J.K. Barnd to Franklin G. Adams

In this letter to Franklin G. Adams, J.K. Barnd, editor of the Ness County News of Ness, Kansas, discusses his interest in the route that explorer Zebulon Pike took when visiting the Pawnees in 1806. Barnd explains that previous accounts of the path followed by Pike were inaccurate, and that the village was most likely "nine or ten miles further up the river and on its west bank."

Creator: Barnd, J.K.

Date: December 9, 1895

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J.K. Barnd to Franklin G. Adams

FAVORITE PAPER OF NESS CITY — NESS COUNTY NEWS — LEADING PAPER OF NESS COUNTY

INTO WHICH IS MERGED THE NESS CITY TIMES

LEADING PAPER IN EVERYTHING. J. K. BARND, Editor and Proprietor.

NESS CITY, KANSAS, December 9, 1895.

H Indians- Pawnee
Barnd, J. K.
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Judge F. G. Adams,
See'y State Historical So)
Topeka, Kansas.) Dear Sir:----

Recently I spent a few days visiting friends in Republic county, and while there became very much interested in tracing the course followed by Zebulon M. Pike in his expedition to the Pawnee Republic in 1806,—and in the probable location of that Indian village. In most of the histories accessible the place is said to be near the village of Scandia on the Republican river, and one writer, I. O. Savage, says on the present site of Scandia. The latter position I think is absolutely incorrect, and not in harmony with the general trend of the evidence as adduced from the instructions of the officer projecting the expedition, the accounts of the route followed, nor with evidence that yet remains of the fact that an Indian village never existed in the immediate vicinity of Scandia.

In tracing the course of Pike and his party up the Missouri and Osage river, and to the head waters of the Neosho, thence to the mouth of the Saline, from where it appears a line was taken by the compass direct for the Pawnee Republic,—and as the report says, crossing the Solomon on the way,—it is not reasonable to suppose that the expedition was heading at all for the vicinity now occupied by Scandia; and no mention whatever is made of having crossed the Re-

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publican at any point, which would have been necessary to reach Scandia. On the contrary, the whole route as described in the report, and the topography of the country, precludes the idea of having crossed the river, but point directly to another location for the Indian village about nine or ten miles further up the river and on its west bank, where there are present indications to support the theory, and which are utterly lacking below. Had the expedition approached Scandia from the direction indicated in the report, when arriving within three miles, instead of being upon a level praire it would have been in the breaks of the river. To have approached from a direction that would coincide with the report the ex pedition would have been forced to ~~have~~ cross the river, making a detour that would have brought it upon the scene from the east or northeast, and the instructions and report can scarcely be reconciled to this theory, as the route was laid down to be followed by direct lines as indicated by the compass.

A second, and stronger reason for believing that a mistake has been made, is the fact before stated, that in the recollection of the oldest settlers there is no evidence that there was ever an Indian ~~XX~~ village at Scandia, while at the point indicated above there yet remain indisputable indications of the existence of a large village, with signs that it was also at one time fortified. Marks are yet distinct where the tepees stood, circular embankments about thirty feet

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FAVORITE PAPER OF NESS CITY — NESS COUNTY NEWS — LEADING PAPER OF NESS COUNTY

NESS COUNTY NEWS, ESTABLISHED DECEMBER 28, 1878. INTO WHICH IS MERGED THE NESS CITY TIMES, ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 20, 1884.

LEADING PAPER IN EVERYTHING. J. K. BARND, Editor and Proprietor.

NESS CITY, KANSAS,

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in diameter, and covering an area embracing something like thirty acres of land. Many relics have been picked up about the vil lage site, and graves have been opened, showing the character of the former inhabitants. This site has long been known to the earlier settlers, and recently they have become interested in preventing the entire obliteration of the ~~IX~~ marks by which it can yet be identified and traced. One half of the land has been in cultivation for twenty years or more yet I am told that it is yet easy to trace the location of the lodges even upon the land that has been disturbed by the plow. The old settlers have interested themselves in preserving, in some manner, this historic spot, and rescuing it from obliteration and consequent oblivion which is threatened by the owner of the ground who has made preparations for breaking and putting under cultivation the remain- portion of the village site.

It seems to me that the place where the first American flag was raised in this territory should possess sufficient historical interes to warrant the assistance of your society in determining its site and and marking it for future identification, and if possible in setting it apart as a reservation or public park, in which I believe you would have the hearty cooperation of the old settlers' association in that vicinity.

In this rather rambling letter I have referred to but few of the

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many facts that lead me to believe that recorded history is wide of the mark in locating the seat of the Pawnee Republic — but sufficient to suggest to any one who will give the matter study and attention to follow the course of the expedition directly from the mouth of the Saline, across the level prairies, along the salt marshes west of the Republican river, rather than going farther east and crossing the latter stream, and by detour reaching a spot that has nothing in the way of history, tradition or material evidence to point out the possibility of its having been the place where the Spanish flag was hauled down to give place to the American banner.

For the information I have been able to glean in this matter, and which possesses a peculiar interest to me, although I am a long distance from the scene, I am indebted to E. D. Haney, Esq., of Courtland, Republic county, who is devoting considerable time, and not a little energy, in awaking an interest among the people in that locality to rescue the remaining portion of the old village from the encroachment of the husbandman's plow, and who would undoubtedly be glad to work with your society to the end that its claims to the distinction, if I may use the term, may be definitely settled, and I would respectfully suggest the propriety of your opening correspondence with that gentleman.

Very respectfully, J. K. Barnd