

MARKING THE SANTA FE TRAIL

America's Highway of the Ages, Every Rod of Which Is Said to Have Cost a Life in the Winning of the West



The Old Stage Station at Bluewater (The Original Adobe Structure on the Right)

JUST at the moment when the movement to mark the historic Santa Fe Trail is reaching its climax and consummation, by one of those ironic freaks of fate that so often come to cap the best laid plans of men with an anti-climax the most notable remaining memorial of the old highway is threatened with imminent destruction. This is the Fonda, later known as the Exchange hotel, which was the southwestern terminus of the trail from the beginning to the end of the commerce of the prairies. It stands at the southeastern corner of the plaza in Santa Fe, and was the rendezvous of all the freighters, scouts, plainsmen, bad men, Indian fighters, gamblers, prospectors, pioneers, travelers, soldiers and settlers in the southwest when Santa Fe was the chief mart and emporium beyond the Missouri. After bull team traffic came to a close on account of the successful rivalry of the railroad the old hotel fell upon evil days, and soon degenerated into a rooming house for sojourners in the City of Holy Faith. Then the corner apartments were used as a meat market, while the others were rented out for housekeeping rooms. But within the past few months the old adobe walls have begun to bulge alarmingly, making it necessary to prop them up with heavy timbers. Naturally the "roomers" sought safer quarters, the butcher moved elsewhere and the hostelry is now vacant. Then an enterprising merchant bought the property, and has announced it as his purpose to raze the historic block upon the site.

This impending disappearance of the last relic of the Santa Fe Trail remaining in the city of Santa Fe is to be compensated by the erection of a memorial arch. This will be placed in the plaza, directly opposite the Fonda, at a cost approximating \$1,500. A bill to that effect was passed by the legislative assembly in 1903. It was provided that the work should be superintended by a commission consisting of the mayor of Santa Fe, the superintendent of the Territorial penitentiary, and a third person to be appointed by the governor. Nothing has yet been done, but only the other day Gov. Curry appointed Bradford L. Prince to act as the third member of the commission, and the building of the memorial will proceed without unnecessary delay. By a further provision of the assembly, the arch must be of stone quarried in New Mexico, and the work must be performed by convicts from the Territorial penitentiary.

Few Relics Now Left.

The remaining bonafide relics of this highway to the southwest are few. Through a large part of its length, the trail is now followed by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad. In many places the rails and ties were laid along the exact line followed by the old wagon trains. Crossing the Raton Pass of New Mexico, the trail is distinctly visible from the car windows; and near the summit of the divide may be seen one of the old halting places—a road house on the old Southern Overland stage route. A few miles further on is Starvation Peak, a landmark familiar to every traveler in the old days, where it is said that a number of early traders were besieged by the Indians until they died of thirst and hunger.

As the trade with the southwest grew in volume and importance, numerous branches radiated from the main highway. One of the most important of these extended south to El Paso and Chihuahua, and another ran north through Taos. On the Taos branch, at Alcalde is still standing, in an excellent state of preservation, the old

corral and roadhouse, now used as a warehouse for a country store. After the discovery of gold in California, the Santa Fe Trail became a mere reach on the longer journey to the goldcoast. Some travelers followed the Southern Overland route by way of El Paso and Yuma, and others took the shorter but more difficult and dangerous Central Overland route, past old Fort Wingate. On the Central Overland route there are still standing a number of the old roadhouses. One of these is located at Bluewater, N. M., a few miles west of the site of old Fort Wingate. Two more are standing within ten miles of Adamana, Ariz.—one seven miles northeast and the other about the same distance northwest. Of the natural landmarks of the Central Overland route, Buzzard Rock, in the great Mojave Desert of southern California, near Barstow, is deserving of mention.

