Pacific Ocean. Founded in 1850, the magazine reached hundreds of thousands of readers. A typical item for *Harper's* was A. A. Hayes's piece, “The Santa Fe Trail,” published in July 1880, just as the “end” of the trail was in sight. This article was collected, with four others Hayes wrote for *Harper's*, into a book, *New Colorado and the Santa Fe Trail*. This particular

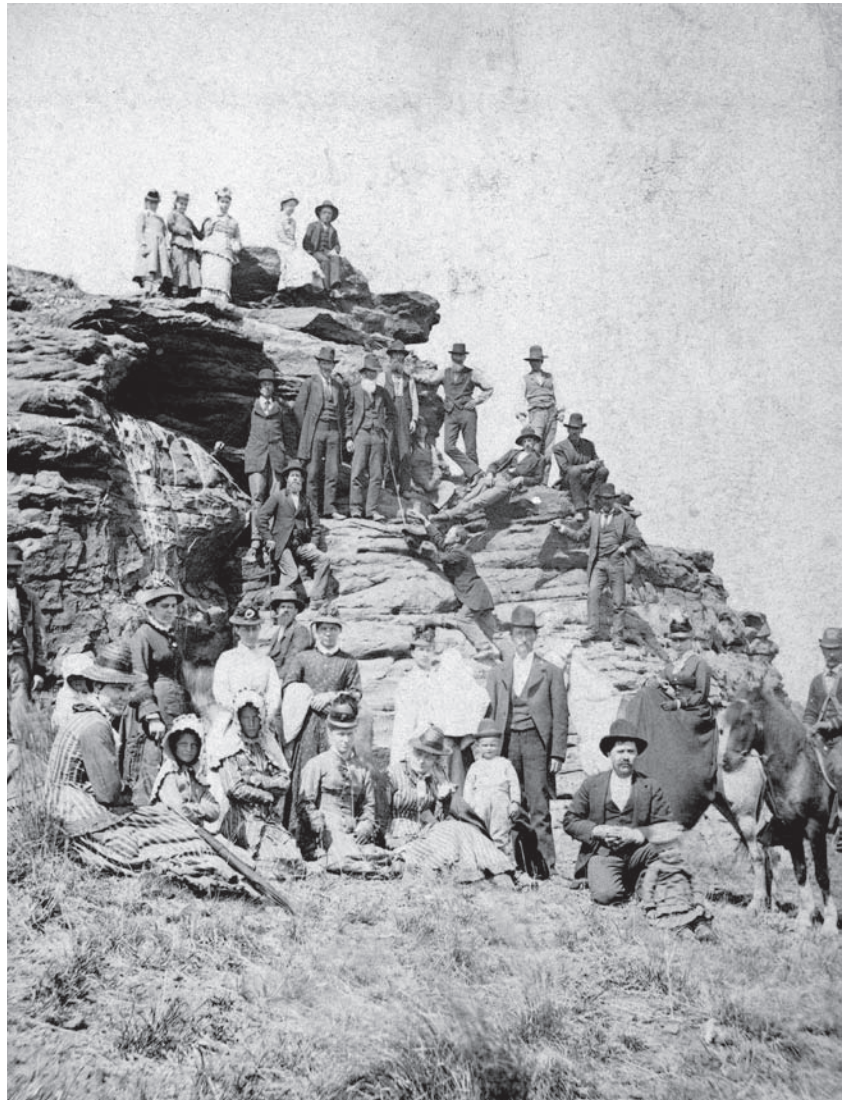
piece reviewed the entire history of the trail going back to the Spanish occupation of New Mexico and included coverage of William Becknell's expedition, the Mexican War, and Hayes's own journey by stagecoach to Santa Fe. It boasted ten illustrations, always a distinctive feature of major *Harper's* stories, depicting “Prairie Schooners at the Dock,” “Sudden Attack by Indians,” and “Entrance of the Caravan into Santa Fe,” among other scenes.⁷ Sylvester Baxter, another *Harper's* correspondent, reported on his adventures, “Along the Rio Grande,” in the April 1885 issue, and Clarence Pullen contrasted “Spanish” and “American” cultures in “Scenes About Las Vegas, New Mexico,” in July 1890. Even at this late date, Pullen observed, he occasionally saw, “draped with the *rebozo*, the dark handsome face of a Mexican girl attired after the fashion of the old time.”⁸

7. A. A. Hayes, “The Santa Fe Trail,” *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 61 (July 1880): 185–96; Hayes, *New Colorado and the Santa Fe Trail* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880).

8. Sylvester Baxter, “Along the Rio Grande,” *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 70 (April 1885): 687–700; Clarence Pullen, “Scenes about Las Vegas, New Mexico,” *Harper's Weekly* 34 (July 12, 1890): 539.

Other national magazines were not as devoted to western themes as *Harper's*, but the *Overland Monthly*, published in California from 1868 to 1875 and again from 1883 to 1923, profiled Santa Fe, "A City in the Old West," in October 1884. Even the venerable *Atlantic Monthly* carried "The Story of the Santa Fé Trail," by Charles M. Harvey, an eleven-page double-columned piece, in its December 1909 edition. Taken together, these and numerous other periodicals that covered the Santa Fe Trail, New Mexico, Indians, and the Southwest kept the romance, if not a concise knowledge of the Santa Fe Trail, alive.⁹

Henry Inman, long a U.S. Army officer at posts along the Santa Fe Trail and in retirement a resident of Topeka, Kansas, became a prolific author of books highlighting adventures in the "Old West" and especially along western trails for readers in the 1890s and on into the twentieth century. His narratives also appeared in various journals, such as *St. Nicholas*, a children's magazine issued by Scribner's from 1873 to 1940, and *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*. His most well-known and enduring effort was *The Old Santa Fé Trail*, distributed by the Macmillan Company in 1897 and reprinted at least four times through 1916. Other Inman works include *The Great Salt Lake Trail* and *The Rancho on the Oxhide*. There is no way to determine Inman's sales figures, but his books were reviewed in highly regarded magazines such as the *Nation*, the *Critic*, and the *Athenaeum*. His writing usually was not well received in the eastern press; a reviewer in the *Critic* remarked on *The Old Santa Fé Trail*, "This volume belongs to the class of histories which are not histories at all according to our present use of the word." Interestingly, however, in 1902 the University of Chicago



Pawnee Rock, situated about one hundred yards from the Santa Fe Trail in the southwest corner of Barton County, became a landmark for travelers. Many, such as this group passing along the trail in the 1870s, engraved their names on the stone and had their pictures made, marking their arrival at what was considered a halfway point of the journey. The landmark also made frequent appearances in trail literature.

placed *The Old Santa Fé Trail* on its recommended reading list for elementary school teachers preparing lessons on "Oregon, Texas, [and] California."¹⁰

9. Clarence Miller, "A City in the Old West," *Overland Monthly*, Second Series 4 (October 1884): 337-41; Charles M. Harvey, "The Story of the Santa Fe Trail," *Atlantic Monthly* 104 (December 1909): 774-85. Two published bibliographies indicate the broad scope of periodical literature on the Santa Fe Trail: Rittenhouse, *The Santa Fe Trail*; and Harry C. Myers, "Since Rittenhouse: Santa Fe Trail Bibliography," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 20 (August 2006): 20-29.

