

Desert Tracks

Publication of the Southern Trails Chapter
of the Oregon-California Trails Association

November 2009



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Map showing the Southern Trail from Santa Fe to Southern California, with cutoffs and alternates in Arizona, plus four trails from Texas and Arkansas connecting to the Southern Trail. These trails will be included, together with the Salt Lake-Los Angeles wagon trail, in the Southern Trails Chapter's proposal for National Historic Trails status for the southern emigrant routes.
cartography by Tom Jonas

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The Southern Trails Chapter Receives the OCTA Board of Directors' Approval for our National Historic Trail Project.

At the Board of Directors meeting held during OCTA's annual convention in August 2009 at Loveland, Colorado, the Southern Trails Chapter made a request to the board to approve and support an effort to obtain National Historic Trail status for the Southern Trail to California. The request was unanimously approved by the board.

The proposal identified the Southern Trail as originating in Santa Fe, New Mexico, traveling down the Rio Grande, turning west in southern New Mexico, traveling through Arizona, and terminating at San Diego and Los Angeles in Southern California. This is shown, along with alternates and cutoffs, as the Southern Trail on the map on the inside cover. The four routes seen on the map that feed into the Southern Trail from the states of Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas were not forgotten, but identified as phase-two trails, to be included later as chapter resources allow.

Following board approval, the project was circulated among OCTA's legislative committee and discussed with federal agency partners. These groups recommended expanding the proposal to include three gold rush routes to Southern California cited in the "Recommendations for Future Study" section of the National Park Service's 1999 *Comprehensive Management and Use Plan for the California Trail*. (The plan can be downloaded from the website <http://www.nps.gov/cali/parkmgmt/planning.htm>.) These

are the "Cooke-Graham Wagon Road to Southern California, 1846-48," which is the same as the Southern Trail to California discussed above; the "Southern Routes to California – 1849," which are the above-mentioned "feeder" routes that connected with the Southern Trail from the east; and the "Mormon Trail to Southern California – 1848," which was the Salt Lake City/Los Angeles wagon road that overlaps the Old Spanish Trail in Nevada and California.

While the Southern Trails Chapter is concerned about over-committing its limited resources, it has agreed to expand the plan. The positive aspects of following the recommended expansion of the plan are as follows:

- 1) By conforming to the approved 1999 *Comprehensive Management and Use Plan*, the project will be viewed more favorably by Congress, and hence it will be easier to obtain legislative support.
- 2) The expanded plan will be more favorably received by our Federal Agency Partners.
- 3) OCTA has committed to help us recruit new members and volunteers in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma.
- 4) OCTA's Legislative Affairs team will develop a Legislative Action Plan for use in helping solicit legislative support in congressional districts along the length of the trail.

The Southern Trails Chapter plans to launch its "Southern Trail to California Project" on November 13–15, 2009, at its fall meeting in Fort Mojave, Arizona. Once under way, members can follow the progress of the project at our website (southern-trails.org) and in future issues of *Desert Tracks*.

***Albert Eddins, President
OCTA Southern Trails Chapter***

From the Editors

A major theme of this issue is the trail from Fort Smith to Santa Fe that was used by a number of emigrants to connect to the Southern Trail from Santa Fe to Los Angeles. We include an article by David Miller, who describes his work with Jack Beale Smith to locate the trail in western Oklahoma and eastern New Mexico. A brief article by Marc Simmons relates the experiences of William Chamberlain, who left Fort Smith early in 1849 on his way over the Southern Trail to the California gold fields. We review Patricia Etter's new book on William R. Goulding, who also traveled from Fort Smith to Santa Fe and then to California in 1849.

This topic is very timely, as explained in the article by Bert Eddins. In the effort to obtain National Historic Trails status for the southern routes, the Southern Trails Chapter has been asked to include the trails through Oklahoma and Texas which connected to the Southern Trail.

Following the article "Whatever Happened to James Colin Brewster" by Gary Vitale in the December 2007 issue of *Desert Tracks*, we became interested in learning what more is known about Brewster's stay in Socorro, New Mexico. We contacted Paul Harden, a historian in the Socorro area with an expertise in the local historic trails. We present an edited version of our e-mail exchange with Harden, where he discusses the historic background, as well as some of his recent findings concerning members of Brewster's emigrant party. We also include an article that Harden wrote which gives his reasoning as to the probable location of the Colonia that Brewster established in the Socorro area.

This fall, the Trail Turtles returned to map in the vicinity of Dragoon, Arizona. This was the Turtle's 25th mapping trip, as well as the 50th wedding anniversary of Harland and Rose Ann Tompkins, pioneer founders of our chapter. Bravo, Trail Turtles! And congratulations, Harland and Rose Ann!

Deborah and Jon Lawrence

Letter to the Editors

Dear Editors,

The new format for *Desert Tracks* is quite spiffy. There was one little slip, however, that is easy to make. On page 21, the caption under the photo reads "Carson and Frémont." Trouble is, that's not Frémont, even though almost everyone believes it is. The truth has surfaced in just the last few years.

Taos author Blanche Grant started the mistake in 1926 when she published *Kit Carson's Own Story of His Life* and first published the photograph of the two men, identified as Carson and Frémont. She credited the image to historian Ralph Emerson Twitchell. Probably he was the one who decided that "the bearded one" must be Kit's companion, since Frémont wore a similar beard.

We know now that the man with Carson was actually Edwin O. Perrin, born in Springfield, Ohio, in 1822. At the time of the Civil War, he was selected to oversee the delivery of clothing and equipment to the New Mexico Volunteers, including Kit's regiment. In early August, Perrin arrived at Fort Union riding the mail wagon ahead of the slow moving Army supply train. He then went on to Santa Fe. He was something of a showboat and persuaded Kit to pose with him for the daguerreotype. He also had pictures made of himself riding a burro and sitting in a studio with a phony "Indian" wearing a warbonnet and carrying a bow and arrows. Lee Burke, the leading authority on Carson images, thinks these images could only have been made in Santa Fe or Albuquerque, and he favors the latter place. Perrin seems to have fled back east during the Confederate invasion. In New York, he had sets of his New Mexico photos made up as CDVs (*cartes de visite*) to hand out to admirers.

David Roberts had the disputed image on the cover of the hardback edition of his *A Newer World, Carson and Frémont*. When he and the publisher learned of their mistake, they went to a different cover on the paperback.

Marc Simmons



Carson and Perrin, the latter mistakenly identified as Frémont in the Spring 2009 issue of *Desert Tracks*.

trader Josiah Gregg from Fort Smith through Indian Territory to Santa Fe. At James Edwards' trading post at Little River, Goulding met trader Cherokee Jesse Chisholm and was able to witness the Green Corn Dance, of which he provides a colorful account. In Santa Fe, where the Knickerbocker Association was dissolved, he met frontiersman Kit Carson. On their way south to Albuquerque, the reduced group of Knickerbockers passed by Pueblo villages, which Goulding describes in his journal.

Of particular interest to our readers who attended OCTA's 2008 Yuma symposium will be the next leg of his journey – along the Gila River to its junction with the Colorado River at the Yuma crossing. Although he admired many Indian tribes he came into contact with along the route, Goulding had negative views of certain Apache bands. He also refers to the Quechan as “savages,” describing a group of them devouring the meat of a roasted mule “with as much relish as our epicurean would do from the leg of a chicken.”

Book Review

California Odyssey: An Overland Journey on the Southern Trails, 1849.

By William R. Goulding. Edited by Patricia A. Etter. Norman: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2009.

ISBN 978-0-87062-373-8.

360 pages, maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, appendices. Hardback, \$45.

William Goulding (1806-1865) traveled to California over the southern route in 1849 as a member of the Knickerbocker Exploring Company of New York. Housed in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, Goulding's gold rush journal contains the details of his seven-month overland trip. Introduced, edited, and annotated by Patricia A. Etter, *California Odyssey: An Overland Journey on the Southern Trails, 1849* is, in our view, one of the most interesting and informative journals of overland travel from the Gold Rush era.

Goulding's group traveled from New York to Fort Smith, Arkansas, and then followed the old trail of

At Rancho Santa Ana del Chino, Isaac Williams offered hospitality to Goulding and his friends at his large adobe home. Etter asserts that Goulding provides one of the most detailed descriptions that we have of this historic ranch, which is in present-day San Bernardino County, California. Goulding wrote the first entry in William's Register Book, a major source of information about who traveled the Southern Trail. Williams asked Goulding to deliver a letter to the military governor of California in Monterey, so instead of heading for the southern mines, Goulding traveled north on the Mission Trail to Monterey where he sojourned during the California constitutional convention. During this period he met not only the last military governor of California, General Bennet C. Riley, but John Sutter and John Frémont as well. Perhaps Goulding had grown weary of adventure because instead of prospecting, he returned east and was back in New York in time to be counted in the census of 1850.

A careful observer with a keen eye for detail, Goulding offers information on the southern overland trail. His journal details the plants, reptiles, animals, and birds that he sees along the way. For example, he describes

a large flock of the now-extinct Carolina Parrots that almost took his cap off “with the flapping of their wings as they swept by” and the grasshoppers who swarmed by him, “like a live cloud sweeping over the prairie.” Many of Goulding’s entries concern the frontiersmen and military officers whom he encountered, as well as his fellow Knickerbockers. Most interesting is his description of the Native American groups he meets along the route, including the Cherokees, Choctaws, Kiowas, Comanches, Apaches, Pimas, and Papagos.

Recently retired as Curator of the Labriola Center, the American Indian Research Library at Arizona State University, Patricia Etter has done an outstanding job of editing and annotating Goulding’s journal. The extensive explanatory footnotes are highly informative and illuminating. Etter’s introduction provides background on Goulding’s origins, his education, his professional career as a designer and manufacturer of surgical instruments in New York City, and his later life following his overland journey, which included his participation in the Civil War as a medical steward in army hospitals in Washington, D.C. Four maps created by cartographer Tom Jonas enable the reader to follow Goulding’s route to California. The armchair reader’s journey is also enhanced by Etter’s modern photographs of sites along the trail. Moreover, she supplements each section of the narrative with several introductory paragraphs, situating the reader in the context of the chapter. Her appendices include a short reminiscence by John Hoyt, another member of the Knickerbocker Company who, after reaching Santa Fe, was among the party to leave Goulding’s group and attempt to take the Old Spanish Trail. Plagued by floods and bad weather, Hoyt’s party soon turned south and followed the Gila Trail as well, reuniting with Goulding at Isaac Williams’ rancho.

Goulding’s narrative is a Southwest treasure. It will be appreciated by anyone with an interest in California Gold Rush literature and southwestern overland trails.

Deborah and Jon Lawrence

Sites in Oklahoma and New Mexico on the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail

by David Miller

Using Sea Shells to Map the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail in Oklahoma

Andy Wallace¹ first introduced me to Jack Beale Smith² in Flagstaff in the early 1990’s. Jack and I share a common interest in the emigrant wagon trails across northern Arizona. Jack has located and marked the Beale Wagon Road³ across Arizona, while I am interested in locating and mapping topographical engineer A. W. Whipple’s 35th parallel railroad survey⁴ across the same terrain. About 18 months ago, Jack retired and moved to Oklahoma City and, at about the same time, I retired to Norman, Oklahoma. Jack’s retirement project is to locate the route of the Beale Wagon Road from Fort Smith, Arkansas, across Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. Mine is to locate and map Whipple’s 1853 railroad survey route through the same area. Hence, for the past 18 months Jack and I have been working together on determining the location of one of the most neglected segments of the Southern Emigrant Trail – the stretch between Fort Smith and Santa Fe.

