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## THE COVER

The Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston railroad bridge across the Kansas river eighty years ago. It was the first north-south railroad bridge across the Kaw (*see* pp. 225, 232). The engine, "Ottawa," was the first locomotive on this road.

The view is from a stereoscopic photograph by Alexander Gardner of Washington, D. C.

## THE KANSAS HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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### The Building of the First Kansas Railroad South of the Kaw River

HAROLD J. HENDERSON

THE first railroad locomotive to operate in Kansas south of the Kaw river made its initial crossing of that river at Lawrence, November 1, 1867.<sup>1</sup> Nosing of this "iron horse" across the Kaw was a part of the first all-out construction race in the state to cash in on county bonds before a fixed deadline.<sup>2</sup> In order to qualify for the bonds it was necessary for the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston railroad to lay track from Lawrence to Ottawa by January 1, 1868.<sup>3</sup> The race developed into a "photo finish," in which a prominent Kansas newspaper editor made a "last-minute" dash to Illinois to rush delivery of passenger cars for the railroad's opening.<sup>4</sup> The track was completed a day before the deadline.<sup>5</sup>

The locomotive making this pioneer southward Kaw river crossing was the "Ottawa."<sup>6</sup> It belonged to the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston, which, by destroying its bridge behind it<sup>7</sup> became probably the only Kansas railroad that ever operated the greater

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1. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, November 2, 1867.

2. *Ibid.*, November 26, 1867.

3. Douglas county, board of commissioners, "Commissioners' Record," v. "B," pp. 133, 134; "Special Election," notice in *Kansas Weekly Tribune*, Lawrence, January 17, 1867; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, February 8, 1867; "Special Election" notice in *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, September 4, 1867, election returns in September 26, 1867, issue.

4. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, December 29, 1867.

5. *Ibid.*, January 1, 1868.

6. *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, November 7, 14, 1867.

7. *Ibid.*, January 15, 18, 1868. Four western tributaries to the north and west of the Kaw had been bridged on the north side of the stream but a railroad span had never been erected across the Kansas river except from west to east after the river's bend northward near the state line to empty into the Missouri river.

The Blue river was spanned near Manhattan in the summer of 1866 and the first passenger train crossed on August 20.—*Manhattan Independent*, August 25, 1866; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, August 29, 1866. The Republican river was bridged near its mouth in the fall of the same year and the first passenger train entered Junction City, November 10.—*Junction City Union*, October 27, November 17, 1866. The Union Pacific also bridged the Solomon in March, 1867, and the Saline river on April 16, 1867.—*Ibid.*, March 30, April 20, 1867.

Driving of piles for the Union Pacific's first Kaw river bridge and trestle near the state line was in progress by October, 1863, and regular service across the Kansas river east to the state line was established in December, 1864.—*Wyandotte Commercial Gazette*, October 10, 1863, December 31, 1864, see advertisements of train schedules; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, December 23, 1864.





part of two years minus a terminus with a direct rail or ferry connection.

The Union Pacific railway, Eastern division, had been constructed westward from Wyandotte and placed in operation to Lawrence<sup>8</sup> before the Missouri Pacific, its original connecting line, had a continuous track in operation from St. Louis to Kansas City<sup>9</sup> but the Union Pacific from the first had connecting carriers in the form of Missouri river boats.<sup>10</sup>

County bonds had been issued for three other Kansas railroad projects prior to the launching of the construction race by the Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston<sup>11</sup> but the ballot proposals presented to and adopted by the voters either did not specify a time limit in which the railroads should be completed or the bonds by agreement were issued in advance of construction on a "pay-as-you-go" basis as the lines were built.<sup>12</sup>

Leavenworth county had issued bonds to the Missouri River railroad<sup>13</sup> (the Missouri Pacific's present Kansas City-Leavenworth line) prior to its construction<sup>14</sup> and to the Union Pacific railway, Eastern division, for the building of a branch from Leavenworth to Lawrence with an agreement that the bonds be delivered pro rata as the work progressed.<sup>15</sup> Johnson county also voted bonds to aid in the construction of the Kansas and Neosho Valley railroad<sup>16</sup> (the Frisco's present line from Kansas City to Olathe)<sup>17</sup> but issued a portion of the bonds more than a year before the line was placed

8. *Ibid.*, November 27, 1864.