10. Henry Inman, "In the Sunny Southwest," *St. Nicholas* 28 (May 1901): 599-600; and Inman, "Great Salt Lake," *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* 65 (March 1900): 469-76. Inman, *The Old Santa Fé Trail* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1897); Inman, *The Great Salt Lake Trail* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1898); and Inman, *The Rancho on the Oxhide, A Story of Boys' and Girls' Life on the Frontier* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1898). Reviews in *Nation* 68 (January 26, 1899): 74; *Athenaeum* 114 (July 1, 1899): 33; and *Critic* 31 (December 1897): 18. Also, University of Chicago Department of Education, *The Elementary School Teacher and Course of Study* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1902), 590.

Inman engaged his readers with lurid stories that were often inaccurate by dropping names of famous western figures such as Christopher Houston "Kit" Carson and William Frederick "Buffalo Bill" Cody and through a romantic nostalgia for the passing of the West. Two examples suffice. He dramatized the deaths of James White, a Santa Fe trader, and his party in 1849 at Point of Rocks, New Mexico (although Inman has all the details and the date wrong), with a powerfully racist though typical nineteenth-century depiction: "Out dashed the savages, gorgeous in their feathered war-bonnets, but looking like fiends with their paint-bedaubed faces." Yet, his lyricism can be attractive, as when he chronicled the arrival of the railroad and the passing of the trail era. He placed himself on Pawnee Rock, a famous landmark on the trail in southwestern Kansas, and imagined "in the distance, far eastwardly, a train of [railway] cars could be seen approaching. . . . Farther to the west, a caravan of white-covered wagons loaded with supplies for some remote military post, the last that would ever travel the Old Trail, was slowly crawling toward the setting sun."¹¹

The completion of regional and transcontinental rail links also served to maintain the cultural heritage of the Santa Fe Trail. Tourists could now experience firsthand the western frontier they had only read about. A variety of newspapers and magazines carried advertisements for the railroads, including, somewhat intriguingly, *Catholic World* in 1885, with an ad placed by the Denver and Rio Grande Railway (D&RG). Despite competition from the D&RG and, notably, the Southern Pacific Railroad, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway became the leader in promotional southwest tours, principally to Santa Fe and New Mexico. The AT&SF did not market its popular "Indian Detour" until the 1920s, but almost immediately after its completion to New Mexico in 1880, it began to attract tourists and also those in search of good health, especially tubercular patients. For example, the AT&SF Passenger Department published 198,000 copies of a pamphlet, *To California Over the Santa Fe Trail*, for general distribution in 1902. As Victoria E. Dye has noted in her comprehensive treatment of the AT&SF's efforts, *All Aboard for Santa Fe: Railway Promotion of the Southwest, 1890s to 1930s*, "the AT&SF became the first industry to exploit the history and scenic attractions of New Mexico, and the town of Santa Fe represented the essence of the Southwest." The Santa Fe Trail was not

central in this promotional scheme but the ghost of the trail hovered over passengers as they headed west.¹²

While the impact of railroads, journalists, authors, travelers, and local supporters was important, no group ensured the survival of the trail's history and heritage into the twentieth century more than the Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Joined by their sisters in Missouri, Colorado, and New Mexico, they envisioned, carried forward, and completed a massive and expensive effort to mark the trail along its entire route. Their legacy lives on in the nearly two hundred red granite markers, affixed with bronze plaques identifying the trail and noting its dates, along interstate and state highways, county roads, and in fields and pastures in these states. DAR Women in Kansas today have recognized this project as "the single greatest undertaking of the Kansas Daughters."¹³

Planning for the project began in 1902. In Kansas it eventually involved recognition and funding from the state legislature, the Kansas State Historical Society, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, and the Kansas Department of Education. A special appeal was made to school children. January 29, 1906, the forty-fifth anniversary of the state, was designated throughout Kansas as "Trail Day" and teachers and students were urged to contribute to the marker fund. Kansas's Ottawa Daughters drafted a suggested program for the day's celebrations that ran to eight pages and included a map of the old trail's route, commissioned by the DAR State Conference. This program was printed in the January 1906 issue of the *Kansas Educator*. An essay contest for seventh and eighth graders, with the themes of "local history" and "the Santa Fé Trail," offered cash prizes. The ambitions of the Kansas Daughters were not modest. They began placing nearly one hundred markers in 1906 and set the last one, in Morton County, in 1914.¹⁴

12. *Catholic World* 41 (September 1885): 246; C. A. Higgins, *To California Over the Santa Fe Trail* (Chicago, Ill.: Passenger Department, Santa Fe, 1902); and Victoria E. Dye, *All Aboard for Santa Fe, Railway Promotion of the Southwest, 1890s to 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 16.

13. Shirley Coupal and Pat Traffas, "Kansas DAR Celebrates 100 Years on the Trail," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 23 (February 2009): 8.

14. The leading source for the work of the Kansas Daughters is still that of Mrs. T. A. Cordry, *The Story of the Marking of the Santa Fe Trail by the Daughters of the American Revolution in Kansas and the State of Kansas* (Topeka: Crane & Company Printers, 1915). See especially chapter 6, "Trail Day," for the various educational endeavors. Also see Jane Mallinson, "DAR Markers on the Santa Fe Trail, Part II," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 5 (August 1991): 14–16.

11. Henry Inman, *The Old Santa Fé Trail* (Topeka, Kans.: Crane & Company, 1899), 161, 489–90.

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The completion of regional and transcontinental rail links served to maintain the cultural heritage of the Santa Fe Trail. Tourists could now experience firsthand the western frontier they had only read about. A variety of newspapers and magazines carried advertisements for the railroads, including Catholic World, in which the Denver and Rio Grande Railway made its pitch in September 1885.

This work of the DAR did not go unnoticed in the national press of the day. The *World's Work* magazine of June 1906 noted, for example, "The school children of Kansas have undertaken to establish a monument of considerable historical interest by marking with posts the old Santa Fé Trail. . . . Every school child was asked to contribute one cent to a fund to buy markers for the old course, and 369,166 responded." *Harper's Weekly* for May 14, 1910, had a feature article titled, "Marking the Paths that Led to Empire," with a photograph of a DAR stone in Rice County, Kansas. Even the American Historical Association bowed in the direction of the DAR with a five-page summary of the marker project by Zoe Adams, "The Marking of the Santa Fe Trail," in its 1908 *Annual Report*.¹⁵

15. "Preserving the Santa Fe Trail," *World's Work* 12 (June 1906): 7689-90; Thaddeus S. Dayton, "Marking the Paths that Led to Empire,"

The Colorado Daughters, with a much shorter section of the trail to commemorate than their Kansas compatriots, completed marking the trail there in 1909, aided by a \$2,000 appropriation from their state legislature. The Missouri Daughters took the bold step of chartering a special train, which traveled from Kansas City to the state capitol at Jefferson City in 1909 with Daughters aboard who lobbied successfully for a \$3,000 grant from that state's legislature. All Missouri markers were in place by 1913. In New Mexico the Daughters worked with the territorial legislature, placing markers with the aid of penitentiary convicts. A special stone, erected by the DAR and the Territory of New Mexico in 1910, marked the "end" of the Santa Fe Trail on the Santa Fe Plaza.¹⁶

For many decades these markers languished. A few are now "lost" and some have been relocated, but, remarkably, most are still intact and in place. In each state campaigns have been launched recently to rescue markers, refurbish them if needed, and in some cases rededicate them. Kansas, once again, led the way with a comprehensive investigation in the early 1980s. Sometimes DAR chapters have taken on the responsibility of maintaining local markers, or they are tended by members of the Santa Fe Trail Association or county and state highway departments. There is general recognition that without the physical presence of the markers today and the work of the DAR a century ago, knowledge of the trail and its heritage would be sadly diminished.¹⁷

By the 1920s the generation that had personally experienced the days of the Santa Fe Trail was gone. At this point the myth and memory of the trail could have languished—but different factors now fed the public's awareness. Most notable was the advent of the automobile and auto tourism. Books and magazine articles retailing the heritage of the

Harper's Weekly 54 (May 14, 1910): 16-17; Zoe Adams, "The Marking of the Santa Fe Trail," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1906* 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1908): 152-56.