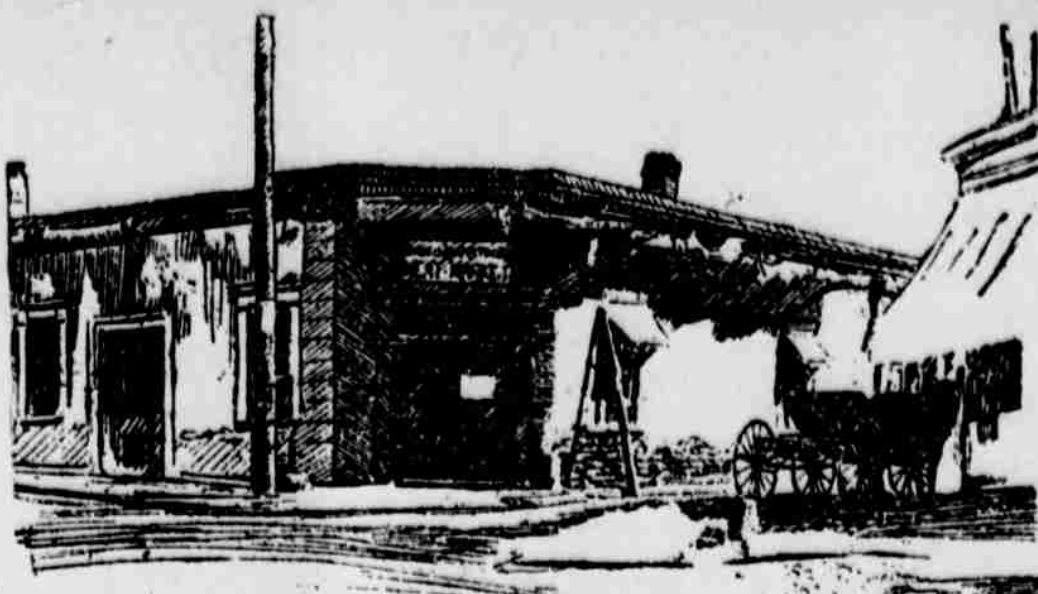
Mark Course of Highway.

When the relics of the trail have become so few, only a third of a century after the last of the great wagon caravans traversed the long streaks of white dust outlined in the somber gray of the plains, it is evident that every trace of it is in danger of speedy obliteration. That it may not fade to a mere tradition, the Daughters of the American Revolution and other patriotic organizations and individuals have taken steps to mark its course by means of suitable monuments and tablets. Wherever it is followed or crossed by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad that corporation is providing suitable markers; and the state legislatures of Kansas and Colorado have granted appropriations for the same purpose. In several states contributions have been received from the children of the public schools, and the work of marking the trail has now progressed so far that it is certain to be carried to a successful end. It is planned to place four granite monuments in each county it traversed, and between these cement posts will be placed to mark every mile.

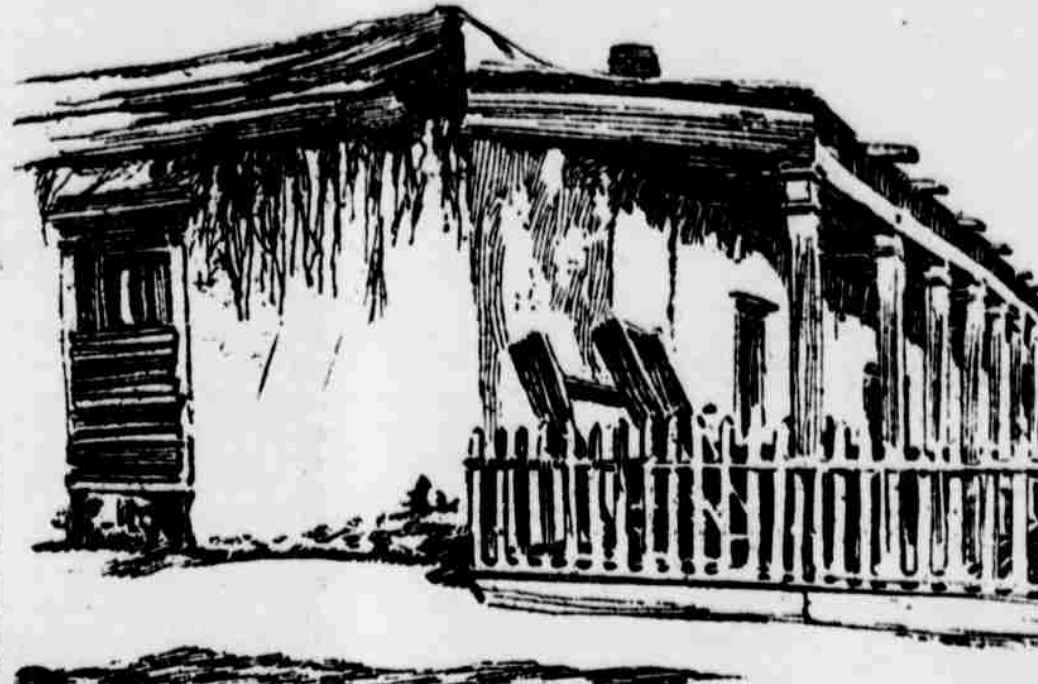
Trade routes like trade centers are determined by nature, rather than by the arbitrary caprices of men. The physical features of a country constitute the main factor that controls the upbuilding of its great cities and that decides the direction, character and destination of its commerce. A little knowledge of geography, therefore, shows why the Santa Fe Trail played a part so important in the development of the west and southwest. It lay along the line of least resistance to trade and travel between the region of the Great Plains and the region of the Great Central Plateau. To-day it is followed by one of the most important of the world's railroad systems. A generation ago it was traversed by vast caravans of clumsy wagons, conveying a commerce that reached the high-water mark of \$150,000 in value annually. More than 350 years ago it was the route followed by the Spanish explorers on their journeys through the unknown and savage country that they believed it was their mission to conquer and to convert. If we could lift the veil that hides the past history of aboriginal America, it is probable that we would behold the march and countermarch of armies of painted and plumed savages and hordes of nomads of plain and desert moving on to conquest or fleeing in wild retreat over this hoary highway of the ages.