When Jack and I began our research on the emigrant trail west of Oklahoma City, we noticed that Beale and Whipple, as well as several of the 1849 emigrants, mentioned finding sea shells on the trail in western Oklahoma. French geologist Jules Marcou,⁵ traveling with Whipple in 1853, examined the terrain near what Whipple called Comet Creek, in Custer County, Oklahoma. (Whipple named this creek for the Encke Comet that appeared on the horizon in August 1853; it is now called Barnitz Creek.) Marcou came upon several outcroppings of Cretaceous oyster shells, known to science as *Texigryphaea navia*. He had seen similar shells in Europe, and he correctly dated them to the Lower Cretaceous, when a shallow sea covered much of Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. In Custer County, Marcou became the

first geologist to recognize the existence of Lower Cretaceous rocks in North America (Fay, 37-43). Since Edward F. Beale mentioned these same shells, Jack and I were able to use these outcroppings to map both the emigrant trail and Beale's Wagon Road through what is today Custer County, Oklahoma.

Sea Shells on the Pyramid: Jules Marcou and Geological Controversy

Most of the emigrants mentioned the buttes and mesas jutting up along the edge of the Llano Estacado or Staked Plains in the vicinity of modern Tucumcari, New Mexico. The emigrant road ran almost straight west through these mesas about eight miles south of modern Tucumcari, past the Mesa Redonda, and through a valley known as Plaza Larga. Plaza Larga was a favorite Comanche camp ground. Several emigrants found Comanches camping there in 1849.⁶ New Mexicans used Plaza Larga as a summer sheep pasture. Most emigrants mentioned a "Tucumcari Butte," but they were referring to the modern Mesa Redonda, which at that time was called Big Tucumcari. The Southern Trail ran beneath the northern escarpment of Big Tucumcari. Little Tucumcari – today's Tucumcari Mountain – is about seven miles north of the emigrant trail, and would not have been visited by those in a rush to get to California.



Texigryphaea navia collected by Miller and Smith from Marcou's site in western Oklahoma. *photo by David Miller*



Jack Beale Smith examines the evidence. *photo by David Miller*

Pyramid Mountain, an outlier of Circle S Mesa, juts up just south of the emigrant road about eight miles west of Mesa Redonda. Pyramid Mountain is designated as Lover's Peak on most modern maps. On September 22, 1853, several members of Whipple's surveying team, including Möllhausen⁷ and Marcou, climbed up the 500-foot peak to examine the strata which had been laid bare along its northern face. Near the summit, Marcou discovered a thin layer of fossil oyster shells, almost identical to the *Texigryphaea* shells he had seen in Oklahoma. He concluded that the lower strata of Pyramid Rock were Triassic, while the upper strata were Jurassic rather than early Cretaceous as the presence of these oyster shells might have suggested. This conclusion set off a 40-year firestorm of debate in the American scientific community concerning the actual age of the upper strata of the Pyramid, as well as the age of the North American continent. Two of Marcou's major antagonists were James Hall⁸ and William Blake.⁹ In his later years, Blake was well known as the territorial geologist of Arizona and as a professor of geology at the University of Arizona. He would have played an important role as geologist on Beale's Wagon Road survey through Arizona, had he not backed out at Fort Defiance due to ill health. Professor Barry Kues¹⁰ of the University of New Mexico, who has written an insightful study of the



The Pyramid, seen from the east. *photo by David Miller*

Marcou-Blake-Hall controversy, has concluded that, for the most part, Marcou was correct.

The Capture of the Texas-Santa Fe Expedition at Laguna Colorada

October 4, 1841, was a bad day for McLeod's Texas-Santa Fe Expedition.

The expedition had initially been organized into five companies of 40 to 50 men each, including an artillery company that manned a brass six-pounder. After adding the merchants, teamsters, servants, journalists, and adventurers, this Texas army totaled a little over 300 men. They had set out in mid-June from Austin to Santa Fe with two objectives: to divert the Santa Fe trade to Texas and to annex New Mexico.¹¹

On October 4, the Texas Pioneers, as they dubbed themselves, were encamped on a muddy, red colored water hole known to the locals as Laguna Colorada, situated a little over 20 miles southwest of the modern city of Tucumcari. The Texans were in serious straits. They had come to the end of a dreary 700-mile march. Their journey across Texas had been a living nightmare. They never had a clear idea of how to get to Santa Fe, and after their Mexican guides deserted them, they had wasted precious days aimlessly wandering in the mesquite barrens of northern Texas. They had lost most of

their horses and livestock to Kiowa raids, and as the weeks dragged on, had suffered disease, thirst, and starvation. They had foolishly divided their little army at the end of August when they encountered the palisades demarking the eastern border of the Llano Estacado or Staked Plains. An advance force of 95 Texans under the command of John Sutton and William Cooke set out on horseback for the New Mexican settlements, while the main command of 153 men under Hugh McLeod, remained behind with the wagons and baggage in order to work their way up over the caprock onto the *llano*. They planned a victorious rendezvous in Santa Fe.

New Mexico governor Manuel Armijo was prepared for the Texans. In stark contrast to his actions five years later in 1846 when General Stephen Watts Kearny's troops marched into New Mexico unopposed, Armijo in 1841 concentrated his militia and presidio troops on the eastern approaches to Santa Fe. Armijo's forces captured the Sutton-Cooke detachment in mid-September near Anton Chico on the Pecos River. Armijo then sent Colonel Juan Andres Archuleta to intercept the McLeod detachment at Laguna Colorada. Archuleta and his well-armed troops were encamped on the far side of the *laguna* on October 4 when the Texans arrived. The colonel demanded that the Texans surrender, setting a deadline of 9:00 a.m. the following morning. The Texans knew they were beat, even though neither side had fired a single shot. Shortly after sunup on October 5, the Texans surrendered their weapons and began a long odyssey as prisoners of war.¹²

Locating Laguna Colorada

Laguna Colorado was a well-known camping place on the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail. Most of the gold rushers were familiar with the significance of this rather non-descript water hole,¹³ having read about the capture of the Texans there in Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*¹⁴ or Kendall's *Narrative of an Expedition*.¹⁵ Both were originally published in 1844. Gregg's accompanying map laid down the location of Laguna Colorada along with other important landmarks along the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail.

The waterhole was situated in a shallow basin on an arroyo known as Laguna Arroyo on early maps. That arroyo today appears on modern maps as Bull Creek, an intermittent tributary of the Canadian River. Never covering more than a few acres, and frequently little more than a mud hole, it was the only water to be had. Whipple's nephew, John Sherburne noted that bread made from its waters had a rich chocolate color. The coffee "looked like soap suds, & thick enough to be eaten with a spoon" (Sherburne, 99-100). Captain Randolph Marcy, who characterized the water near the Big Tucumcari as "having the appearance of the drainings of a stable yard," found the Laguna Colorada a little more palatable (Marcy, 43-46). Nevertheless, he had to dig for water.

Sometime in the 1860's or 1870's, erosion in Bull Creek cut into the *laguna* and drained it. Although local ranchers were familiar with the site as late as the 1930's and 1940's, memory has faded about its existence. Jack and I could find nobody at the Tucumcari history museum who had ever heard of it. I find it a little surprising that New Mexicans have not erected an historical marker to commemorate their military victory over an invading force of Texans. After all, had the Texans been successful, Santa Fe would now be a city in Texas instead of the capital city of New Mexico.

I first became interested in the *laguna* through my research on Prussian artist Balduin Möllhausen. Möllhausen is known in Germany for his Wild West novels, but in the U. S. he is known for the landscapes of New Mexico and Arizona that he created as a member of Whipple's 35th parallel

railroad survey, as well as for the watercolors he made during Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives' survey of the Lower Colorado River and Grand Canyon.¹⁶ Whipple's *Report* includes a woodcut of Laguna Colorada with an army wagon train traveling beneath an urn-shaped rock along the shore of the *laguna*. The escarpment of the Llano Estacado can be seen in the background. In 1990, I located Möllhausen's original watercolor in a collection in the New Palace in Potsdam, Germany. Shortly after his return to Berlin at the conclusion of Whipple's railroad survey, Möllhausen presented a folio of his watercolors of New Mexico and Arizona to the queen of Prussia. They were placed in the royal watercolor collection.

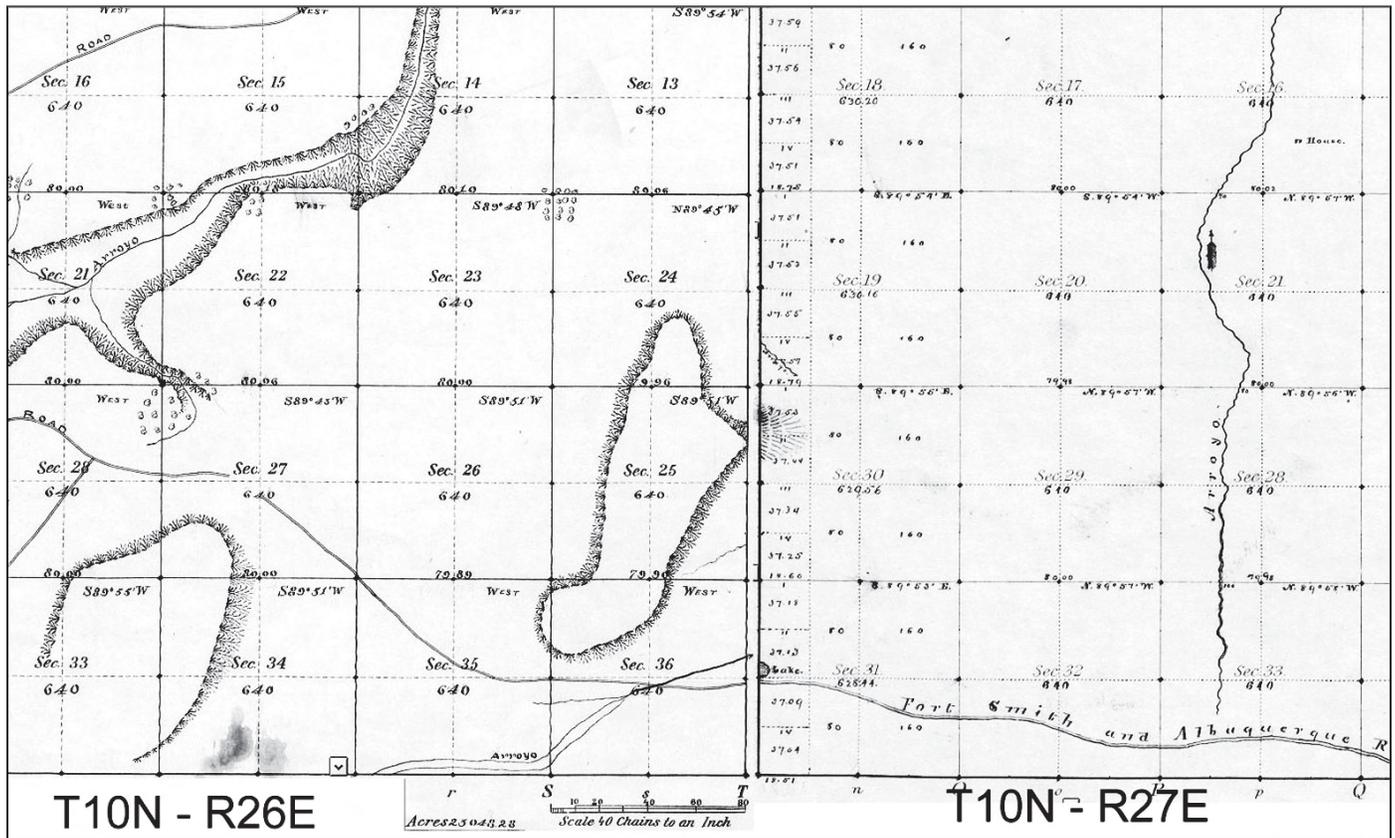
There they remained, unknown to the outside world until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. After seeing this watercolor, I was determined to locate the site and make a modern photograph from Möllhausen's perspective.