16. Mary B. and Leo E. Gamble, *Santa Fe Trail Markers in Colorado* (Spearville, Kans.: Spearville News, Inc., 1987). For Missouri, Jane Mallinson, "DAR Markers on the Santa Fe Trail, Part 1," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 7 (February 1993): 8-9. The DAR in Oklahoma, where the Cimarron Cutoff of the trail ran through the far western reaches of the panhandle, did not participate in this project.

17. Shirley S. Coupal and Patricia Dorsch Traffas, *Ninetieth Anniversary Survey of the Santa Fe Trail DAR Markers in Kansas* (N.p.: Kansas Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1998); and Shirley Coupal, "Kansas DAR Marker Restoration Celebrations," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 24 (May 2010): 1, 5.



MARKER AT BALDWIN.



MARKER IN CITY PARK, LOST SPRINGS.



MARKER BETWEEN LYONS AND STERLING



MEMORIAL AT BURLINGAME.

No group ensured the survival of the trail's history and heritage into the twentieth century more than the Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution. Joined by their sisters in Missouri, Colorado, and New Mexico, they completed a massive and expensive effort to mark the trail along its entire route. Their legacy lives on in the nearly two hundred red granite markers, affixed with bronze plaques identifying the trail and noting its dates, such as those pictured here in Cordy's *The Story of the Marking of the Santa Fe Trail* at Baldwin, Lost Springs, between Lyons and Sterling, and Burlingame.

trail also continued to appear, and so did movies and music featuring the trail, delivered via new technologies like radio, “talkies,” and eventually television, video tapes, and DVDs. These elements had something of a symbiotic relationship in that Americans traveled the West and then wanted to read or hear more about it or see an action-packed Western, while at the same time the books, articles, songs, and movies stimulated a desire to take to the road.

Motoring in the first decades of the twentieth century could be an adventure, but following the Santa Fe Trail provided its own “amusements.” The trip that Horace Buker and three companions took from Chicago to Los Angeles, which included portions of the trail in Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico, was typical of tours undertaken by others at the time. Buker and his friends devoted the fall of 1920 to their expedition and then Buker wrote it up for the May 1921 issue of *Outing* magazine in an appropriately titled article, “—And a Big Can of Water.”¹⁸ There were ample warnings for potential Santa Fe Trail tourists right from the beginning of Buker’s account. In a subtitle, he observed, “Life along the Santa Fe Trail Moves Faster Than in the Old Days, But There are Still Some Perils.” A special notice, printed dead-center on the first page, continued, “Where prairie schooners once crawled across the prairies and through mountain valleys automobiles now whizz [*sic*] by. But the old precautions for transcontinental travel must still be observed. Know your road, pick your camping sites with care, don’t try to do too much in one day—and above all be sure of your water supply. The desert is nothing to fool with, even in these high speed days.”

Buker offered advice on numerous aspects of travel in the West that drivers and campers might encounter. He noted, “It is not difficult to secure supplies, oil, gasoline, or water at sufficiently regular intervals along the trail, but the motorist should take no chances.” With respect to water, he added, “Canvas water bottles cannot be excelled for keeping water cool on warm days, but a five-gallon can on the running board . . . will prove a wise measure of safety and enlarge your choice of camping sites.” And then, echoing the title of his reminiscence, he cautioned once again, “Carry all the other things advised, if you must, AND a big can of water, just to please me.” Voicing sentiments as old as Marco Polo but also uppermost in the minds of the early motoring public, he reflected, “Garage men . . . are not living in the

alkali and sand for their health, and they like to have you come across. A very few would take your shoes and shirt if you let them, but in the main charges are reasonable, even low, and assistance is friendly and prompt.”¹⁹

In specific references to the Santa Fe Trail, Buker commented on camping and the conditions of the roads. He obviously enjoyed his trip: “Home may be anywhere along the road that you or the car select. East of Raton, fences and warnings make the choice of a site more difficult, but many places, such as Baldwin and Burlingame, Kansas, and Trinidad, Colorado, provide excellent accommodations for motorists. In addition there are the camp grounds set aside—I can not [*sic*] say maintained—by private owners, where for a small fee the tired traveler may spend the night.” Near Wagon Mound, New Mexico, where even today fierce thunderstorms or hail can stop traffic on the interstate, Buker related,

One afternoon over New Mexico, west of Wagon Mound, on a high plateau, unrelieved even by a tree as far as the eye could see, a lively rainstorm turned the road into mire and we finally sloshed off amid the sand and cactus, with ambition taking a vacation. . . . With the curtains on, we waited an hour or so—rain in the Southwest is usually as brief as it is busy—while we watched three other storms circling around us. . . . Before dark the ground was dry enough for our tent and the road gave good promise for the morrow.

It was a serendipitous experience with which any contented traveler might identify, for as Buker continued, “Quickly the stars came down where we could almost reach them and not a sound marred the perfect silence of the night. The most unlikely place we could possibly have selected still remains a pleasant memory.” Somewhat astonishingly, Buker mentions that on some sections of the route “about thirty or forty tourist cars passed us each day.”²⁰

There are hundreds of accounts of American auto tours like Buker’s in the magazines of this period, but only a few by sightseers who particularly took to the Santa Fe Trail. One that perhaps had the widest circulation, published in 1922 in the popular *Saturday Evening Post*, advertised itself as “A Jitney Guide to the Santa Fé Trail” and was authored by a woman motorist, Nina Wilcox Putnam.

18. Horace Edward Buker, “—And a Big Can of Water,” *Outing* 78 (May 1921): 66.

19. *Ibid.*, 66.

20. *Ibid.*, 67–68.



By the 1920s the generation that had personally experienced the days of the Santa Fe Trail was gone. Memory of the trail could have languished, but the advent of the automobile and auto tourism fed Americans' desire to take to the road. Motoring in the first decades of the twentieth century could be an adventure, as the newspaper article accompanying this photo of an April 1910 run along the Santa Fe Trail "from Hutchinson to Pueblo" demonstrates: "Joe Watson of Kinsley drove the relay car from Kinsley to Dodge City at an average speed of thirty-one miles an hour. A mile out of Kinsley the lights on his car failed and the run was made in the dark."