9. The Kansas City (Mo.) *Daily Journal of Commerce*, September 21, 1865; Wyandotte *Commercial Gazette*, September 23, 30, 1865; R. E. Riegel, "The Missouri Pacific Railroad To 1879," in *The Missouri Historical Review*, Columbia, v. 18, pp. 11, 13.

10. Wyandotte *Commercial Gazette*, February 13, 1864. The first load of iron and first locomotive for the Union Pacific, Eastern division, were delivered by the steamboat *Majors* at the Wyandotte levee in February, 1864. A mention of the *Majors* is made in *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 9, p. 306.

11. State of Kansas, auditor of state, *First Biennial Report* (Topeka, 1878), table of "Municipal Debt," Johnson and Leavenworth counties, pp. 234-236.

12. "Election Notice" in Leavenworth *Daily Bulletin*, January 3, 23, 1865, "Election Proclamation," June 27, 1865; Leavenworth *Daily Times*, June 13, 1865; Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, July 1, 1865; Olathe *Mirror*, September 5, 1867.

13. Leavenworth *Daily Bulletin*, August 23, 1865.

14. State of Kansas, board of railroad commissioners, *First Annual Report* (Topeka, 1884), p. 152.

15. Leavenworth *Daily Times*, June 13, 1865; Leavenworth *Daily Bulletin*, June 15, 1865; Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, December 13, 1865. The \$250,000 in stock of the Union Pacific Railroad Company acquired by Leavenworth county in issuing bonds for the construction of the Leavenworth branch, was voted to the Kansas Central railroad under proposals approved at a special election on August 15, 1871.—Leavenworth *Daily Commercial*, July 15, August 18, 1871. Construction of the main line of the Union Pacific up the Kaw valley had been financed with the aid of United States bonds and land grants. This was also true in the building of the first 100 miles of the Central Branch Union Pacific railroad (Missouri Pacific).—State of Kansas, board of railroad commissioners, *First Annual Report*, pp. 85, 171.

16. Kansas City (Mo.) *Daily Journal of Commerce*, November 9, 1865.

17. State of Kansas, board of railroad commissioners, *First Annual Report*, pp. 143, 149, *Sixth Annual Report*, p. 300; H. V. & H. W. Poor, *Poor's Manual of the Railroads of the United States*, 1902 (New York, 1902), pp. 751, 752.



in operation.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston was running trains eleven months before the Kansas and Neosho Valley was maintaining service to Olathe.<sup>19</sup>

Prior problems of financing and bridging formed much of the background for this railroad construction race drama which opened its final act on November 1, 1867. The act began with the pioneer locomotive operation south of the Kaw when the "Ottawa" made its crossing at Lawrence after a temporary "low" bridge had been constructed. The span was erected solely for the purpose of getting the motive power, a small quantity of rolling stock and needed iron across the river<sup>20</sup> for laying a 27-mile track to Ottawa.<sup>21</sup>

Less than four months after Sen. James H. Lane assumed the presidency of the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston railroad in 1865,<sup>22</sup> Douglas county had voted on September 12, 1865, \$250,000 in bonds for a subscription to the stock of the line to be made upon its completion in that county.<sup>23</sup> Franklin county had followed suit a little more than a year later by voting \$125,000 in bonds for the projected line commonly known as "The Galveston Railroad," to be issued upon its construction in that county.<sup>24</sup>

Within the week that Douglas county voted the railroad bonds, Senator Lane had presented to the directors of the Galveston road a resolution providing:

That the executive committee be instructed to ascertain the cost of a double track railroad bridge across the Kansas river, including in connection therewith a double passenger track; and said committee is further authorized to receive special city, county and individual subscriptions of stock, payable as said work progresses, for the construction of the same. And when said committee shall obtain a sufficient amount of said stock, they are hereby empowered to contract for building said bridge, to be completed at as early a day as practicable. . . .<sup>25</sup>

After Senator Lane started on a speaking tour of the South in the interests of the Galveston road with appearances planned at

18. Olathe *Mirror*, September 5, October 24, 1867, Johnson county commissioners' proceedings; State of Kansas, auditor of state, *First Biennial Report*, p. 234; *Weekly Journal of Commerce*, Kansas City, Mo., December 19, 1868.

19. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, December 31, 1867; *Weekly Journal of Commerce*, December 19, 1868. Construction trains were operating from Kansas City to Olathe as early as December 3, 1868, but regular service was not inaugurated until December 11, 1868.—*Ibid.*, December 12, 19, 1868.

20. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, October 15, November 2, 1867.

21. *Ibid.*, March 18, 1869; *Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad Time Table No. 2* [1875], p. 2.

22. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, June 7, 1865.

23. Douglas county, board of commissioners, "Commissioners' Record," v. "B," pp. 40, 41; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, August 17, September 20, 1865.

24. *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, October 11, November 15, 1864.

25. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, September 17, 1865.



Memphis, Vicksburg and New Orleans, the railroad advertised for bids "for putting in the foundations and building the abutments and piers for the railroad bridge of this company across the river at Lawrence," with January 1, 1866, the final day for filing proposals. The *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, said that "We are informed upon reliable authority . . . that it is the confident expectation of the company to have their bridge across the river at this point completed by spring."<sup>26</sup>

But ample credit and cash for railroad building was not forthcoming alone from promised county stock subscriptions to be paid for by a future bond issue. Outside capital was needed. The Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston railroad had received a land grant but title could not be obtained to any of the lands until a portion of the line was in operation.<sup>27</sup> The bond proposition of Douglas county was termed impracticable for railroad financing by James F. Joy,<sup>28</sup> president of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy and Michigan Central railroads, and a director of the New York Central,<sup>29</sup> because the proceeds could not be used until certain work was already completed. He said upon a visit to Lawrence that the amount of Douglas county bonds voted could finance the grading and tying of the road to the Franklin county line, and then rail and iron could otherwise be obtained.

Newspaper discussion and statements of public men pointed to the probability that not more than 50 percent of the par value of the county bonds could be realized by their sale. This brought the suggestion that the state endorse such county bonds or lend its credit to the counties, the state itself being barred by constitutional provisions from issuing bonds for internal improvements. State bonds were credited with bringing near par.<sup>30</sup>

Financial arrangements had not been completed for the construction of the Lawrence bridge nor for the complete building of the road when Senator Lane was reëlected president of the railroad in June, 1866, and one of his "last works" before his death July 11 was to send Maj. B. S. Henning east to interest capitalists in the construction of the Galveston road.<sup>31</sup>

These efforts finally resulted in definitely enlisting the interest of

26. *Ibid.*, October 10, November 17, 29, 1865.

27. State of Kansas, *Session Laws of 1864*, ch. 79.

28. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, August 19, 1866.

29. Henry V. Poor, *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1869-70* (New York, 1869), pp. 21, 64, 206. Joy was also chairman of the board of the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad.—*Ibid.*, p. 414.

30. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, August 19, October 30, November 14, 1866.

31. *Ibid.*, June 5, July 12, 25, 1866.



Chicago and New York capitalists in the projected road early in November, 1866.<sup>32</sup> Then followed a series of moves that led to the establishment of a deadline for the completion of the road to Ottawa, if county stock subscriptions were to be made through issuance of bonds, and the ensuing construction race.

With the naming of these capitalists to the board of directors on November 29, the new company officials and board headed by William Sturges of Chicago and including Cyrus H. McCormick of New York, asked Douglas county to increase its proposed stock subscription in the Galveston road to \$300,000, declaring that "in most of the projected enterprises in this region, the people offer, by way of contribution, what is equivalent to one-third of the cost of construction."<sup>33</sup>

Douglas county voters on February 6, 1867, authorized an increase in the proposed stock subscription by the county to \$300,000 and the issuance of a like amount of bonds to the company, contingent upon the railroad completing and equipping 24 miles of track by January 1, 1868.<sup>34</sup>

In February announcement was made that iron for the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston had been purchased in Liverpool, England, and late in the following month the contract had been awarded for the masonry for the first ten miles of line. By April 28 it was reported 30 hands were cutting ties for the railroad.<sup>35</sup>

Heavy rains in late May forced contractors to reduce grading forces in the Wakarusa bottom but it was estimated that a fourth of the grading had been completed to the Franklin county line and considerable stone had been delivered for the 140-foot Wakarusa river bridge. Two miles had been graded on the south side of the Wakarusa river along Coal creek and portions of the grading done along the route towards Baldwin City. "Beyond the Santa Fe Ridge, hands are strung all along the line of the work," the *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, said.<sup>36</sup>

By mid-July, with less than six months to meet the deadline, Col. J. B. Vliet, engineer of the Galveston road, estimated that the road-bed for the first 24 miles of the line could be made ready for the rails in three weeks. And following a directors' meeting in Chicago, Major Henning was sent east to purchase locomotives and rolling

32. *Ibid.*, November 10, 1866.