In tracing the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Southern Emigrant Trail through the Tucumcari area, Jack and I found the original land office township survey to be extremely useful. We found that on the original New Mexico township survey plats – most of which date back to 1858 – the emigrant trail is referred to as the

"Fort Smith and Albuquerque Wagon Road." In the 1858 survey, the eastern half of Laguna Colorada appears on the western edge of the plat for section 31, township 10N, range 27E, but does not appear on the plat of adjoining section 36, township 10N, range 26E in the 1881 resurvey. (The 1858 plat for section 36 is missing.) Both plats show the emigrant wagon road. Field notes accompanying the 1858 survey of section 31, mention a lake about 400 feet



View, with an urn-like structure in the foreground, looking southeast across the broad valley in which the Laguna Colorada was located. The palisades in the background form the northern edge of the *llano estacado*. The photo was taken so as to replicate the same perspective as in Möllhausen's watercolor (see back cover), which was based on a sketch made from a point about half way up the side of the small sandstone mesa which borders the *laguna* to the northwest. *photo by David Miller*



Map combining two adjoining township surveys, one from from 1858 showing part of the *laguna* (denoted “lake” on the edge of section 31), and the other from the 1881 resurvey showing the adjoining section 36 with no lake, but showing an arroyo (Bull Creek) passing through the area where the *laguna* should have been. Möllhausen made his sketch from the edge of the mesa that runs north-south through sections 24, 25, and 36. The urn in the foreground of his watercolor is near the eastern point of the mesa in section 25. The boundary between Guadalupe and Quay Counties runs north and south along the boundary between range 26E and 27E, right through the center of the site of the *laguna*. maps collated by Tom Jonas

in diameter. Field notes for the 1881 resurvey fail to mention a lake. It can be concluded that the *laguna* either drained into the Canadian sometime during this 23 year interval or was dry in 1881. The lake was situated on today’s Quay-Guadalupe county line, about a mile and a half south of Interstate 40. The dark red sandstone Mesa Colorada from which Möllhausen made his sketch is also visible from the highway. The urn in the foreground of Möllhausen’s sketch is on the southeastern edge of the mesa.

Endnotes

1. Living in Prescott, AZ, Andrew Wallace is Professor Emeritus of southwestern history at Northern Arizona University. He has been on the board of the Arizona Historical Society and is co-editor with Richard Hevley of *From Texas to San Diego in 1851: The Overland Journal of Dr. S. W. Woodhouse, Surgeon Naturalist of the Sitgreaves Expedition* (Lubbock: Texas Tech Press, 2007).

2. Jack Beale Smith is an authority on the Beale Wagon Road, and has mapped much of it in northern Arizona. His books on the topic include guides to the Beale Wagon Road through national forests and other sites in Arizona. His *Tales of the Beale Wagon Road* (San Bernardino: Borgo Press, 1989) includes sections on the emigrant John Udell, on Kerlin’s Well (a site on the Beale Wagon Road near Seligman, Arizona), and on trail sites in the Flagstaff area.
3. Edward Fitzgerald Beale (1822-1893) was a lieutenant in the U. S. Navy during the Mexican War, and later Indian Agent in California. In 1857, under orders of Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, he surveyed a wagon road along the 35th parallel, from Fort Smith through Albuquerque to Los Angeles.
4. Lieutenant Amiel Weeks Whipple (1817-1863) was a member of the Topographical Engineers. He had participated in the US/Mexican boundary surveys following the Mexican War. He led the 1853 survey along the 35th parallel from Fort Smith to Los Angeles to establish whether a railroad to the Pacific along this route would be practical. The report of the

survey is a classic source for information on the Southwest in the 1850's.

5. A member of the Whipple expedition, Jules Marcou (1824-1898) was a Swiss geologist who worked extensively in the U. S.
6. For example, William R. Goulding visited the area in 1849. (See the review of Goulding's *California Odyssey: An Overland Journey on the Southern Trails, 1849*, edited by Patricia A. Etter (Norman: Arthur H. Clark Co., 2009) in this issue of *Desert Tracks*.) Goulding reported meeting with a Comanche group (121). The Comanches had moved east to the Mesa Redonda area by the time Marcy and Simpson reached the Plaza Larga in June 1849.
7. Heinrich Balduin Möllhausen (1825-1905) was a German artist and writer. He accompanied the Whipple survey as a topographer and draughtsman. His two-volume *Diary* of the expedition was published in 1858; the original manuscript no longer exists. In 1858 he steamed up the Colorado River with Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives as artist on the military expedition to determine the navigability of the Colorado River below the Grand Canyon. The author has prepared an English translation of the two-volume account of his adventures with the Ives Expedition under the title *Travels in the Rocky Mountains of North America with a United States Government Expedition as Far as the Colorado Plateau*. The book includes the first published image of the Grand Canyon.
8. James Hall (1811-1898) was an American geologist and paleontologist. His principal work was the 13-volume *Paleontology of New York*.
9. William Phipps Blake (1826-1910) was a geologist for the Pacific Railroad expeditions. He was director of the School of Mines at the University of Arizona from 1896-1905.
10. Barry S. Kues is a professor in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at the University of New Mexico. His primary research interest is in late Paleozoic and middle Cretaceous marine invertebrates.
11. Following the 1836 Battle of San Jacinto, the triumphant Texans forced Generalissimo Santa Anna at gunpoint to sign the Treaty of Velasco, recognize Texas independence, and withdraw his troops beyond the Rio Grande. Although never ratified by the Mexican government, this treaty formed the basis of Texas' claim to the Rio Grande as her western boundary all the way north to the river's headwaters in southern Colorado. Texas governor Mirabeau Lamar was eager to annex Santa Fe and divert the lucrative Santa Fe trade from the Santa Fe Trail to a new trail to be laid out to Texas. In 1840 he issued a proclamation to residents of Santa

- Fe, inviting them to join the Republic of Texas. He naively assumed that Santa Feans would welcome this opportunity and would greet his Texas army with open arms. This was the origin of the Texas-Santa Fe Expedition. For general treatments of the expedition, see Carroll (1951) and Loomis (1958).
12. Following capture, the Texans were marched to Mexico City and then imprisoned; they were released the next year. Larry McMurtry's *Dead Man's Walk* (New York: Pocket Books, 1996) includes a fictionalized version of the march.
 13. Goulding mentioned stopping at a small pond in the area (Goulding, 121); this pond may have been Laguna Colorada.
 14. Josiah Gregg (1806-1850) was a trader on the Santa Fe Trail during the 1830's. His work, *Commerce of the Prairies*, is considered a classic of frontier literature; it was widely read by emigrants in the late 1840's. Chapter 1 of Volume 2 describes his 1839 caravan from Arkansas to Santa Fe, which was the earliest wagon train to follow what became the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail.
 15. George Wilkins Kendall (1809-1867), the owner of the New Orleans *Picayune*, accompanied the expedition and sent back dispatches to the newspaper; these became the basis for his book *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition*. The book was widely read in the 1840's.
 16. Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives (1829-1868) led an expedition in 1857-58 to explore the Colorado River as far as the Grand Canyon.

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Sea Shells in Oklahoma:

Fay, Robert O. "Geology and Mineral Resources (Exclusive of Petroleum) of Custer County, Oklahoma." *Bulletin 114, Oklahoma Geological Survey*, 1978. Dr. Fay's accompanying geologic map of Custer County is of special interest. Using Whipple's *Report* and Marcou's "Field Notes" as his guide, Dr. Fay was able to trace Whipple's route across Custer County with great precision.

Pyramid Mountain:

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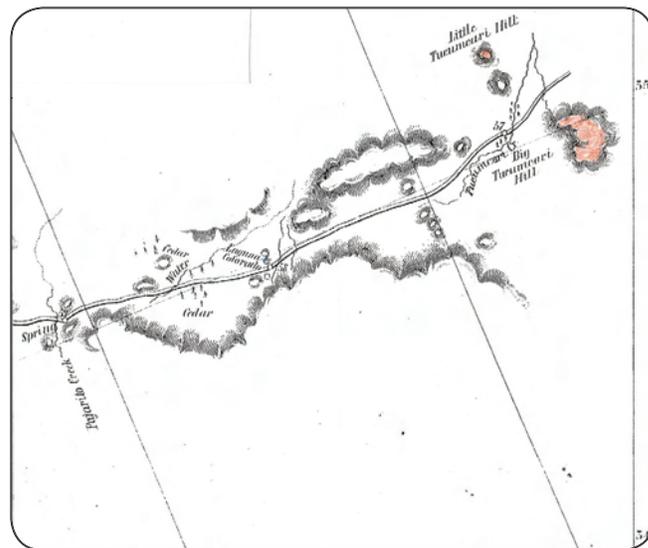
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James H. Simpson's 1849 map showing Little and Big Tucumcari and Laguna Colorado (camp 58). *courtesy David Miller*

Weary 49ers Find Surprises on Journey

by Marc Simmons

The great California Gold Rush of 1849 lured fortune seekers from all over the world, about 85,000 in that year alone. While some came by sea, the majority traveled overland by the Oregon or Mormon Trails. Others of these “49ers,” as they came to be called, took routes through the Southwest, initially following either the familiar Santa Fe Trail or the lesser-known route from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Santa Fe.

On February 26, 1849, young William H. Chamberlain with five friends departed Lewisberg, Pennsylvania, bound for the California gold fields. During the seven-month-long journey, he kept a log book that contains interesting notes on his experiences in New Mexico.

The little group reached Fort Smith where they acquired provisions, mules, and wagons. By the time they started west, their number had grown to 31, other 49ers having joined them for protection. The route lay across the Indian Territory (modern Oklahoma) and the Texas panhandle to the eastern limits of New Mexico. Water and game were scarce but wolves, rattlesnakes, and toads were abundant.

On June 2, just east of the Pecos River, the men joined the main Santa Fe Trail from Missouri. Chamberlain wrote that the Pecos was swift and very cold, being fed by mountain snowmelt. The mules struggled across a ford to the town of San Miguel perched upon the west bank. It was the first community the Americans had seen since leaving Fort Smith. They were delighted to find mercantile stores, a fandango held in their honor, and fresh mules available at \$50. Chamberlain attended church, saying that “thousands of swallows were flying and twittering about the adobe hall during service.”

Four days later, the rested travelers left for Santa Fe, arriving there on June 7. “The first object that attracted our attention as we neared the town was the American stars and stripes floating in the breeze,” Chamberlain noted. “The somber appearance of the town, built entirely of unburnt adobes, inspired us with rather

gloomy sensations,” he added. Along the narrow street leading to the Plaza, handbills were posted advertising the United States Hotel (also known as La Fonda Americana) “offering comfort, convenience, and good living.” The 49er newcomers lodged there for \$1 a day including meals, but found the vaunted hostelry infested with fleas and bedbugs.