Along with the usual advice such as, "The Choice of a Car" and "Tools and Equipment," Putnam included a section on "What Women Should Wear," noting critically but enthusiastically,

We started out in dark clothing. Believe me, before we'd gone very far we found that what you want is dirt-colored clothes. West of the Mississippi khaki for all hands becomes positively *de rigueur*. After we left Kansas City I put on a pair of riding trousers, and ho, the joy of that! I need not sing their praises to any female who has tried them, but for the encouragement of those who have not, allow me to insist and reiterate that they are the only thing to wear in thorough comfort west of the Rockies. Everyone from grandma to the snappiest chicken in the snappiest roadster that you pass wears 'em. Do not dream of going without a pair.²¹

21. Nina Wilcox Putnam, "A Jitney Guide to the Santa Fé Trail," *Saturday Evening Post* 194 (June 10, 1922): 28, 30.

One of the most entertaining book-length treatments of trail travel by auto from this period is that of Irwin Delp, titled *The Santa Fe Trail to California: A Tale of the Experiences of a Party of Eight Boys on the Old Trail to Santa Fe and the Spanish Trails to California and Old Mexico*. Delp and his friends traveled in the early 1930s. This account is especially important because Delp paid close attention to trail sites and towns in Kansas, including Cottonwood Falls, Hutchinson, Cow Creek, Walnut Creek Crossing, the ruins of Fort Zarah, and Great Bend. For instance, he recorded, "After a long pull through mud and water, with much opening and closing of gates, with not a sign of civilization in site [sic], we reached what our map calls Ingalls[, Kansas]. The total population seems to be the railroad employee in charge of the station. He is up the road giving some verbal help to the owners of another car stuck in the mud to the running boards. We help dig this car out and are rewarded with a gloomy description of roads westward." Be-

cause bridges were out over the Arkansas River west of Ingalls, the Delp party temporarily left the trail and headed north to Scott City. Eventually they arrived at Colorado Springs, and returned to the trail via Pueblo, Raton Pass, Wagon Mound, Las Vegas, and finally Santa Fe.²²

Other accounts, from earlier in the century, include Thomas J. H. O'Shaughnessy's 1915 book *Rambles on Overland Trails*, and Harry C. Drum's article, "Motoring on the Santa Fe Trail," which appeared in the *World Today* magazine in 1911. O'Shaughnessy and his companions, somewhat unusually, started their tour in Oklahoma, looped north into Kansas, and then headed down the trail to Santa Fe. Drum's excursion along the trail was part of a longer trip from New York to San Francisco, and he recalled, "From Trinidad we got our first touch of real western mountain work as we crept slowly up over Raton Pass and into the little town where we were

22. Irwin Warren Delp, *The Santa Fe Trail to California*, by Irwin W. Delp: *A Tale of the Experiences of a Party of Eight Boys on the Old Trail to Santa Fe and the Spanish Trails to California and Old Mexico* (Boston, Mass.: Christopher Publishing House, 1933), 58.

to repack for our mountain and desert ordeal. . . . Down we dipped through a valley, full of the lore of early days . . . and past the home of 'Uncle Dick' Wooten, and the hangout of Kit Carson."²³

Touring the Santa Fe Trail in the 1920s and 1930s was not done only in private automobiles. The trail could also be traveled by "bus," as with Guy De Larigaudie's trip in 1936. Notably, a Kansas branch of the National Trailways Bus System began service along the trail in 1935. To arouse interest in touring by bus it started *Trails* magazine. The very first issue highlighted the Santa Fe Trail experience, boasting

With this number, *Trails* makes its salutatory bow—and hopes you'll like it. . . . Published for the entertainment of those interested in travel—and who isn't—*Trails* will endeavor to picture the romance, adventure, the education that accompany the act of going-places. Travel is no longer an expensive luxury. The paved highway and motor-coach have combined to provide a cheap, safe and comfortable transportation that puts roaming-about within the reach of all. . . . "Catch up! Catch up!" as the old caravan bosses yelled to start the trip to Santa Fe. Trail along with *Trails*.

This same issue carried a fully illustrated article, "Just How Old Is the Old Santa Fe Trail?," by Edward Arrington.²⁴ Author Flora Barns, in her article "*The Santa Fe Trail of Yesterday and Today*" in the September 1928 issue of *Mentor* magazine, summarized the options for traveling the trail in first part of the twentieth century: "Today the existence of the Santa Fe Trail is perpetuated by a railroad and a highway that vie with each other in attracting the tourist, who has a choice of three ways to see and follow the old Santa Fe Trail: He may sit comfortably in the observation car of a fine railway train. . . . For a closer view of the trail he may start on a self-conducted tour in 'flivver' or limousine. . . . Or he may see the trail by motor-bus."²⁵

23. Thomas J. H. O'Shaughnessy, *Rambles on Overland Trails* (Chicago, Ill.: privately printed, 1915); and Harry C. Drum, "Motoring on the Santa Fe Trail," *World Today* 20 (June 1911): 680.

24. *Trails* 1 (June–July 1935): 1; and Edward Arrington, "Just How Old Is the Old Santa Fe Trail?" *Trails* 1 (June–July 1935): 8–9, 16. The only extant run of early issues of *Trails* is housed at the New York Public Library, New York, N.Y.

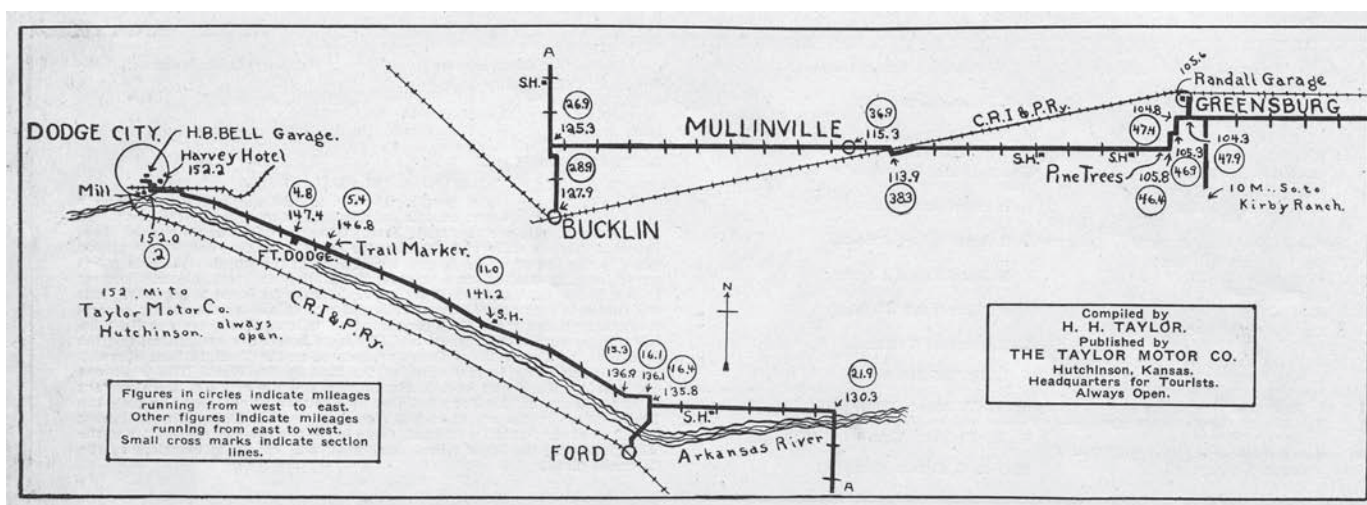
25. Florence Elberta Barns, "*The Santa Fe Trail of Yesterday and Today*," *Mentor* 16 (September 1928): 21.