33. *Ibid.*, December 1, 22, 1866, January 19, 1867.

34. *Kansas Weekly Tribune*, Lawrence, January 17, 1867, "Special Election Notice"; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, February 8, 1867.

35. *Ibid.*, February 22, March 26, April 28, 1867.

36. *Ibid.*, May 25, 1867.

stock for the road, but no construction had been undertaken to bridge the Kaw.<sup>37</sup>

Meanwhile, Franklin county was asked to increase its proposed bond issue from \$125,000 to \$200,000 to aid in completing the railroad through to Ottawa.<sup>38</sup> On August 14 it was reported that grading would be completed in ten days to the Douglas-Franklin county line but there remained a mile and a half gap immediately south of Lawrence.<sup>39</sup>

By September factors in the construction race for the county bonds were taking more definite shape.

Early in the year Douglas county had increased the amount of its proposed bond issue to aid in financing the road and stipulated the January 1 deadline for completion.<sup>40</sup> Original provisions in 1866 for Franklin county's proposed \$125,000 bond issue specified no time limit for completing the road but provided for delivery of half of the issue upon completion of the line to Ottawa.<sup>41</sup>

On September 2, 1867, the Franklin county commissioners issued a notice for an election September 23 on the proposal to authorize an increase in the contemplated issue to \$200,000, but with the added provision that the road be completed to Ottawa by January or no bonds would be issued at all.<sup>42</sup> When the voters approved this proposal later the same month, the Galveston railroad thus faced the task of completing the road to Ottawa by New Year's or not only lose the original \$125,000 in bonds promised by Franklin county but an additional \$75,000 as well.<sup>43</sup>

Early in September, it was reported that iron for the road had been shipped and two locomotives purchased. By September 11 three carloads of the rail and track material had passed through Quincy, Ill. Three days later seven carloads had reached Leavenworth.<sup>44</sup>

Still no means had been procured for crossing railroad equipment over the Kaw and less than four months remained to bridge the river, finish construction of the roadbed and lay the rail to Ottawa by January 1.

37. *Ibid.*, July 17, 21, 1867.

38. *Ibid.*, July 17, 1867; *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, August 15, 1867.

39. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, August 14, 1867.

40. *Kansas Weekly Tribune*, Lawrence, January 17, 1867; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, February 8, 1867.

41. *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, October 11, 1866.

42. *Ibid.*, September 4, 1867.

43. *Ibid.*, September 4, 26, 1867.

44. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, September 7, 11, 14, 1867.



So vital had become the problem that the laying of temporary rails over the Babcock wagon bridge was considered as a means of moving locomotives to the south bank of the Kaw.<sup>45</sup>

Neither Quincy<sup>46</sup> nor Leavenworth had railroad bridges<sup>47</sup> but the rolling stock brought west via these points could be transferred across the Mississippi and Missouri rivers by boats. Leavenworth had a ferry connection with a Missouri railroad at East Leavenworth.<sup>48</sup> But Lawrence at this period did not have a ferry, the Babcock wagon bridge having been constructed in 1863 and the steam ferry was not placed in service until 1871.<sup>49</sup>

"Three car loads of iron have arrived at the Lawrence depot for the Galveston railroad. It will keep coming," was the announcement of the *Kansas Daily Tribune* of Lawrence, October 1.

Building of a railroad bridge across the Kansas river was discussed by the directors of the company at a meeting at Lawrence October 9 and a resolution was passed instructing the chief engineer to make plans and estimates for the bridge. The *Tribune* in reporting the directors' meeting said:

There is no shadow of doubt of the speedy completion of the road to Ottawa. The iron horse can be watered in the Marais des Cygnes on New Year's day, and our Franklin county friends can get up a grand celebration and barbecue, if they want to.