After strolling the Plaza, Chamberlain remarked that Santa Fe was a very immoral place. He was referring to the gambling houses operating around the clock, and the nonstop fandangos in which “the faces of all the women were ornamented with cigarettes.” Some of the newly arrived 49ers had run out of money or had lost it at the gaming tables. Now penniless, such fellows had only two options: turn around and go home or ride south 30 miles to the gold placers of the Ortiz Mountains. There they could pan one-to-five dollars worth of gold per day, in hopes of raising enough money to continue their journey.

Chamberlain and his companions decided to go on to California from this point, following the so-called Kearney trail used by General S. W. Kearney and his army in 1846. For this second stage of their journey, they needed to resupply. Unexpectedly, they found Santa Fe prices to be very cheap. That was because the Fort Marcy quartermaster had gambled away \$30,000 of Army funds. To make up the loss, he slyly “condemned” government stores as being unfit for use, and instead of throwing them away, sold them to 49ers at low rates, everything being of top quality.

On a sunny morning, the emigrants, as they called themselves, climbed on their saddle mules, and leading pack mules in place of wagons, headed south. Three days later they reached Albuquerque, containing 300 residents and “the most cleanly respectable village seen so far in New Mexico.” Over the next week, the party passed through a series of small farming villages, purchasing fresh goat’s milk at 25 cents a quart and eggs at 35 cents a dozen. At Tomé, the Rio Grande was swollen and swift. Since a ferry was available there, the men decided to cross to the west bank. In reality, the boat was nothing but the hollowed-out trunk of a large cottonwood, but it got everyone to the far

shore safely. Two days later, the riders filed into Socorro. That stop had about the same population as Albuquerque, but appeared to the easterners as “a poor destitute place.” It was the last town of any size they would see in New Mexico.

Continuing down river about 70 miles, the 49er column left the Rio Grande where General Kearney had done so, and headed southwest into unsettled country. Days later they crossed into the future state of Arizona and eventually reached Los Angeles. From there the weary travelers rode northward to the Frémont gold diggings, journey’s end, having covered at least 2,600 miles since leaving home.

In 1935, New Mexico historian Lansing B. Bloom visited J. V. Chamberlain, the nephew of William Chamberlain, at his ranch outside Estancia. He gave to Bloom a series of 1902 newspaper clippings of the 49er’s logbook or diary. But for that fortunate circumstance, this account might never have come to light.

(Reprinted with permission of the author from the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 17 October 2009.)



The Tompkins celebrate their Golden Anniversary, with cake provided by the Trail Turtles. photo courtesy Travy DeVault

James Colin Brewster’s Colonia in Socorro: An Exchange with Paul Harden

Editors’ note: Paul Harden is a local historian in Socorro, New Mexico. He publishes a monthly history column in the Socorro newspaper, *El Defensor Chieftain*. (Some of his articles can be found online at www.caminorealheritage.org/PH/ph.htm.) President of El Camino Real International Heritage Center Foundation, he has a long-standing interest in mapping El Camino Real in southern New Mexico. He is also knowledgeable about the southern emigrant trail on the west side of the Rio Grande in the vicinity of Socorro. We approached Harden in March 2009, asking whether he had information on the Colonia that James Colin Brewster established in the Socorro area in 1850. We present below an edited version of the exchange.

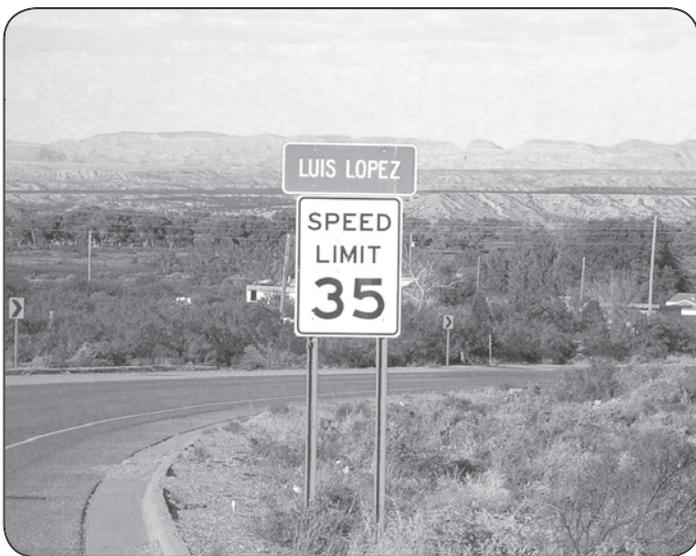
Background: The Oatman family were members of a party of emigrants who were following the Mormon dissident James Colin Brewster from Independence, Missouri, to “the land of Bashan,” Brewster’s prophesized Zion at the junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers. The Oatmans split off from Brewster’s train in October 1850, in the vicinity of Las Vegas, New Mexico, and headed south, passing through Socorro in early November. Brewster apparently went first to Santa Fe, and then south to Socorro, arriving in December 1850. According to reports that he sent back to his church’s newspaper (*The Olive Branch*) in Kirtland, Ohio, Brewster purchased land in the vicinity of Socorro and established the Colonia. While the details of the fate of the Colonia are not currently known, it lasted at least until September 1851, and perhaps as late as July 1852. At some later time, Brewster returned to Illinois, served in the Civil War, worked as a teacher in Reconstruction-era Louisiana, and died in a veteran’s home in Wisconsin.

DJL (Deborah and Jon Lawrence) James Colin Brewster and the followers who remained loyal to him established a community that they called “Colonia” near Socorro in 1850-51. We are wondering whether you have any information on the colony.

PH (Paul Harden) I am only scantily aware of the presence of the Colonia, and of the connection of Brewster and his dissident group of Mormons to Socorro. Of course, the Mormon Battalion blazed a trail through New Mexico as part of the Mexican-American War with 500 Mormons under the command of Lieutenant Philip St. George Cooke, but these Mormons were not connected to Brewster. I have thus far found nothing about the Colonia in the Socorro County Historical Society. However, as I will indicate later, I have found some information in the county courthouse on one of the Brewsterites who remained in Socorro after the Colonia failed.

DJL Is the site of the Colonia known?

PH There are no known locations of a settlement called “Colonia.” If I were to venture a guess, I would think Brewster’s Colonia would have been located south of Socorro, around the villages of Luis Lopez and San Antonio. [See the map on page 19.] In the 1850’s, everything south of San Antonio was “Apacheria,” the land of Victorio and his Warm Springs Apaches.



Luis Lopez is a small village five miles south of Socorro, NM, on Highway 1. It was first settled in 1630 by Luis Lopez, the *alcalde* of the Senecú Pueblo. Highway 1 roughly follows the west branch of the Camino Real between Luis Lopez and San Antonio.

photo by Paul Harden

I did find a reference online (*The Plains and the Rockies* by Henry R. Wagner) that states: “and ultimately Brewster founded a small colony in the valley of the Rio Grande seven miles southeast of what Brewster called Socorro Mountain. Brewster called the place Colonia.” Socorro Peak or Socorro Mountain is the fairly large mountain in walking distance to the west of Socorro. (Since 1914, a large white “M” for School of Mines is on the peak, and it is now commonly known as “M Mountain.”) Of importance is the “seven miles southeast of Socorro Mountain.” This would indeed place Colonia in the region of Luis Lopez or a few miles towards San Antonio. This was (and still is) fairly rich farmland along the Rio Grande.

However, I should also point out that “colonia” was a general term for any settlement along the Rio Grande. In 1850, there were very few Anglos in southern New Mexico. Shortly after the establishment of New Mexico Territory, most of the population was in the north, especially in Santa Fe, where the Santa Fe Trail ended. Many settlements along the Rio Grande in southern New Mexico (called the Rio Abajo region) were called “colonias.”

[Editors’ note: For more of Harden’s reasoning on the location of Brewster’s settlement, see the article, “The Search for Colonia” on page 16.]

DJL Are there Socorro court records or county records from the early 1850’s that might shed some light on this?

PH The county seat of Socorro County was transferred to Polvadera by Kearny in 1848; it went to Socorro in 1852. County records began around 1850, with the county seat initially at Lemitar, moving next to Socorro and then back again to Lemitar for several years between 1854 and the Civil War. The old record books are currently located in the Socorro County Courthouse. They are mostly in Spanish and are sparse and incomplete for these periods. Indeed, there are no records before October 1852; the whereabouts of the 1848-1852 records has always been a local mystery. If Brewster settled somewhere along the Rio Grande simply as a squatter, no records would exist.

DJL Brewster wrote back from Socorro to the *Olive Branch* that “we have purchased a large tract of land,” so perhaps he was not a squatter. Apart from court and county records, what about army records or newspaper reports?

PH The first newspapers in Socorro did not begin until the early 1880’s. The present newspaper, *El Defensor Chieftain*, began in 1884 and is the second oldest continuously run newspaper in the state. Court and Catholic church records are about the only thing extant from that era. Since Brewster’s Colonia was a Mormon splinter group, it is unlikely that local church records will be helpful.

The truth is, the early history of the Socorro area is very poorly documented. Most of the settlers were Spanish and few were literate, and thus there aren’t many records. Family oral history, Spanish land deeds, etc., are about all that can be found for this era. The first Anglos began drifting in during this time period, and a few letters and diaries of the early dragoons are all we have to go on. Post records from Fort Craig are the earliest records, but of course they are specific to military activity with a few scant mentions of an earthquake or of the settlement of some land or family dispute.

Following the Civil War, many soldiers in the West were discharged from Fort Craig, with some settling in the Socorro area in the mid-1860’s. They left a few records. The railroad didn’t arrive until 1882. This was the first real influx of Anglos, coinciding with the local mining industry, followed by the area’s first newspapers. It was for this period from the late 1860’s to the early 1880’s that the first written documentation of the Socorro area is found.

DJL Can you make some guesses about Brewster’s history in Socorro, based on the general historical situation in the Socorro area in 1850-51?

PH Travel along the Rio Grande (north and south) would have exclusively been along El Camino Real, which ran along the *east* side of the Rio Grande. In the 1850’s, there were few places to ford the river.

Most notable was at Lemitar, about eight miles north of Socorro. This would likely have been where the Brewsterites crossed to the west side of the river. You cannot ford the river at Socorro. The next known crossing, depending upon the river level, would have been at San Pedro/San Antonio. Even today, there are only a few bridges crossing the Rio Grande south of Belen all the way to Las Cruces/El Paso. As a result, there was a variant to the Camino Real along the west side of the river that ran south from Lemitar through Socorro, the last ford being a bit south of Fort Craig.

North of Socorro, the settlements are well documented as part of the Socorro Spanish Land Grant. I doubt that a party of Anglos would have been allowed to settle in this region in the 1850’s for legalistic reasons, not prejudice. The first Army fort, called Fort Conrad, was built in 1851 about 15 miles south of San Antonio. It was established to protect travelers along El Camino Real. The fort was moved eight miles further south in 1854, south of San Marcial, and renamed Fort Craig. The remains of Fort Craig are still there. When Fort Conrad was built in 1851, people did begin to settle south of San Antonio to be closer to the protection of the fort.