The desire to travel the trail would continue for the rest of the twentieth century and beyond. For example, and somewhat unexpectedly, *Today's Health* magazine featured a trip by a Richard Dunlop and his family in the late 1960s in an article titled "Journey to Sundown on the Santa Fe Trail." As mid-century travelers, the Dunlops "sped along Interstate 35 at 70 miles an hour" near Kansas City, stopping to visit the famous Post Office Oak in Council Grove and to walk to the top of Pawnee Rock southwest of Great Bend, and taking back to the road on the Cimarron Branch across the Oklahoma Panhandle toward Las Vegas, New Mexico, and on to Santa Fe. Fifteen years later they could have used the first mile-by-mile guide to traveling the trail, Marc Simmons's *Following the Santa Fe Trail: A Guide for Modern Travelers*, which has been in print ever since 1984. The most recent age of touring the Santa Fe Trail had arrived.²⁶

Highway building—the construction of the roads on which the automobile and the tour bus traveled—also impacted and was simultaneously promoted by interest in and the route of the Santa Fe Trail, particularly in New Mexico and Kansas. As was typical throughout the United States, the new auto highways followed the old trail. The New Mexico Territorial Legislature provided for a public highway running the full length of the state from north to south in 1905, utilizing part of the historic Santa Fe Trail. Very specifically, the legislation read,

There is hereby established a public highway through the Territory of New Mexico, to be known as "El Camino Real," which said highway shall have for its northern terminus a point in the Raton Mountains on the state line between Colorado and New Mexico, where the old Barlow and Sanderson stage road, known as the "Santa Fe Trail" crossed the state line, running thence in a southerly direction and following the old Santa Fe Trail as nearly as practicable through the city of Raton, the town of Cimarron, to the village of Rayado; thence to the town of Ocate; thence following the route of the highway established by Chapter 56 of the Session Laws of 1903, and known as

26. Richard Dunlop, "Journey to Sundown on the Santa Fe Trail," *Today's Health* 47 (September 1969): 67; Marc Simmons, *Following the Santa Fe Trail: A Guide for Modern Travelers* (Santa Fe, N.M.: Ancient City Press, 1984, 1986). A third edition, coauthored with Hal Jackson and "revised and expanded," was published in Santa Fe by the Ancient City Press in 2001.



Under the leadership of entrepreneurs and promoters in towns such as Newton, Hutchinson, and Garden City, a network of roads that came to be known as "The New Santa Fe Trail" stretched from Kansas City to the Colorado border by 1913. Motorists could consult detailed maps of this route, including the *Official Guide of the New Santa Fe Trail*, published in 1915 by the Taylor Motor Company of Hutchinson, which touted itself as "Always Open Day and Night" and the "Largest Garage in the State." At a cost of fifty cents, the guide contained mile-by-mile maps such as the one pictured here and gave information on meals and lodging, as well as where to obtain gasoline, oil, and repairs.

the Scenic Route to Santa Fe, the capital of the Territory of New Mexico.²⁷

In Kansas, the connection between early highways and the old trail was even more intimate and dramatic. Under the leadership of entrepreneurs and promoters in towns such as Newton, Hutchinson, and Garden City, a network of roads that came to be known as "The New Santa Fe Trail" stretched from Kansas City to the Colorado border in western Hamilton County by 1913. Motorists could consult detailed maps of this route, such as the *Official Guide of the New Santa Fe Trail*, published in 1915 by the Taylor Motor Company of Hutchinson, which touted itself as "Always Open Day and Night" and the "Largest Garage in the State." At a cost of fifty cents, this guide contained mile-by-mile maps and gave detailed information on meals and lodging; where to obtain gasoline and oil, noted by icons for each on the maps; and where to find a "garage" for repairs. It also continued its maps into Colorado and then south along the roads of New Mexico, to Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Many such publications eventually circulated in all the

trail states, to be replaced by official state highway maps by the 1920s.²⁸

Some of this "romance of the open road" was fed by a second development that kept the myth and memory of the Santa Fe Trail alive—a spate of novels, movies, and musical compositions using the trail as a backdrop or setting. As with the books of Henry Inman, and coupled with an increasing number of historical essays on the trail written for popular audiences, the impact of these media is almost impossible to gauge, but the works themselves stand as a testimony to the immediacy of the trail's cultural heritage.

There have been approximately 125 novels set in part or wholly on the Santa Fe Trail since the arrival of "dime novels" such as Charles Averill's *Kit Carson, Prince of the Gold Hunters* in 1849. The majority of these books appeared after 1900, mostly between 1940 and 1990. They have fallen into a wide range of genres, from the typical "Western" to "bodice rippers," including several

27. "An Act to Provide for the Construction of a System of Public Highways in the Territory of New Mexico and the Use of Convict Labor Therefor and For Other Purposes," *Laws of New Mexico, Thirty-sixth Legislative Assembly* (1905), ch. 7, 26–30.

28. For a superb treatment of the genesis of the "New Santa Fe Trail" in western Kansas, see L. Robert Puschendorf, "Two Trails of the Twentieth Century: John C. Nicholson and Newton, Kansas," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 32 (Autumn 2009): 154–67. The Taylor Motor Company's pamphlet and maps, *Official Guide of the New Santa Fe Trail* (Hutchinson, Kans.: The Taylor Motor Company, 1915); Taylor's advertised itself as the "official garage" of the "New Santa Fe Trail" and as a "Headquarters for Tourists," where "Road Information [was] Cheerfully Given."

dozen well-plotted and relatively accurate historical treatments. These works were of course part and parcel of the national obsession with and glorification of the history of the American West, especially in the several decades after World War II. They attest that the Santa Fe Trail came in for its share of attention.²⁹

No Santa Fe Trail novel ever made the *New York Times* bestseller list, though some were written by famous authors and others have remained in print since their publication. Zane Grey was the most well-known writer who drew on tales of the Santa Fe Trail. The titles of his two trail novels reflect their setting: *Fighting Caravans*, published in 1926, and *The Lost Wagon Train*, from 1932. Neither of these can be relied on for accurate depictions of trail history, geography, or personalities, but they put the trail before the public and aroused interest. Publishers reissued them in numerous editions and many languages in subsequent years. Ruth Laughlin's *The Wind Leaves No Shadow*, nationally distributed by McGraw-Hill publishers in 1948, is perhaps the most enduring of Santa Fe Trail novels. Still in print, it is a fictional biography of the historical Maria Gertrudis Barceló, a saloon owner and renowned gambler known as Doña Tules up and down the old Santa Fe Trail. She was the most famous woman in Santa Fe during the years of the trail and was a central figure in the events that swirled around the American conquest of New Mexico in 1846. For over half a century this novel has shaped readers' impressions of the trail, Hispanic New Mexico, and the role of women in the Southwest.

Recent stories set on the trail, both historical and contemporary, include Jon R. Bauman's *Santa Fe Passage* (2004), identified on its dust jacket as "a novel of the early 1800s when two cultures met at the southwestern end of the Santa Fe Trail," and Lenore Carroll's *Uncertain Pilgrims* (2006), whose protagonist travels the trail at the turn of the twenty-first century, and, along with telling her own story, reflects on other people who traveled and events that shaped the historical trail.³⁰

29. Charles E. Averill, *Kit Carson, Prince of the Gold Hunters* (Boston, Mass.: George H. Williams, 1849). For extended treatments of Santa Fe Trail fiction, see Michael L. Olsen, "The Cimarron Route in Fact and Fiction," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 13 (May 1999): 12–19; and Olsen, "Depictions of Women in Santa Fe Trail Novels," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 14 (May 2000): 10–14.

30. Zane Grey, *Fighting Caravans* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1929); Grey, *The Lost Wagon Train* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1932); Ruth McLaughlin, *The Wind Leaves No Shadow* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1948); Jon R. Bauman, *Santa Fe Passage* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004); and Lenore Carroll, *Uncertain Pilgrims* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006).