Three engines have been purchased, and one of them has already reached the Missouri opposite Leavenworth, and was to have crossed the Missouri river yesterday. The construction cars are on the way, a few car loads of the iron is at the Lawrence depot, a hundred car loads are near Leavenworth—we don't know on which side of the river. . . .<sup>50</sup>

Plans for a temporary bridge were revealed on October 15 after the engineers of the road had made a survey the previous day. A Lawrence newspaper gave the following description of the plans for the structure, just above the Babcock wagon bridge, and its connecting track:

The road starts from the U. P. road, west of the bridge, and will thus cross this temporary bridge, and the engine and construction train pass under the

45. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1867.

46. The cornerstone of the Quincy bridge was laid on September 25, 1867, and it was completed the following year.—Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, October 1, 1867; Murray, Williamson & Phelps, pub., *The History of Adams County, Illinois* (Chicago, 1879), pp. 490, 491.

47. Work on the first Leavenworth railroad bridge approaches was started July 20, 1869, and on the superstructure in July, 1871. Opening of the bridge was celebrated on April 18, 1872, after an official test earlier that month.—Leavenworth *Daily Commercial*, April 18, 1872.

48. See schedule of Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad boat under "Railroad Time Table" in Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, August 15, 1867. The Missouri Valley railroad was running trains to East Leavenworth.—*Ibid.*, September 1, 1867.

49. George A. Root, "Ferries in Kansas," in *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 2, p. 285.

50. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, October 10, 1867.

Babcock bridge (so called), and thence along the river bank till near Sparr's old brick yard, and around the hill by Speer's place. The bridge is to be a temporary structure, the stringers set on cribs loaded with stone, and is to be used only for the transportation of the iron, cars, etc., used in the construction of the road. The water is only about two feet deep and the bridge will be easily made. The hands will be at work on the grading to-day.<sup>51</sup>

The next day grading on the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston was started on the north side of the Kansas river for the track to be laid from the Union Pacific to the temporary bridge, and cribs for the temporary structure were being placed in the water. The last crib was constructed on October 23 and the first track-laying on the road started the preceding day. Stringers on the bridge had been placed within ten days after work on the span started and track-laying across the bridge was completed on October 29. The *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, reported:

The track-laying across the railroad bridge was completed yesterday. Construction cars are run across by hand with iron, but the locomotive will not be placed on it for a day or two. The ties are also in place for a considerable distance on the south side of the river.<sup>52</sup>

The locomotive "Ottawa" made its first crossing over the temporary bridge on November 1 with five cars of iron, shortly after its arrival from Leavenworth the same afternoon. However, preliminary to the actual crossing of the locomotive the strength of the bridge was tested by a truck loaded with iron which was detached from the train at the upper part of the grade on the north side of the river and "coasted" across the bridge. The crossing of the locomotive was made a celebration and after the initial trip onlookers accepted an invitation to ride across the river and back.<sup>53</sup>

The *Kansas Daily Tribune* of November 2 gave this description of the eventful crossing:

The first raid on Southern Kansas by a railroad train was made yesterday. A locomotive was brought down from Leavenworth, and in the afternoon, with five carloads of iron, successfully crossed the Kaw, being the first train that ever made its appearance on Southern Kansas soil. A truck loaded with iron was first detached at the upper part of the grade on the north side of the river, to make the experiment trip to test the bridge, its own weight giving it sufficient impetus to carry it across in beautiful style, checking its speed only when the brakes were applied. The locomotive with its five cars and a large number of persons aboard then backed slowly across, and on reaching the south side awoke the echos of Southern Kansas with its shrill whistle of triumph. The bridge bore the immense weight without giving in the least.

51. *Ibid.*, October 15, 1867.

52. *Ibid.*, October 17, 20, 23, 24, 30, 1867.

53. *Ibid.*, November 2, 1867; *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, November 7, 1867.



## BUILDING FIRST RAILROAD SOUTH OF KAW

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It appears to be very solid and strong, capable of sustaining any weight that may be placed on it. A large crowd gathered on the wagon bridge and river banks to witness the crossing.

After the unloading of the iron was completed, Col. Vliet invited the citizens to a ride across the river and back. Several hundred persons availed themselves of the privilege, and the cars were speedily filled to their utmost capacity with gentlemen, ladies and children. The train ran over to the junction and back, the passengers enjoying it hugely, judging from the general hilarity. As soon as the train arrived back at the starting point, Mayor Kimball proposed three cheers for the Galveston railroad, which were given with will, followed by three more for Mr. Sturges, three for Maj. Henning and three for Col. Vliet.