First Expedition Over Trail.

The first recorded commercial expedition from the east to the west over the route that afterward became known as the Santa Fe Trail was out-



The Fonda, or Exchange Hotel, Terminus of the Trail



Road House on the Taos Branch of the Trail at Alcalde, N. Mex.

fitted by William Morrison of Kaskaskia, Ill., in 1804, and was dispatched for the far southwest in charge of a trader named La Lande. He never returned, and it is commonly believed that he reached Santa Fe in safety and there settled down to enjoy life at the expense of his employer. It was a profitable trip for La Lande, if not for Morrison. Two years later Lieut. Zebulon M. Pike set forth upon his famous expedition. His report revealed to Americans the opportunities for profitable trade with northern Mexico; led to the establishment of the great and remunerative traffic over the Santa Fe Trail, and resulted ultimately in the war of conquest against the southern republic, and in the annexation of the empire of the southwest to the United States. Before Pike's expedition little was known of distances, directions, obstacles or opportunities in the great and undefined region called "Kansas." He mapped the way from the Great Bend of the Arkansas to the Rocky mountains, and thence to Santa Fe and Chihuahua, blazing the trail for the irresistible progress of the American pioneers beyond the Missouri.

After Pike—who was anything but a trader—the first traders to journey to Santa Fe were those of the Baird, McKnight and Chambers party, consisting of 12 men, who started in 1806. They were seized, taken to Chihuahua, and cast into prison, where they remained for nine heart-breaking years, or until the blossoming of Iturbide's power, when they were set free. On the return journey McKnight was killed by Indians, but Baird and Chambers reached civilization in safety, and in 1822 organized another expedition. This was late in starting, so that the animals froze to death, and the traders had to winter at the crossing of the Arkansas. In 1821, William Becknell started for the Missouri river, intending to trade with the Indians of the Arkansas valley; but he was met by some Mexicans, who persuaded him to continue on to Santa Fe. His trip was successful, and the next year he tried it again, taking three wagons along. Although he was not the first to make the journey, yet he is known as the "Father of the Santa Fe Trail." That is the tribute the world pays to success.

Turning Point of Destiny.

Thus was inaugurated the first overland commerce by way of the Santa Fe Trail. The journey was small in comparison with some of the trade routes established by the Spaniards long before in South America, and almost trifling compared with that over the Oregon Trail that came shortly after; but it was at least three times as long as any commercial journey by land ever before undertaken by the American people, and in danger and hardship it was without previous parallel in our national life. It marked one of the turning points of destiny, because it was the beginning of the great drama of the Winning of the West—the great west beyond the Missouri. History has not yet done justice to the Santa Fe Trail.

The traffic across 800 miles of desert

and wilderness to the inland capital of a foreign province was at first exclusively by pack train. When Becknell employed wagons on his second trip great surprise was expressed that no serious obstacles were encountered to their progress. That fact shows how true it is that the Santa Fe Trail was a natural highway. At the beginning of the southwestern trade little trouble was experienced with Indians. Not until the Texans and some irresponsible traders began Indian baiting were the redmen provoked to scalp lifting as a measure of retaliation.

Journey One of Hardship.

Nevertheless, the long distance that had to be traversed over waterless deserts, the heat of the treeless plains and the sandstorms and tempests that sometimes overtook the caravans made the journey, under the most favorable circumstances, one of difficulty, hardship and discouragement. When the Indians had been goaded into a state of chronic hostility freighting over the trail became anything but a holiday pastime. In later years, as the traffic grew in volume and importance, the dangers and difficulties were lessened by the establishment of military posts at intervals, but these could not afford perfect security. It was not until after the Indians were corralled on reservations, about 1870, that travel became reasonably safe, and even after that occasional war parties left the reservations and returned to their old trade of murder and plunder. It was the custom of traders to outfit at Independence, Mo. From there the wagons traveled singly to Council Grove, on the Cottonwood, where they waited for others to form a caravan of sufficient strength to be able to repel any probable attack. Often 200 men or more were thus banded together. Each wagon was drawn by eight mules or horses or by six or eight oxen, the white canvas covered Conestoga wagons, made in Pittsburg, being employed.