It was pretty darn rough living in this area in those days. It would have been difficult to engage in much business or social activities if you did not speak Spanish. This is desert country with temperatures over 100° F in the summer; it is dry and hot with sandy soil, making farming very difficult except very close to the Rio Grande. Before the dams, the Rio Grande either flooded in the spring or ran dry in the summers. Other than the Rio Grande, there is virtually no water to be found. Apache attacks were common until Geronimo and Nana finally surrendered in 1886. The Spanish survived by forming hamlets (*haciendas*) to pool their resources and for protection against the Apache. The main glue of these communities was the Catholic Church. When people got sick, had disputes, or needed food, it was the priest at the San Miguel mission that handled these matters.

It would not be surprising to me at all that the Brewsterites made a gallant attempt in forming Colonia, driven by their religious zeal, but after a year or two, the harshness of the country, remoteness, alienation and the constant threat of Apache attacks made them throw in the towel.

DJL You mentioned that you had turned up some information on a Brewsterite who stayed on in Socorro after the Colonia failed.

PH Yes. I spent a couple of hours poking around the Assessor's and Clerks' Offices at the Socorro County Courthouse. I searched deed records, mortgage records, master deed indices, even marriage records, to no avail on Brewster. Our Assessor, Sammy Vivian, searched old records and could find no reference to Colonia.

However, I did stumble across some interesting information. Online I was able to get the names of some of the other known families arriving in Socorro with Brewster, so I started looking at the Socorro deed and marriage records for the other names. I got to William J. Conner and hit paydirt. He is listed as "witness" to Mary E. Conner on the marriage index. Mary Conner was born in Henderson County, Illinois. She married an Orlando G. Barkley from Jackson County, Missouri, on Sept. 10, 1865. Later, I found a reference online to both Mary Conner and O. G. Barkley on the "History of Jackson County, Missouri" website. It states that Orlando Barkley was born in 1844, moved to Kansas City in 1859, moved to New Mexico in 1862 (when the Civil War was being fought in New Mexico), and returned to Missouri in 1872. It states that Mary Conner was "born Aug. 27, 1844 in Henderson County, IL." This corroborates the Socorro records, and that she was six years old when the Brewster party arrived in Socorro. She could have been either a sister or daughter of William Conner.

Concerning Barkley, the history website continues: "While in New Mexico, served as Postmaster of Socorro" and "during the War of Rebellion . . . served in the State Militia for nine months." This could refer to the New Mexico Volunteers, so that he might have fought in the Battle of Valverde, or the reference may

mean that he belonged to the Missouri State Militia. He might have sent to New Mexico/Ft. Craig in that capacity. Nine months was typical of the volunteer units, not regular army. In any case, the Civil War must have been what brought Barkley to Socorro.

The fact that he was listed as postmaster also aroused my interest. I looked up Conner in my list of Socorro postmasters. The first Socorro postmaster was another New Mexico notable character, Vincent (or Vincente) St. Vrain, who began the job in 1851. When he resigned, the post office was abandoned for several months in 1852 while they searched for "an English speaking Postmaster." William Conner accepted the job as postmaster, which he served from September 28, 1852, through November 2, 1855, and again from June 26, 1863, to January 15, 1866. A further surprise for me was that Conner was replaced as postmaster in 1866 by Orlando Barkley, who served until 1868. Given the marriage reported above, this made him either Conner's brother-in-law or son-in-law. Then four years later, Orlando Barkley and wife Mary Conner-Barkley moved back to Missouri.

If this William Conner was the same Conner who arrived with the Brewster party, which seems fairly likely, it shows he stayed around in Socorro for some time. Perhaps other Brewsterites did the same. Since Conner became Postmaster in 1852, this suggests he either broke away from the Colonia settlement at that time or that that is when the Colonia disbanded. Perhaps there was a mutiny, abandoning Brewster, while others moved to Socorro to attempt a normal life. Word of the Oatman massacre in Arizona could have worked its way back to Socorro by then, increasing the Brewsterite's dissatisfaction with their leader.

There are several things that could be done to further our knowledge of the Colonia. There may be more information at the courthouse on other Brewsterites who stayed in the area. If William Conner was buried here, there might be a line of descendants who are still around. There are many descendants of the early families still living in Socorro, San Antonio, and Luis Lopez. Perhaps one of the old-timers has heard of the Mormon settlement of Colonia.

The Site of Brewster's Colonia: An Educated Guess

by Paul Harden

I have found no references to Brewster's Colonia in local land, tax or other records at the Socorro County Courthouse. Explorations at the offices of the Socorro County Clerk, the County Assessor, and the local title company have revealed no references to the Colonia in the original pre-homestead and homestead land and title records.

Prior to the transition to the American government in the early 1850's, many local land records were kept by the Catholic Church, with land descriptions based on distances and directions from Socorro's San Miguel Mission. Due to the Brewsterites' Mormonism, it is unlikely they had their Colonia land claim recorded through the Catholic Church. (These incomplete church records are now in Santa Fe and have not been checked.)

Brewster's Colonia was established in 1850–51, the very year that Socorro County was created by the Territorial Legislature under the American flag. This occurred more than a year before there were any army forts in the area,¹ 20 years before any newspapers were established, and 20 years before the arrival of the railroad. Furthermore, the county seat of Socorro County shifted between Socorro and Lemitar at least twice between 1854 and 1867, rendering gaps in the records. As a result, documentation during this era is very sparse and incomplete.



A view of the narrow strip of fertile farm land south of Luis Lopez. The view is southeast from I-25 overlooking the Rio Grande. The probable location of Colonia is on the right side of the photo. Waterless sandhills, unsuitable for agriculture, are on the west (in the foreground).
photo by Paul Harden

References to Brewster and some of his party have been located in Socorro County census and marriage records, but with no specific reference to Colonia in Socorro County yet found, the probable location must be based on the few scant descriptions by James Colin Brewster and on a knowledge of the history of the Socorro area in the mid-1800's. Based on existing citations from the literature, we can draw certain tentative conclusions as follows.

1. According to Brewster, the prophecy of Esdras stated, "They who fear God shall escape through the wilderness, and go beyond the river Amlí [The Rio Grande river]" (Launius and Thatcher, 128). Traveling from Independence, Missouri, the phrase to "go beyond the river Amlí" would indicate that the Colonia was on the west side of the Rio Grande.
2. Brewster referred to everything west of the Rio Grande as "the Land of Peace" (McGinty, 53). This constitutes a specific reference to the west side of the Rio Grande.

3. "On January 16, 1851, Brewster wrote from Socorro, relating that on December 4, 1850, he and a part of the company crossed the Amlí [Rio Grande] and entered into the land of our inheritance" (Launius and Thatcher, 132). Traveling southward along the Rio Grande from Santa Fe, Brewster's party would have been traveling along El Camino Real.² From Albuquerque south to Doña Ana, El Camino Real ran along the east side of the Rio Grande. Therefore, to "cross the Amlí river," the party ventured to the west side.



The ruins of the historic Luis Lopez are behind the trees. Socorro Mountain is seen to the north. *photo by Paul Harden*

4. “Brewster founded a small colony in the valley of the Rio Grande seven miles southeast of what Brewster called Socorro Mountain” (Wagner, 381). The majority of the fruitful farm land along the Rio Grande in Socorro County in 1850 was on the west side of the river; this remains true to the present day. The east side of the Rio Grande remains sandy and dry, and the sudden rise in elevation due to the gravel benches prevents the construction of *acequias* for routing irrigation water. The flat (and flood prone) area around San Pedro is the exception. Seven miles southeast of Socorro Mountain clearly identifies an area in the vicinity of Luis Lopez, a farming area and hacienda whose roots date back to 1630, and which exists to the present day.

5. Brewster wrote, “I informed the readers of the *Olive Branch* that it was our intention to make a settlement on this river, not far from Socorro. I am now happy to be able to inform them that we have purchased a large tract of land, and that the settlement has already been commenced” (*Olive Branch*, vol. 3, p. 147). There are no Socorro County land records recording this sale, though records were incomplete during this time. By 1850, the naturally rich farm land from Lemitar³ south to San Antonio was fairly heavily populated with small Mexican farms. Secondly, with the exception of a small number of U.S. Dragoons, there were few Anglos in and around Socorro in 1850, and all transactions were conducted in Spanish. (Socorro County courthouse records were

exclusively in Spanish until the late 1880’s.) Did any of the Brewsterites in Socorro speak Spanish? Without the ability to speak Spanish, it would be difficult to imagine how they conducted any business or purchased land. Perhaps the purchase of a “large tract of land” was simply an exaggeration. Not speaking Spanish or being Catholic, their existence around Socorro must have been very isolated. Perhaps they were simply squatters.

6. Although the name “Colonia” was taken from the Writings of Esdras, it was an unfortunate choice for a name in New Mexico. Most Mexican settlements along the Rio Grande consisted of a few families living in close proximity for protection against the Apache, thus forming small settlements. These settlements were called “*haciendas*,” “*estancias*,” or “*colonias*.” “Colonia” was thus a rather generic term in New Mexico for a small settlement.

To summarize, Brewster’s Colonia was almost assuredly on the west side of the Rio Grande and about 7 miles south to southeast of either the center of Socorro or of Socorro Peak (Socorro Mountain). There are three possibilities for the point from which the “7 miles” was measured: 1) From the San Miguel Mission in Socorro. Since Brewster was not Catholic, this is the most unlikely. 2) From the Socorro plaza. This is considered to be the center of town and is only three blocks south of the mission. 3) From Socorro Springs, at the foot of Socorro Mountain. This was the main water supply for Socorro when the Rio Grande was dry, which was often the case in December, the month of Brewster’s arrival. It was a known camp site for wagons. Thus, Socorro Springs might have been a temporary camp site for Brewster and his party, and they would have measured the distance to Colonia from this spot at the foot of Socorro Mountain. Let us consider the latter two possibilities.

In 1850, traveling 7 to 7 ½ miles south from the Socorro plaza would take the traveler along the west branch of the Camino Real. This road (which is today’s Cuba Road) ran southeast from the plaza to the vicinity of the river, from where the road more-

or-less followed the base of the hills on the west side of the north-south path of the Rio Grande. By this route, the 1850 Hacienda de Luis Lopez would be about 5.5 miles from the Socorro Plaza. An additional two miles south would place the traveler on a slightly high gravel and clay bench that even today does not support agriculture. It is significant that the Teypama Pueblo,⁴ visited by Juan de Oñate in May 1598, was located on the top of this bench. The condition of this pueblo in 1850 is not currently known, although surface rocks outlining the pueblo rooms and plaza can be seen today. (This is a protected archaeological site on private property.)

Socorro Springs is on the base of Socorro Peak and has been long the source of water for Socorro. It is located about 1.8 miles west southwest of the Socorro plaza. It is a running spring to this day. (It is home to the endangered “Socorro isopods” – an aquatic insect.) Traveling 7 to 7.5 miles from Socorro Springs, through the Socorro plaza, then south along El Camino Real would place the traveler about a mile north of Luis Lopez, near a large arroyo that runs from Socorro Mountain to the Rio Grande. This same arroyo also served as a road from Socorro Mountain directly to the west branch road of the Camino Real that bypassed Socorro. Traveling 7 to 7.5 miles south of Socorro Springs directly by this route would place the traveler about one mile south of Luis Lopez, or about one-fourth mile north of the Teypama Pueblo. Hence, whether they traveled the established 1850 roads from Socorro Mountain or from the Socorro plaza, a distance of seven miles southeast would put the location of Colonia between one and two miles south of the settlement of Luis Lopez. This also places Colonia within a mile or less from the Teypama Pueblo. Perhaps the Brewsterites occupied the abandoned pueblo, or salvaged the rocks from the collapsed walls – Teypama had been two stories in places – for constructing their own dwellings. Regardless, the probable location of Brewster’s Colonia appears to be within a very short distance of the Teypama Pueblo, describing a strip of land on the west side of the Rio Grande from about one mile to two miles south of present day Luis Lopez.