Americans in the twentieth century also experienced the "Old West," both in reality and myth, via the movie screen and then television. Unlike its sister route, the Oregon Trail, the Santa Fe Trail never rated a television series of its own, but it did have a starring role in several Hollywood productions. The most popular of these was the eponymous *The Santa Fe Trail*, starring future president Ronald Reagan, Errol Flynn, and Olivia de Havilland. Overtly mistitled, the plot has more to do with the building of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad and, incongruously, with the life of the abolitionist John Brown than with the actual history of the trail. One of the most profitable films of 1940, it was extensively reviewed in prestigious publications such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Christian Century*, the *New Republic*, and *Commonweal*, and derided in nearly all of them. A respected journalist and political commentator of the day, Oswald Garrison Villard, wrote a scathing letter to the editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, a letter which began, "May I have the privilege of protesting in your columns against the travesty of history produced by Hollywood under the title 'The Santa Fe Trail?'"³¹

The earliest trail movie was *Fighting Caravans*, based on Zane Grey's novel. It debuted in 1931 and starred a very young Gary Cooper. Today it plays almost like a parody of itself, given its blatant racial, ethnic, sexist, and cultural stereotypes. Another novel, Gwen Bristow's *Jubilee Trail*, published in 1950, was the basis of a movie of the same name starring Forrest Tucker and Vera Ralston, which screened in 1954. Its Santa Fe Trail scenes again evoked stereotypes of Hispanics, women, and the Southwest. An extended film treatment of the trail, the twelve-episode movie "serial" released in 1937, *The Painted Stallion*, followed a plot even more questionable since it brought together Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett, and Kit Carson to fight an outlaw gang and save a wagon train.³²

The Santa Fe Trail also inspired twentieth-century musicians, though with one exception their compositions garnered little notice. In the late 1930s, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra recorded a symphony, *The Santa Fe Trail*, by Harl McDonald, a composer and the

31. "New Pictures," *Time* 36 (December 23, 1940): 45; "A Western Out of West Point Goes East to Hang John Brown," *Newsweek* 16 (December 30, 1940): 36–37; "An Insidious Attack on The American Dream," *Christian Century* 63 (March 19, 1941): 382; Otis Ferguson, "Resurrection without Life," *New Republic* 104 (January 6, 1941): 20–21; Philip T. Hartung, "Whoa—or West for the Winter," *Commonweal* 33 (December 27, 1940): 256; Oswald Garrison Villard, "History and the Movies," *Saturday Review of Literature* 23 (March 1, 1941): 9.

32. Gwen Bristow, *Jubilee Trail* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1950).

conductor and manager of the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1939 to 1955, but the arrangement did not enter the repertoire of other orchestras. Another classical piece, *Santa Fe Trail Echoes*, for solo viola, was composed in 1992 by Greg A. Steinke and later recorded on a compact disk, *Passion—Music for Viola*. Taking inspiration from the Santa Fe Trail photographs of Joan Myers, published in the 1986 volume *Along the Santa Fe Trail*, this piece literally “echoes” the Santa Fe Trail, with movements reflecting on “Round Mound,” “Dorsey Mansion,” “Bent’s Old Fort,” “Iron Springs Stage Station,” “Ocaté,” “San Miguel,” and “Cañoncito,” all well-known sites along the trail. Again, it does not seem to have entered the contemporary classical repertoire.³³

Much more familiar to the listening public was the popular and often recorded song “Along the Santa Fe Trail,” with music by Will Grosz and lyrics by Al Dubin and Edwina Coolidge, from the 1940 movie *The Santa Fe Trail*. Glenn Miller and his orchestra featured it, as did the Sons of the Pioneers and dozens of country and western singers over the years. It begins, “Angels come to paint the desert nightly / When the moon is beaming brightly / Along the Santa Fe Trail.” Today the opening bars can even be downloaded as a ringtone for a cell phone. With the formation of the Santa Fe Trail Association in 1986 and the establishment of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail in 1987, there was a resurgence of interest in songs from the old trail days, such as those recorded by Mark Gardner in 1997 on his album, *Songs of the Santa Fe Trail and the Far West*. Gardner and fellow cowboy singer Rex Rideout recorded another album in 2003, *Frontier Favorites: Old-Time Music of the Wild West*, which carries an early twentieth century Santa Fe Trail ballad by James Grafton, “Alongside The Santa Fe Trail,” with the lilting lyrics, “Say, pard have ye sighted a schooner / Alongside of the Santa Fe Trail? / They made it here Monday or sooner / With a water keg tied to its tail, / With Daddy and Ma on the mule-seat / And somewhere around on the way / A tow-headed gal on a pinto, A-janglin’ for old Santa Fe.”³⁴

33. The New York Public Library holds a microfilm copy of Harl McDonald’s Symphony No. 1, *The Santa Fe Trail*. See also, Kennedy Center, “The Legend of the Arkansas Traveler,” kennedy-center.org/calendar/?fuseaction=composition&composition_id=3784. For information on composer Greg Steinke, consult gregasteinke.com; and for the photographs that inspired the composer, see Joan Myers and Marc Simmons, *Along the Santa Fe Trail* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986). A search of the Internet reveals many more classical and semi-classical compositions with a Santa Fe Trail theme, all of them relatively unknown.

34. The Internet lists a multitude of entries referencing contemporary Santa Fe Trail songs and recordings. See, for example, with reference

Well into the twentieth century, the periodicals and novels that Americans read, the songs that Americans heard on the radio, and the movies they saw on a Saturday night reflected a continuing interest in the country’s history, including the history of the West. As the decades passed, more and more magazines and a host of books specifically satisfying this interest appeared. They did not offer the history of scholars, but history packaged for popular consumption. A splendid example of the development of popular accounts of the frontier was the series “How the West Was Won,” published over seven issues and lavishly illustrated in *Life Magazine* in 1959. It covered the history of the American West from Lewis and Clark to the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. The Santa Fe Trail rated only brief mention in the section on the settling of the West, which noted that “Independence, Missouri was the starting point for most wagons. Then the trail divided, as the great migration was dividing. The Santa Fe Trail led southwest toward Texas and New Mexico.”³⁵

Although the trail never competed well with the “cowboys, Indians, and outlaws” that so dominated the public’s perception of the American West, its heritage did persist. One of the early ventures in this direction was a monthly journal grandly titled, *Santa Fe Trail Magazine*, published in Santa Fe from July 1913 to May/June 1915. It was partly popular history and partly promotional, its cover carrying the motto, “For the Advancement of New Mexico.” Besides articles on the more attractive tourist sites in the state and on topics such as “Better Roads,” it offered pieces on “The Santa Fe Trail in the Kingdom of Colfax [County],” “Cacti of the Santa Fe Trail,” and “The Old Santa Fe Trail,” by Ralph Emerson Twitchell, the most noted New Mexico historian of his day. As its editor, Fenton J. Spaulding, remarked in the magazine’s third issue, “Do not understand the title of the Santa Fe Trail Magazine to mean that it deals only with Santa Fe. The Old Trail winds over a lot of country. It goes clear to Franklin, Mo., and if we include the old Boon[s] Lick Road it reaches to St. Louis. It is the policy of the Santa Fe

to items mentioned here: lyricstime.com/glenn-miller-along-the-santa-fe-trail-lyrics.html, for the ringtone; historynet.com/interview-with-author-mark-lee-gardner.htm; music.gordfisch.net/oregans/songs/santafetrail.php.

35. “How the West Was Won,” *Life Magazine* 46 (April 6, 1959): 78–104; (April 13, 1959): 76–102; (April 20, 1959): 76–94; (April 27, 1959): 78–n.p.; (May 4, 1959): 74–100; (May 11, 1959): 66–n.p.; (May 18, 1959): 86–n.p. Quotation: 46 (April 20, 1959): 2.