After the first tentative years of the traffic oxen were the preferred draught animals. For better protection against the Indians, it was customary for four wagons to travel abreast. In addition to the drivers, a number of horsemen always accompanied the trains, their duties being to kill buffalo, antelope and other game to supply fresh meat to the company, and to keep a sharp lookout for signs of Indians. Before the start was made a captain was chosen, and the long journey was made under his orders, under something like military organization. Camping places were selected by the scouts in advance, with a view to securing plenty of water and good pasturage for the stock. At night the wagons were arranged in circular form, to serve as a fort in case of attack. Watches and guards were posted and relieved at frequent intervals. Cooks and scouts were employed, and everything possible was done to obviate danger and to expedite the trip. But in spite of all precautions, attacks by Indians were common, and it is sometimes said that every rod of the Santa Fe Trail is marked by a grave.

SOME TAX SCHEMES

ORIGINAL METHODS ADOPTED BY FOREIGN NATIONS.

Seems That Governments Can Usually Be Relied On to Develop Ideas When Raising of Money Is in Question.

Some queer expedients have frequently been adopted by the European governments to tax their people. The method usually devised is some so-called "public safety" measure, which will bring in money if it is followed and will still have the same effect if it is disobeyed.

In this class was one which the German government utilized at one time. It sent out charwomen with instructions to inspect and clean the houses of everybody. If the people objected they were fined, and if they didn't they had to pay a charge for the services thus rendered. Altogether the national funds were augmented by \$5,000,000 in this way.

On another occasion only a certain kind of tooth powder was allowed to be sold in the stores—that kind made in the government factories. Rather than pay the high price demanded, the people preferred not to use any dentifrice at all, and the tax failed in its purpose.

Austria is another country that has succeeded in raising money by forcing cleanliness upon its people. Under a penalty of \$50 Austria demands that every householder shall have his chimney swept at least once a month for fear of fire, the work to be done by the government sweep. She found the measure most lucrative, as she charged a tax of 45 cents for every chimney cleaned.

Italy has a plan for raising money that has been called "a tax on imbeciles." This is the state lottery, from which she raises a considerable sum. Out of the numbers from 1 to 90 every Saturday night five winning numbers are drawn. For the player to win it is necessary to draw one or more of these numbers. If you draw one right you gain 14 times what you paid—that is, \$5 probabilities in favor of the government. If you draw two numbers you gain 250 times what you paid, but you have only ten probabilities in your favor, while the government has 3,250. If you draw three you gain 4,250 times what you risked, but while the probabilities in your favor are still ten, those of the government are 117,470, and the same proportion is maintained if you draw four or all of the numbers.

France succeeds in raising \$140,000,000 yearly out of stamp duties. When you visit gay Paris your hotel bills come to you with a stamp on them. Every check drawn bears an extra receipt stamp, across which you must sign your name. Theater tickets must be stamped. Even posters on the boards are stamped, the value varying with the size of the bills.

For municipal purposes its towns also adopt queer expedients. Every morsel of food, drink or fuel must pay a tax, while Paris puts a tax of one penny on all spirits, besides mulcting landlords with a 2½% and tenants a 1% tax.

Holland has similarly levied several queer taxes. Besides imposing a duty of 2 cents on every person who enters a tavern before noon, she used to levy taxes on those who visited places of entertainment, on marriages and on many other things.

If a person were buried out of the district to which he belonged his nearest of kin would have to pay twice the amount that would have had to be paid had the burial taken place in his own district. Even boots and shoes were taxed, regulated by the size of the article—the smaller the shoe the smaller the tax.

In Switzerland, to be exempt from military service, one must pay a tax of \$25 a year, no matter whether one be a cripple or an invalid.

Try the Rest Cure.

If overworked homemakers whose nerves are "worn to frazzle edge" would acquire the habit of sitting or lying absolutely still, relaxed and motionless, for five or ten minutes twice a day, they would soon see improvement. The mind must be relaxed, worries dropped, thoughts wandering to pleasant things. You will probably try this several times before you get it right, but after a little practice you will find that it yields large returns, far surpassing the sacrifice of the time it takes.

His Difficulty.

"You wrong me," said Plodding Pete, "when you say I ain't willin' to work. 'Un jes' dyin' to work." "Then what's the trouble?" "I'm too conscientious. Whenever I git a job I'm so anxious to fill it well dat I gits stage fright."

The Considerate Tenants.

Landlord—Sir, the other tenants will not stay in the house if you insist on playing the cornet.
Mr. Toots—I'm glad of that. They were annoying.