In 1850, the Rio Grande was very different than it is today. At that time, it had numerous meanders. Settlements such as Luis Lopez were often found near these meanders, using the sharp turn of the river for building *acequias*. These hand-dug canals would tap water from the river to irrigate these small towns. Unfortunately, a flood or high water in the river could destroy such settlements located at a turn in the river. The Rio Grande was known for its unpredictable water flow; it often flowed very heavily or flooded during the spring runoff or during excessive monsoon rains. Some years, the river went dry during the winter or in the summer months prior to the monsoon rains. Historical documentation tells us of numerous floods that changed the path of the river on many occasions. With the construction of Elephant Butte dam and reservoir in the 1910’s-1920’s, and upstream dams and reclamation projects in later years, the river is now a fairly straight ribbon through southern New Mexico with a much slower and consistent river flow. In 1850, the meandering Rio Grande near Luis Lopez was located about a mile west of its present day route. [See attached map.] The 1850 river bank was about where the railroad tracks run today. The original



The scattered rocks are part of the block room ruins at the site of Teypama. Piro Indians at this pueblo gave food and assistance to the Juan de Oñate expedition in 1598. Oñate described the 200-room pueblo as being on the west side of the river. Colonia was probably located within one mile of Teypama. Rio Grande floods have buried much of the site in silt. It is a protected archaeological site on private property and has been the subject of recent excavation and study. *photo by Paul Harden*



Map by Paul Harden showing the probable location of Brewster's Colonia in relation to the sites mentioned in the article.

railroad tracks were washed out by floods in 1898, 1929, and 1935, and relocated further to the west to where they are today. Thus, today's railroad track for the Burlington, Northern and Santa Fe Railroad roughly designates where the old river bed was located. This can be verified by comparing historic to contemporary maps, in addition to talking to the old timers in the Luis Lopez area, such as the Lopez and Montoya families.

Today, the site of the Teypama Pueblo is only a few hundred yards west of the railroad tracks, indicating that the pueblo was originally built very close to the river. Likewise, the site of the original Hacienda de Luis Lopez settlement lies just east of the railroad tracks; the tracks actually run through the western portion of the site. Therefore, it can be safely assumed that the location of Colonia could not have been located much farther east than today's railroad tracks – the 1850 western bank of the Rio Grande. Even today, with irrigation channels, the strip of farm land along the Rio Grande is only about 1.5

miles wide, and farm land only occurs on the west side of the Rio Grande. In the 1850's, the fertile farm land was only about a half a mile in width. Farther than a half mile west of the 1850 river course, dry, sandy hills cut with an occasional arroyo would have prevented farming. Therefore, it is unlikely that Colonia would have been located much more than a mile from the Rio Grande.

Taking all of the above into consideration restricts the probable location of Brewster's Colonia to a relatively small area: 1) On the west side of the Rio Grande south of Socorro. 2) Somewhere between one and two miles south of Luis Lopez, centered more-or-less around the known site of the Teypama Pueblo. Since the exact starting point for the measurement "7 miles south of Socorro Mountain" is unknown, the location of the Colonia could plausibly be as much as a mile to the north (just south of Luis Lopez) to perhaps a mile south of Teypama Pueblo. In any case, Colonia was likely located within a mile west of the Rio Grande.

The most likely location is shown on the accompanying map as a box centered around the Teypama Pueblo, extending between the old river bank (approximately today's railroad tracks) to about one-quarter mile west and about one mile north to south of the pueblo site.

As stated above, this area has been flooded by the Rio Grande on numerous occasions. Furthermore, most of this area is now populated with homes, mobile homes, small ranches and farms. Today, there is virtually no chance of any ruins of Colonia being found. Hopefully continued local research will yield some documentation as to the exact location of Colonia.

Southern Trails Chapter Upcoming Meetings

November 2009 – Fort Mojave, Arizona
February 2010 – Tubac, Arizona
May 2010 – Silver City, New Mexico

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Notes

1. The Oatman party reported that they remained in the Socorro area, cutting and transporting hay “to a nearby Army post” to make money, but in 1850, there were no army forts built around Socorro. Fort Conrad was built in 1852, and then abandoned in 1854 when Fort Craig was built. In 1850, there were only a few U.S. Dragoons in the area, some housed in rented quarters in Socorro, and the rest at the old New Mexico Militia post at Lemitar. (This “post” building is now part of the Griego family home in Lemitar.) Therefore, the Oatman party was almost assuredly referring to the post at Lemitar. Wagons were scarce in the 1850’s; most Mexicans only possessed small *caretas*. Therefore, the Oatmans’ wagons were of great value for transporting hay from around Socorro to the post at Lemitar. (One source states they were paid \$50 per wagon load *delivered* to the post.) It is also likely that when they left the area, the Oatmans crossed the Rio Grande at Lemitar/Sabino back to the main El Camino Real on the east side of the river and then travelled south to Cooke’s Trail and on to California. This is because the west branch of El Camino Real did not run much farther south than San Antonio in 1850; the west branch was not extended farther south until the building of Fort Craig in 1854.
2. Documentation also shows that the Oatman party branch of the Brewsterites camped at the village of La Joya, northeast of Socorro. La Joya was a well-known staging point on the Camino Real on the east side of the river. That the Oatmans camped at La Joya clearly shows that their travel down the Rio Grande was along El Camino Real, which was the main trail along the river through Socorro County. James Colin Brewster and party would have taken the same route.
3. Lemitar and Sabino were established in the early 1830’s; the Lemitar mission was built in 1832-33. Lemitar/Sabino was a popular ford on the Rio Grande due to its hard, clay river bottom and the fact that the river was fairly wide, making for a shallow and slower flow. This was a year-round well-known river crossing. On the east side of the Rio Grande, the wagon swales from the town site of Sabino to the Camino Real, about a mile away, can still be seen.
4. Oñate recorded in 1598 that his expeditionary party camped on the east side of the Rio Grande opposite the Pueblo of Teypama (also spelled “Teypana”). It was located about one league south of the Pilabo Pueblo – today’s Socorro. The Piro Indians came across the river to give Oñate and his people desperately needed food. This indicates that Teypama was fairly close to the river on the west side. Recent archaeological excavations of the site called “Plaza Montoya” have attempted to determine whether the site is the Teypama Pueblo. Recovered artifacts include metal objects and other items verifying post-Spanish contact. Most archaeologists working at the site believe it is the Teypama Pueblo, though it has not yet been officially declared as such. I use the terminology “Teypama Pueblo” as the likely identity for the historical site, rather than the more contemporary name “Plaza Montoya,” which is named after the Montoya family property upon which the pueblo ruins are located.

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Trail Turtles' Fall 2009 Mapping Trip

by Richard Greene, with contributions by Ken and Pat White and endnotes by Tracy DeVault

The Trail Turtles in attendance were Tracy and Judy DeVault, Don Buck, Bert Eddins, Marie and Richard Greene, Marian and Neal Johns with Dixie, Rose Ann and Harland Tompkins, Charles Townley, Cam Wade, and Pat and Ken White.

Tuesday, October 6 – Meeting at the windmill

All participants, except Cam and Charles, met in Casa Grande around noon. It was good to see old friends – come to think of it, we are all literally *old* folks.

After lunch, we proceeded past Tucson to Exit 281, and turned left on to the frontage road. We drove on past the two railroad bridges over Cienega Creek, with the stage station on our right. We pulled off on a dirt road with a water tower landmark to view the remains of Pantano – an old “jerkwater” town. Tracy told us that the term “jerkwater town” applied to a community where the railroad stopped to put water in their engines.¹ There’s not much left of Pantano: some concrete foundations and lots of scrap metal and glass. A local resident had shown Rose Ann a nice section of a stage trail – with plenty of rust – around Pantano, so we explored the area.

Next, we continued down the road to I-10 to Benson, from where we headed for the “windmill” campsite where we camped last spring. To get there, Ken and Pat, as well as Wade, drove in to the

campsite from Dagoon. This is an easier route to the site than the road that the rest of us followed – the latter started at the Sybil Exit off I-10, turned east at the railroad crossing, and followed the dirt road beside the tracks. The road was rough but passable, crossing over sandy washes and rock-filled culvert drainages. At times, the road passed right beside two sets of tracks. At least three trains went by very close to the cars; when their cargo containers towered over us, we hoped they wouldn’t fall over. A 1905 culvert etched into rock was a photo stop for Tracy. We passed many old rock/concrete culverts – there must be considerable flooding in this area, though all was dry when we passed.²

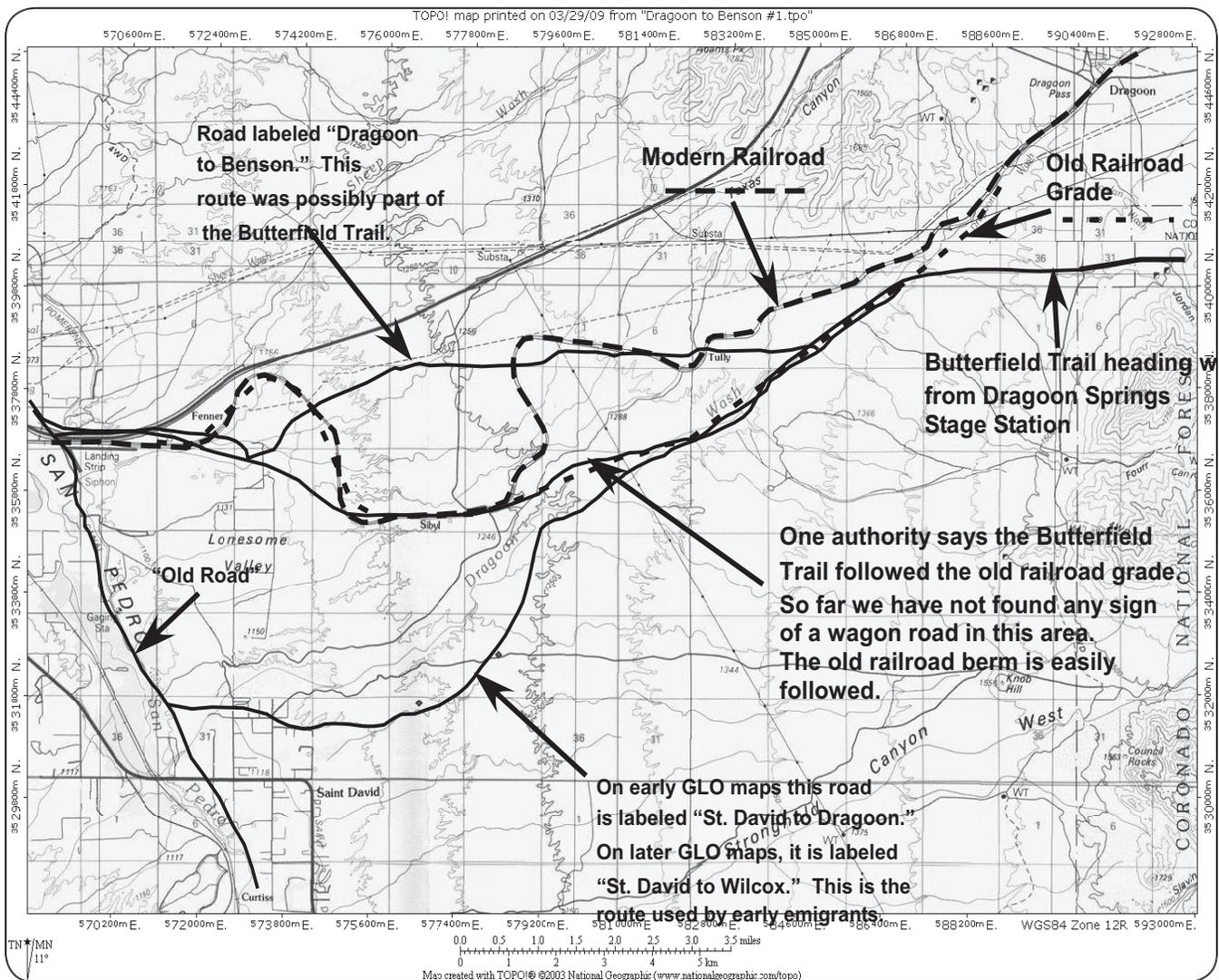
We found camping spots around the broken windmill, the empty concrete tank, and the power lines. A big iron cylindrical water tank on a slope loomed over our camp. That night we celebrated our 25th mapping trip and also Rose Ann and Harlie’s Golden Anniversary. Tracy and Judy bought a big cake with the inscription “Older than Dirt,” and Ken, Pat, and Cam provided champagne. We broke for bed around 7:15

p.m. It was a lovely night with a cool breeze.