Trail Magazine to reach half way across the continent.” Nonetheless, within two years it had folded.³⁶

A review of magazines that treated the trail, including a list of their trail-related feature articles, reveals the sorts of readers that editors and publishers felt were interested in the Santa Fe Trail and shows how their interests changed over time. Some of these periodicals were fairly obscure and are difficult to locate today; some served very specific markets, and others had millions of readers. A fairly comprehensive list includes:

- *Overland Monthly*—1913—“The Santa Fe Trail” by John Cowan, an extensive and lengthy overview.
- *Overland Monthly*—1914—“An Explorer on the Santa Fe Trail,” by Cardinal Goodwin, profiling Josiah Gregg and his book *Commerce of the Prairies*.
- *Saturday Evening Post*—1923—“The Magnetic West—The Spanish Risk,” by Joseph Hergesheimer, a detailed consideration of trail personalities and events.
- *National Geographic Magazine*—1929—“The Santa Fe Trail, Path to Empire,” by Frederick Simpich, with maps and photographs.
- *National Republic*—1933—“Old Fort Zarah,” by Charles Allen, with the subtitle, “An Outpost in a Land of Savagery Whose Walls Became Foundation Stones for the Habitation of Peace and Prosperity.”
- *Library Journal*—1938—“Kansas City and the Santa Fe Trail,” by Paul Wellman, which notes, “There are two paved motor routes which parallel [the trail], and by motor car the sightseer can view the same country which once fascinated the pioneer trail driver.”
- *Rotarian*—1940—“Hats! Beaver vs. Silk,” by Stanley Vestal, an overview of the fur trade and its demise, profiling Kit Carson; Vestal was one of the more well-known mid-century popular historians of the West.
- *Rotarian*—1941—“Colorado or Bust in ’72,” by Edwin Muller, which encompasses the careers and enterprises of Cyrus Holliday.

36. Volume 1, number 1 of the *Santa Fe Trail Magazine*, published in Santa Fe, N.M., dates from July 1913. It appeared monthly through January 1914. There was no March 1914 issue, when the editorship changed. The final issue was 3:3 (May–June, 1915).

- *Yale Review*—1945—“The Santa Fe Trail,” by Donald Culross Peattie, is rather breezy and short for such an august publication, but asserts, “Of all the great roads by which the American people have surged forward . . . none surpasses the road to Santa Fe in authentic romance.”
- *Frontier Times*—1961—“Uncle Dick,” by Bernice Martin, with the subtitle, “‘Uncle Dick’ was one of the little (less publicized) mountain men—that is, if you call a great trapper, a wonderful trader and a hellacious fighter ‘little.’”
- *Hobbies*—1961—“Arrow Rock Was Missouri’s Frontier,” by Ann Wolf, which especially mentions buildings and houses and their owners associated with the trail.
- *The West*—1967—“Adventures of a Charming Lady,” by Louise Cheney, on Susan Shelby Magoffin and her trip “down the trail.”
- *The West*—1970—“Mountain Man Capitalist,” by Fred Huston, another look at “Uncle Dick” Wooten.
- *Saturday Review*—1971—“New Trail to Santa Fe,” by David Butwin, in his “Booked For Travel” column, with brief mention of the trail.
- *American West*—1974—“Reporter on the Spot,” by Paul Laune, considering George Wilkins Kendall and the Texan-Santa Fe expedition of 1841.
- *American History Illustrated*—1980—“Along the Santa Fé Trail,” by Dee Brown, including an overview of the route of the trail, major events, and personalities.³⁷

37. John L. Cowan, “The Santa Fe Trail,” *Overland Monthly* 62 (October 1913): 317–26; Cardinal Goodwin, “An Explorer on the Santa Fe Trail,” *Overland Monthly* 62 (January 1914): 19–22; Joseph Hergesheimer, “The Magnetic West—The Spanish Risk,” *Saturday Evening Post* 195 (February 17, 1923): 20–21, 140–42, 145; Frederick Simpich, “The Santa Fe Trail, Path to Empire,” *National Geographic Magazine* 56 (August 1920): 213–52; Charles Allen, “Old Fort Zarah,” *National Republic* 2 (July 1933): 4–7; Paul I. Wellman, “Kansas City and the Santa Fe Trail,” *Library Journal* 3 (June 1, 1938): 447–48; Stanley Vestal, “Hats! Beaver vs Silk,” *Rotarian* 57 (November 1940): 17–20; Edwin Muller, “Colorado or Bust in ’72,” *Rotarian* 59 (December 1941): 38–39; Donald Cross Peattie, “The Santa Fe Trail,” *Yale Review* 35 (December 1945): 242–50; Bernice Martin, “Uncle Dick,” *Frontier Times* 39 (Fall 1961): 30–31, 34; Ann Wolf, “Arrow Rock,” *Hobbies* 66 (June 1961): 28–29; Louise Cheney, “Adventures of a Charming Lady,” *The West* 3 (April 1967): 14–15, 49–51; Fred Huston, “Mountain Man Capitalist,” *The West* (February 1970): 28–31, 67–68; David Butwin, “New Trail to Santa Fe,” *Saturday Review* 54 (July 3, 1971): 35–36; Paul Laune, “Reporter on the Spot,” *American West* 11 (November 1974): 4–11; Dee Brown, “Along the Santa Fé Trail,” *American History Illustrated* 15 (October 1980): 8–13, 42–44.



The Santa Fe Trail Association has already begun formulating plans for the trail's upcoming bicentennial celebration, which will include regional, state, and local participants. They were preceded by earlier generations of Kansans, such as those pictured here in 1925 parading through Council Grove to commemorate the centennial of the Santa Fe Trail.

Book-length popular treatments of the Santa Fe Trail also appeared during these years. Perhaps the one with the widest appeal was *The Santa Fe Trail: A Chapter in the Opening of the West*, produced by *Look* magazine in 1946. It was designed to capture growing, postwar public fascination with California and the Southwest. As might be expected, it was handsomely illustrated. It carried the story of the trail from "The Spanish Explorations" to "The Modern Southwest." The dust jacket neatly bracketed the whole trail story: "Then. . . . The trail to Santa Fe was a two-way thoroughfare of international trade. . . . Now. . . . Today the Santa Fe Trail is a highway of steel and concrete. The creaking wagons that rolled painfully over plains have made way for flashing trains, planes and autos."³⁸

Four other popular books on the trail can also be mentioned in this context. The earliest, and still one of the best in the estimation of many trail aficionados, was Robert Duffus's *The Santa Fe Trail*, from 1930. Duffus was a journalist with various newspapers in the 1920s and early 1930s and served on the editorial staff of the *New York Times* from 1937 to 1962. His opening chapter was evocatively titled "Catch Up! Catch Up!" and began, "If you travelled to the Missouri River in the golden

days of the Santa Fe Trail you found yourself at last on the far brink of civilization." In 1939 another animated treatment, *The Old Santa Fe Trail* by Stanley Vestal, appeared. Although he was an English professor at Oklahoma State University, he too emphasized the romantic aspects of the trail. In his bibliography of Santa Fe Trail literature, Jack Rittenhouse noted that Vestal's work was "a standard history for the general reader, with emphasis almost entirely on selected incidents that make exciting reading."³⁹

Ralph Moody's *The Old Trails West: The Stories of the Trails that Made a Nation*, published in 1963, included a chapter on "The Santa Fe Trail," along with other routes west, such as "The

Old Spanish Trail." Moody was primarily a novelist and as the dust jacket on this book says, "*The Old Trails West* is a history with the flavor of fiction." Significantly, in the context of how myth and memory are transmitted, the dust jacket also proclaims, "*The Old Trails West* will enrich your vacation as you speed in comfort over many of these same routes." Following the trail is exactly what Hobart Stocking did in his 1971 *The Road to Santa Fe*. Stocking was a distinguished geologist who encountered the trail during field work and succumbed to its lure. While not exactly an "auto tour," Stocking takes readers from Old Franklin in Missouri to Santa Fe, recording mileages—"About fifteen miles south of Raton, near the fading settlement of Hoxie, is a fork in [the] modern pavement"—and stopping frequently to discourse on the lore of the trail.⁴⁰

Children's and juvenile literature from these decades also provides a link to the history and heritage of the trail.