The train tracks were on a high bank about 100 yards away. All night long, trains came by, tooting and tooting – a van had been abandoned by the tracks, which was probably why the trains sounded their horn so much. On the hour, you could hear a rumble build into a roar, and then after several minutes the roar went back to a rumble followed by deafening silence. Between the noise of the trains and the singing power lines, it was a hectic night.



The Trail Turtles meet at the windmill, just west of Dagoon, where they had camped last spring. *photo by Harland Tompkins*



Map showing the terrain and sites explored during the mapping trip. *courtesy Tracy DeVault*



Left to right: Richard and Marie Greene, Rose Ann and Harland Tompkins, Marian and Neal Johns with Dixie, Don Buck, Tracy DeVault, Cam Wade, Judy DeVault, Ken and Pat White, and Albert Eddins.

Wednesday, October 7 – Mapping near the windmill

The sun rose over the hills at 6:45 a.m. It was a cool morning. Tracy broke us into two groups. Ken, Pat, Rose Ann, and Bert explored east of the windmill back towards Dragoon. Tracy, Don, Neal, Cam, and Richard hiked 1.6 miles west of camp to the final point mapped on the last trip, and then mapped back towards camp. Judy, Marie, Marian, and Harland stayed in camp to help when needed.

Tracy's group encountered patches of thorny, hip-high cat's claw and mesquite, knee-high grass, and dry washes of various sizes. For all the scratches they received, they found nothing but a few rust specks that probably came from cowboys riding through the area.³ A strong wind had the mappers holding on to their hats. Ken and Pat's group had more luck mapping to the east of camp. The modern railroad is on the north side of Dragoon Wash, while the old emigrant road and the old railroad grade is on the south side between the wash and a line of low hills. There are trees along the wash and smaller bushes in the line of the road. The group picked up some waypoints on the road that Ken and Pat had found last spring. Continuing east, they found rust on rock, old green glass, and dug ways where the old road crosses small washes coming in from the south. There was a slight swale in places, although it was not very pronounced. The road disappeared where the pipeline crossed a cleared area. Both groups walked back to the windmill for lunch.

During the morning, Woody Adams, a third generation local rancher, visited the camp to find out what was going on. Harlie and the ladies had a friendly visit with him. He talked about the stage route and said that in the 1950's the USGS incorrectly named Jordan Canyon as the location of the Dragoon Springs Station site, when it was actually located in Dragoon Canyon. Woody's wife runs the Antique store in Dragoon. We figured that nearby Mount Adams was probably named after Woody's family.

Following lunch, the Whites returned to the pipeline crossing and tried to pick up the road farther east.

After traversing some heavy brush, they found that the nature of the land changed. There is a mine shaft on a low hill with piles of rock containing traces of a copper compound. Farther along, there is a gravel pit where half of a hill has been hauled off. There are many piles of off-white rock covering a wide area. Some piles are the size that would be left by a skip loader, while others were the size of a dump truck. Although the group pushed on almost to Dragoon, they found no traces of the road past the pipeline crossing.

Richard cleaned the extended cab of his truck and drove Rose Ann, Tracy, and Don west along the railroad tracks to the closest point where they could intersect other sections of the trail, about 0.6 miles from the railroad.⁴ Rose Ann stayed with the truck to provide a shuttle. They first checked out a trace seen on the aerials but saw no sign of trail. They went to a second trail location determined earlier, where they found artifacts: the bottom of an old black bottle, a rusty can, and rust on rocks. Heading east towards the windmill, they found a section of grassy swale. The swale soon disappeared as they encountered big and small washes crisscrossing the area. About 4:00 p.m. they called it a day. Walking up a decent road, Tracy and Don found a good camping spot for the next day.

We noticed some people at the abandoned van, but they left and did not move the vehicle. No doubt the Cochise County Sheriff was aware of the van. After dinner, Harlie, set up his tripod with a homemade device to reenact the theories of Copernicus. [One of Harland's retirement projects is to study the history of science.] We went to bed by 7 p.m., which made it a long night. The mild temperature made for comfortable sleeping, but there was still no escape from those "d...n" trains.

Thursday, October 18 – Second camp, two miles west of the windmill camp

As the night progressed, it got colder and we were bundled up when we broke camp. The sun was hidden by cloud cover. We left the windmill by 8 a.m., heading for the railroad tracks and turning west on the road we had used coming to the



Tracy DeVault, Richard Greene, and Don Buck heading off to look for the trail.
photo by Rose Ann Tompkins

windmill. We went west two miles beside the tracks and turned at the gate where Tracy and Don had hiked out on the day before, eventually finding a good camping area near the trail. Both the emigrant trail and the old railroad grade used this route, making it difficult to sort out one from the other.

Tracy split us into two groups again: Ken, Pat, and Bert worked west along the old road, finding rust on rocks and a dump full of large soldered, lap-seam cans. There were several finds of glass, including two pieces of black glass. Tracy, Don, Neal, and Richard headed east but did not find any trail. The rust and the old tin cans that they found were too close to the old railroad bed to believe they were not railroad artifacts.

By noon we were all back at camp. After lunch, Tracy decided to explore two areas to the southwest that looked promising on the aerials. Tracy, Don, and Richard checked out the first area, which was two miles away. As it turned out, the two parallel traces that were visible on the satellite images were parallel drainages on each side of the old railroad berm. Tracy, Don, and Richard decided it was easier to hike Dagoon Wash then fight the cat's claw in the drainages around it. The second area of investigation was where the old railroad grade crossed to the west of Dagoon Wash. They relocated the old railroad bed and followed it to where Tracy had hoped to find some evidence of a wagon road that possibly ran parallel to the old railroad grade,⁵ but they had no luck. They contacted Neal by radio, and he drove out and gave them a ride back to camp.

Dixie, the Johns' Huskie, howled during dinner, and coyotes sang late into the night. Richard's new pedometer registered that he had taken 18,888 steps during the day, approximately 8.94 miles.

Friday, October 9 – From the second camp to Benson

We left camp at 8:15 a.m. Tracy needed extra time for planning, so some of the group drove to a big hole in the road and threw in enough rocks to give the vehicles safer passage. We drove along the railroad line to a point where we were again going to investigate "The Dragoon to Benson" trace shown on GLO maps and satellite images.

We again divided into two groups. Ken, Pat, and Bert worked west. The area was hilly with gullies coming in from the south. Many rocks with rust enabled them to follow the road. The many wagons traveling over this terrain had left a swale that had eroded over the years into a deep drainage. The other group with Tracy, Don, Neal, and Richard found rust in their section, but they encountered so many scraps of junk iron that it felt as though they were following the trail of a railroad wagon that was hauling scrap metal. They ended up close to the power line road.



Richard Greene standing in the trail, as marked by a vegetation.
photo by Tracy DeVault

After lunch, Ken, Pat, and Bert walked west from the power line and found half a mule shoe in a swale. There was some rust on rock and also glass, but the swale was the most prominent feature. Due to the light green grass growing in the bottom, the swale was quite distinct. The swale increased in depth to the west and ended at the railroad. Tracy, Don and Richard were shuttled east to their starting point and after a two-mile hike, they ended up at the power line by the other group's starting point. They saw periodic swales and some rust on rocks, but there was a long barren stretch where even no scrap iron was found.

The decision had already been made to stay in motels for the night. When we arrived in Benson, we met Charles Townley and then had dinner at Gracie's Station Restaurant. The restaurant is named after a madam. The railroad had offered her a deal to move her restaurant and brothel to the current spot to take care of railroad business. The present restaurant has been built on the original site of her building.

Over dinner Ken said that all the scrap metal that Tracy, Don, and Richard had found earlier had the same appearance as scrap coming from a bombing range.⁶ Richard's pedometer registered 13,400 steps or approximately 6.34 miles for the day.

Saturday, October 10 – Benson to Dragoon Wash camp

After breakfast and a review of maps, we hit I-10, took Exit 303, and followed Highway 80 through Benson to St. David. Taking the steep and rugged Stronghold Canyon Road, we proceeded up the steep and rugged dirt road to overlook Dragoon Wash, with its wide sandy wash and vegetation that lived off the floodwaters that scour the area. We were only 15 miles from Benson, but we felt like we were in total wilderness. We parked in the same area we had mapped last April, when we had found and followed the trail north from this spot until we lost it where it crossed a deep side wash.



Solder-top can found along the trail. *photo by Ken White*

Satellite images now showed us where it crossed the wash. The trail also went south from this spot, but we had not found any real trail leading south last April.

Ken and Pat went west along the ridge and found some rust on rocks on the north side of the dirt road. This is a very rough area with many cat's claw bushes lying in wait. Off the ridge on a side road to the south, Ken and Pat checked the road location taken from a GLO map. There is a huge gully at the bottom that carries a lot of water during the rainy season. The land sloping down from the side is crossed with many steep-sided



The Trail Turtles receive their morning instructions.

photo by Judy DeVault

gullies that would be impossible to cross or go down with wagons. They didn't find any evidence of a road.

Tracy's group headed east to try and connect with the spot where we had lost the trail last April. It was very rough country. Besides having to wade through thorny cat's claw bushes, there were many deep, sandy drainages that had to be crossed. The group quickly located the wash crossing that had eluded us last April. They found some rust and artifacts, including the bottom of a shovel. They were searching desperately for more sign when Neal and Bert found where the trail went down a draw with lots of rust. This led them to discover more of the trail. They even found half a mule shoe. Neal, Bert, Tracy, and Richard searched east and tagged their last waypoint, but the trail had petered out by then. The group was still a long way from where they had stopped mapping the day before. Everybody was back in camp around 2 p.m. After lunch, Rose Ann and Pat spent a little more time going west along the morning route. They found rusty rocks and a broken chain link.

Then we headed back down the steep dirt road towards St. David. We drove into a primitive camping area at Dragoon Wash where we had camped last spring. We were in bed by 7 p.m. It was a mild night. Richard's pedometer registered 18,300 steps for the day.

Sunday, October 11 – Dragoon Wash camp and then home

Tracy said this would be the last day of mapping, so that when we were done with our mapping assignments we could go home at our convenience. Rose Ann, Marie, Charles, Ken, and Pat returned to the place where the swale we had followed on Friday ended at the railroad. They crossed the railroad and found that the swale continued. The aerial photographs indicated that there were parallel swales starting just past the railroad. They found where the swale split into two. Rose Ann and Charles followed the north swale. Since it was more eroded, it



In search of trail. Left to right: Tracy Devault, Don Buck, Richard Greene, and Neal Johns. *photo by Bert Eddins*

appeared to be the oldest. Ken and Pat followed the southern swale. Although they found some rocks with rust, the swale was the prominent feature. The two swales continued to Sybil Road without rejoining.

Bert, Marion, Neal, Don, Tracy, and Richard drove toward St. David and on to the Sybil Road to the Dragoon Mountain Ranch security gate. There was enough space by the gate for all to park. The gate is impressive and secured. You need to know the code for the security pad to open the gate unless you're a resident and have a remote. We talked with some residents and guests, as well as with the Sheriff's Department, and all of them approved of our being parked by the gate. (The Dragoon Mountain Ranch is a 10,000-acre development consisting of 35-acre parcels – with power, water, and sewer – for \$150,000. If you want to live out in the middle of nowhere with desert scenery and only a few neighbors, this could be your place of solitude.)

Judy and Marian stayed with vehicles while Don, Neal, Bert, Tracy, and Richard headed towards where they had finished the day before. They didn't have aials for this section, so Tracy used topo maps to pick a spot where they might find trail. They crossed a dirt road and struggled through cat's claw and in and out of deep eroded cross channels. They followed

a deep eroded section that was in the same direction as the trail. The erosion led to a swale on flat ground that led down into Dragoon Wash; they saw much rust on rock. They searched to the left and right of Dragoon Wash. Tracy thought he found the spot where a crossing was made, but it wasn't conclusive. They searched on top and checked the high bank of the wash. They could see power lines about a mile away. At 11:30 a.m., they decided to stop mapping. They hiked for an hour to get to the cars. Tracy had downloaded GPS waypoints during the trip, and before breaking for home, he recorded the latest waypoints.

A few days later: Clean-up mapping

Within a few days of arriving home Tracy e-mailed a map of what we accomplished. Because he had found evidence on aerials of good trail where we had been on the very last day of mapping, he called Richard, and the two of them decided to return to the area to spend a couple more days mapping. Their trip was successful, and they found much trail. This means that only a small section – maybe 600 yards – remains to be mapped to complete the trail from Dragoon Springs to St. David.

Endnotes

1. These old water tanks had a spout that was used to fill steam engines with water. The engine's tank was filled by pulling or "jerking" on a rope attached to the spout. The small communities that were only there to support the water tank became known as "jerkwater towns." The term has come to

mean any community with few people and not much going for it.

2. The original railroad that was installed in the early 1880's took a substantially different route along Dragoon Wash than the modern railroad. Our investigation shows that much of the old railroad berm has been washed away by the flooding of Dragoon Wash. In evaluating the Conkling's description of the routes of the Butterfield Road and the Emigrant Road, it was necessary to know when the railroad route was changed. The culverts in the new railroad route dated "1905" answer this question and tell us that the route was changed 30 years before the Conklings came through



The work goes on after dark, as Tracy Devault gets data from Richard Greene's GPS. Left to right: Bert Eddins, Tracy DeVault, Don Buck, and Richard Greene.

photo by Rose Ann Tompkins

this area, so that they probably are referring to the later railroad. 3. The road that this group was following was the Butterfield Road heading west from Dragoon Springs Stage Station toward Dragoon Wash. The group hiked to the last waypoint taken on a previous trip by a group led by Rose Ann Tompkins, and tried to follow it west from that point. Even though the rust rocks were few and far between, the group was able to follow the route

across a drainage and some distance past where Tompkin's group had ended.

4. Here the group was working along an old wagon road that is clearly shown on Government Land Office maps and labeled "Road from Dragoon to Benson." This could be the route the Butterfield Overland Stage Line used.
5. Some believe that the Butterfield route ran more or less parallel to the old railroad grade in the area. The group found no evidence of a wagon road in this area.
6. Despite the resemblance of the scrap metal to bomb fragments, we have no evidence that the Southern Pacific right-of-way was ever used for bombing practice.

News of Skulls and Bones

Buffalo Soldiers Re-interred

U.S. Army Privates Thomas Smith, Levi Morris, and David Ford, were given full military honors and laid to rest in wooden coffins at the Santa Fe National Cemetery this summer. The three died between 1866 and 1877, and were among hundreds of the so-called Buffalo Soldiers – African American regiments of the Army who served at remote outposts on the western frontier in the years after the Civil War.

More recently, they suffered the humiliation of having their graves robbed. The three men's remains were among those of more than 60 skeletons, four with missing skulls, exhumed at the historic Fort Craig Cemetery in southern New Mexico in 2007 during an investigation into widespread looting at the site. Forensic experts with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., identified the men.

Contained in a paper bag, Thomas Smith's skull was given anonymously to the investigators. A University of New Mexico graduate student, working at the Smithsonian, connected the skull with Smith's skeleton. Smith was 5-feet-two-inches in height and about 20 years old. He was a member of Company A of the 125th Regiment of U. S. Colored Troops. Although he suffered from tuberculosis, he died of cholera on November 21, 1866.

The end to the looting investigation brings attention to the extensive damage criminal looters can cause. The fact that Private Smith's skull was separated from his body is an example of the extent of damage that criminal looters are doing across the U.S.

For more information, see "Smithsonian sleuths solve grisly mystery of a Buffalo Soldier," by Michael E. Ruane, *Sacramento Bee*, June 18, 2009; and "More than 130 years after their deaths, Buffalo Soldiers buried in Santa Fe National Cemetery," by Melanie Dabovich, *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 28, 2009.

Geronimo's Skull

In February 1909, the Apache warrior Geronimo went to Lawton, Oklahoma, bought whiskey, and fell down drunk on the way home. He died of pneumonia a few days later, and was buried in the Apache cemetery at Fort Sill, near Lawton. A legend exists that members of the Order of Skull and Bones, an elite student society at Yale University, dug up Geronimo's remains while they were training at Fort Sill in 1918. The legend has it that Prescott Bush, grandfather of George W. Bush, was among the grave robbers. Geronimo's remains were reputedly taken to Yale to serve in Skull and Bones rituals.

Early this year, Harlyn Geronimo, a great-grandson of the historic warrior, filed suit to obtain the remains of the skeleton, and re-inter them at the historic warrior's birthplace, in New Mexico near the headwaters of the Gila River. Harlyn's lawsuit gives the legend new life by naming Yale, Skull and Bones, President Barack Obama, and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, as defendants.

The suit is related to other efforts to remove Geronimo's remains from the Fort Sill Apache Cemetery and re-bury them in New Mexico or Arizona. All such efforts are opposed by the Fort Sill Apache Tribe. Lariat Geronimo, another great-grandson of the warrior, has joined the Fort Sill tribe in a countersuit to Harlyn's suit. Since the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act gives the primary claim on skeletal remains to direct descendants, but only if they are in unanimous agreement, Lariat's dissension represents strong opposition to the suit.

As for the theft of Geronimo's skull by Yale students, a number of specialists claim that the story was a fraud, hatched back in 1918 as a prank.

For more details, see "The Strange Saga of Geronimo's Skull," by Leo W. Banks, *The Santa Fe Reporter*, July 1-7, 2009; also see "Famed Warrior Geronimo Had a Complex Life," by Marc Simmons, *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, March 6, 2009.

New Mexico History Museum

The New Mexico History Museum, which opened its doors in May 2009, displays the diversity, complexity, richness, and significance of New Mexico's history.

The permanent exhibit begins in the 1500's, before the arrival of the Spanish. The life style of the Native Americans is set by petroglyph-like handprints, three of which are interactive so that when touched, the visitor hears either a Navajo, Apache, or Pueblo Indian tell of their relationship with the land. Particularly fascinating is a rare yucca fiber sock that was found in Chaco Canyon. The exhibit next explores the Spanish Entrada and the Pueblo Revolt from different points of view, illustrating the history



with period artifacts which include a medallion that arrived with Juan de Oñate in the late 16th century. The era following De Vargas' reconquest is represented by period household and church items. One wall reproduces the Segesser Hides, which detail historical battle scenes painted sometime in the 18th century. This is one of the most informative exhibits in the museum. A screen provides visitors with the history of the hides and zooms in on the hide's details. The Mexican era includes period maps and household items, and displays on the mountain men and Doña Tules. Trail enthusiasts will enjoy the exhibit on the Santa Fe Trail that includes a covered wagon whose back canvas wall is used as a screen for a video about life on the trail. There are original oil portraits of early Santa Fe trail merchants and a number of objects brought over the trail. Another informative exhibit is on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War and made New Mexico a U.S. territory. Visitors can read a facsimile of the document and watch a screen showing interviews with historians discussing different interpretations of the treaty and its significance. The exhibit on the American takeover includes paintings of and personal possessions of Kearny, Marcy, Bent, and Doniphan. Another section explores New Mexico's 19th century forts and the Indian wars, with a particular stress on the Long Walk. There is a display on the Civil War in New Mexico and another on the Lincoln County War, with impressive artifacts: Billy the Kid's knife, a letter by Governor Wallace to the Kid, and Emil Fritz's passport. The 20th century is represented by exhibits on such topics as the Taos/Santa Fe artists, the Manhattan Project, and the Bataan Death March.

The museum uses a variety of approaches to convey information – informational wallboards, videos on large screens and on small touch screens, timelines, plasticized flip books, etc. Much of the impact of the exhibition comes from the incorporation of diaries, letters, maps, eyewitness accounts, oral histories, and particularly the artifacts, such as Kit Carson's gaming table and a pipe smoked by Cochise. Indeed, the museum displays an outstanding set of such items. However, many of the exhibits are painfully cursory, relying more on sensation than on explanation and exploration. Those unfamiliar with New Mexico history will have a tough time trying to set the historic objects into their historical context. There is little provision of the explanatory interpretation that provides insight into the larger historical questions, and hence the artifacts lose impact. Despite the marvelous items associated with Billy the Kid and Governor Lew Wallace, the tourist who wanders in off the plaza in hopes of appreciating something about what happened in Lincoln County, New Mexico, in 1878 and 1879 is likely to be puzzled.

Changing exhibits are shown on the second floor. The museum serves as the anchor of a campus that encompasses the Palace of the Governors, the Palace Press, the Fray Angelico Chavez History Library and Photo Archives. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., the museum is located next to the Palace of the Governors on 113 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, NM. (Phone: 505-476-5200)

Southern Trails Chapter

Oregon-California Trails Association



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Trails Association



Watercolor of the Laguna Colorado basin, executed by Heinrich Balduin Möllhausen while he was a member of Whipple's 35th parallel railroad survey.

Front Cover: Lithograph of Pyramid Mountain based on a sketch made by Möllhausen on September 22, 1853. The view is looking south at the exposed strata on the north face of the Pyramid. The bluffs of Circle S Mesa can be seen in the background. The lithograph distorts the height and shape of the Pyramid. The lithograph is printed in Volume III of the *Pacific Railroad Reports*.

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