39. Duffus, *The Santa Fe Trail*. See also Michael L. Olsen, "That Fabulous Procession: An Appreciation of Robert L. Duffus, Author of *The Santa Fe Trail*," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly* 9 (February 1995): 7–10. Stanley Vestal, *The Old Santa Fe Trail* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939); and Rittenhouse, *The Santa Fe Trail*, 218.

40. Ralph Moody, *The Old Trails West: The Stories of the Trails that Made a Nation* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1963); and Hobart E. Stocking, *The Road to Santa Fe* (New York: Hastings House, 1971), 276.

38. Editors of *Look*, *The Santa Fe Trail: A Chapter in the Opening of the West* (New York: Random House, 1946).

There are over a dozen fiction and non-fiction books in this category, published between 1912 and the 1980s. One of the earliest was part of the popular Motorcycle Chums series, Lincoln Andrews's *Motorcycle Chums on the Santa Fe Trail*. Over the years, Kit Carson seems to have sold well—we have Shannon Garst's 1942 *Kit Caron, Trail Blazer and Scout*; Augusta Stevenson's 1945 *Kit Carson, Boy Trapper*; and Ralph Moody's 1955 *Kit Carson and the Wild Frontier* among others. Holling C. Holling's *Tree in the Trail*, primarily for younger children, uses the device of a tree in central Kansas as a witness to the pageant of the Santa Fe Trail from the time of the native peoples forward. It was published in 1942 and is still in print. The trail was also included in the famous Landmark Series of American history books for elementary and middle grades. Random House issued 122 different titles in this series, including Hopkins Adams's *The Santa Fe Trail* in 1951. It was later "dramatized with music and sound effects" on an LP album.⁴¹

National legislation that reflected American's interest in the nation's history also benefited, directly and indirectly, the continuing legacy of the Santa Fe Trail throughout the twentieth century. The Antiquities Act of 1906, stimulated by a desire to protect Native American and Hispanic historical sites in the Southwest, laid the foundation for the creation of a system of federally administered "national monuments." The National Park Service began its work in 1916, by which time there were already fourteen national parks and twenty-one national monuments. The Antiquities Act placed all these entities under National Park Service management. In 1935 the far-reaching and profound Preservation of Historical Sites Act affirmed a national policy "to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States." The Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937, which included provision for setting aside "national grasslands," also served the Santa Fe Trail well in that portions of the trail were incorporated in the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands in Kansas and Colorado.

41. Lincoln Andrews, *Motorcycle Chums on the Santa Fe Trail* (Chicago, Ill.: M. A. Donohue, 1912); Shannon Garst, *Kit Carson, Trail Blazer and Scout* (New York: J. Messner, 1942); Augusta Stevenson, *Kit Carson, Boy Trapper* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1945); Ralph Moody, *Kit Carson and the Wild Frontier* (New York: Random House, 1955); Holling C. Holling, *Tree in the Trail* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1942); Samuel Hopkins Adams, *The Santa Fe Trail* (New York: Random House, 1951); Adams, *The Santa Fe Trail*, script by Elsie Bell, n.p., n.d., 1 LP.

The most important Congressional action for the future of the Santa Fe Trail came in 1968, with the passage of the National Trails System Act. It dealt only with national scenic and recreational trails, but was amended in 1978 to include national historic trails. In 1987, under the aegis of this amendment, Congress designated the old Santa Fe Trail as the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Besides this designation, four units of the National Park System are strung like beads along the Santa Fe Trail today, just as they were in the days of the old trail. They include Fort Larned National Historic Site in Kansas, created in 1964; Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site in Colorado, established in 1960; and in New Mexico, Fort Union National Monument, dating from 1954, and Pecos National Historic Park, formed in 1965. Each has a significant relationship to the Santa Fe Trail. Troops from Fort Larned and Fort Union guarded traffic along the trail, Bent's Old Fort was the most significant venue for trade with the native peoples in the days of the old trail, and trail travelers never failed to catch sight of the ruins of Pecos Pueblo as they approached Santa Fe.

Intertwined here was the birth of the Santa Fe Trail Association in 1986, whose members have dedicated themselves, as stated in the association's bylaws, "to protect and preserve the Santa Fe Trail and to promote awareness of the historical legacy associated with it." Dr. Marc Simmons, a New Mexico historian, is regarded as the "father of the Santa Fe Trail Association." In the mid-1970s the National Geographic Society asked Dr. Simmons to travel the Santa Fe Trail and write a chapter on it to be featured in *Trails West*, a society publication encompassing the stories of six historic western trails. As Dr. Simmons later remarked, "By the conclusion of my first round-trip tour of the trail to Missouri and back to Santa Fe, I had become a confirmed Santa Fe Trail addict."⁴²

In 1986 a conference on the history and heritage of the trail was organized by a handful of trail enthusiasts from Colorado, Kansas, and New Mexico, including Dr. Simmons. To general amazement, 230 participants traveled to Trinidad, Colorado, to attend. Given this high level of interest, a steering committee decided to hold another, similar meeting in Hutchinson, Kansas, in the fall of 1987. It too was a success, registering over 350 attendees. By then the Santa Fe Trail Association had been officially chartered, elected officers, published four issues of its quarterly magazine *Wagon Tracks*,

42. Simmons, *Following the Santa Fe Trail* (1984), xiv.



Both myth and memory can be credited for the enduring legacy of the Santa Fe Trail. Without myths, memories fade; without accurate and documented memory, myth becomes fable and floats free of reality. Motivated, perhaps, by a mixture of myth and memory, these Kansans commemorate the 1961 state centennial with a "Santa Fe Trail Reride" through the streets of Council Grove.

and enrolled over three hundred charter members. Twenty-five years later the association is still preserving, protecting, and promoting the Santa Fe Trail.⁴³

The bicentennial of the Santa Fe Trail, marking William Becknell's initial foray, will be celebrated in 2021. The Santa Fe Trail Association has already begun formulating plans, which will include regional, state, and local participants. Both myth and memory can be credited for the enduring legacy of the trail that makes such a commemoration possible. Without myths, memories fade; without accurate and documented memory, myth

becomes fable and floats free of reality.

The story of the Santa Fe Trail has escaped these extremes. Since the demise of the trail in the 1880s, a solid interest in its history and the people who trod it has persisted. Its impact on America's political, economic, and, most importantly, cultural development has continued to be investigated and recognized. Tourists still regard it as worthy of travel, as they have since the days of the stagecoach and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. Their interest and that of Americans in general has been stimulated for over a century by historians, trail aficionados, chambers of commerce, the National Park Service, song writers, novelists,

and movie producers. In turn, continuing public demand has kept these responses alive. Today, given Google Earth, GPS mapping of the trail by the Santa Fe Trail Association, and other telecommunication technologies, we can continue to walk in the footsteps of the fur trappers, traders, soldiers and their families, and freighters who knew the Santa Fe Trail so intimately. The motto of the Santa Fe Trail Association rings true from Missouri, through Kansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado, to New Mexico—"The Santa Fe Trail Lives On!" [KH]

43. "Trinidad Symposium," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Council Newsletter* 1 (November 1986): 1; "Hutchinson Symposium," *Wagon Tracks: Santa Fe Trail Association Newsletter* 2 (November 1987): 1.