The "Ottawa," described as a "grim old engine," in the succeeding days made daily and sometimes hourly trips across the cribbed bridge over the Kansas river, moving track materials.<sup>54</sup>

By the middle of November less than four miles of rail had been laid from the Lawrence terminus. Timbers and iron for a Howe truss pattern bridge made in Chicago for erection over the Wakarusa river, had arrived at Lawrence, and a second locomotive, the "Osage," had crossed the Missouri river at Leavenworth. "The iron is laid a little past the summit between Lawrence and the Wakarusa, and the engine is on the down grade for the Wakarusa bottom," the *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, reported.<sup>55</sup>

Track laying was completed to the Wakarusa river on November 20 but the bridge was not finished for nearly a week and the construction locomotive did not cross until November 27. Meanwhile, the second locomotive was placed on the job.<sup>56</sup>

With five weeks remaining in which to qualify for the county bonds, the Galveston railroad management faced the task of building four more iron bridges and laying more than twenty miles of rail. John Speer, editor of the *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, although admitting in an editorial he had feared the deadline might not be met, now expressed confidence that the company would qualify for the bonds, in these words:

Everything on the road is now in fine working order. We have really been despondent about this work, not that we had any doubt but the work would be done, but a fear that it might fail to be accomplished within the time required by the counties of Douglas and Franklin, and thus retard the work beyond Ottawa. We now have no fears. Nothing but an interposition of Providence could prevent it.<sup>57</sup>

54. Lawrence *State Journal*, reprinted in *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, November 14, 1867.

55. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, November 14, 22, 1867.

56. *Ibid.*, November 20, 22, 26, 1867.

57. *Ibid.*, November 26, December 22, 1867.

Meanwhile, the "Osage" had the honor of making the first excursion trip down the line, transporting a number of Lawrence citizens and visitors as guests of Mr. Sturges, president of the road, down toward Coal creek where "two thousand feet of railroad was laid down" in an afternoon and the force "so completely organized that at least a mile a day can be laid."<sup>58</sup>

By December 8 the completed track was nearing the half-way mark and it was stated that track laying "is now on the up-grade for the Santa Fe ridge, and will reach Baldwin City this week" [by December 14].<sup>59</sup> Laying of the rails to Baldwin would mark the completion of more than 14 miles of the 27-mile stretch to Ottawa, after more than 40 days had elapsed following placing of the first construction locomotive in service. It was estimated that laying 16 miles of rail in 20 working days was the task in order to reach the Ottawa townsite by January 1.<sup>60</sup>

However, newspapers indicated a stepping up of rail laying. The *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, said: "Two sets of hands—one for day, and the other for night work—are laying down over a mile of track a day." "Mr. Cooley, the new superintendent of track-laying," the *Tribune* said, "is a go-ahead man, as we were convinced by seeing his hands at work an hour or two yesterday [December 7]. On Friday [December 6] he laid a mile and two hundred feet, and Saturday a mile and three hundred and fifty feet."<sup>61</sup>

Work was progressing when the locomotive, "Osage," ran off the track on December 16 while "shoving a heavy train up to the summit of the Santa Fe ridge, near Baldwin." The pilot was badly smashed and other damage sustained. This made it necessary to operate the engine, "Ottawa," night and day to carry material as one engine was "scarcely sufficient, even when constantly employed." Nevertheless, the rail was laid to Prairie City, south of Baldwin, by December 17, and to the county line by December 20, and the grading to Ottawa had been done a few days previously.<sup>62</sup>

The construction score then read: Approximate mileage completed, 18; approximately 9 miles to go in 11 days.<sup>63</sup> Bridges had been completed except one over "what is known as Ottawa Jones's creek."

58. *Ibid.*, November 27, 1867.

59. *Ibid.*, December 8, 1867.

60. *Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad Time Table No. 2* [1875], p. 2; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, November 2, December 8, 1867.

61. *Western Home Journal*, Ottawa, December 12, 1867; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, December 8, 1867.

62. *Ibid.*, December 17, 18, 21, 1867.

63. *Ibid.*, December 21, 1867; March 18, 1869.



Cooley was quoted as promising to put down a mile and a half of track a day "from there on." The disabled engine was repaired just before Christmas and on that day it was announced track laying was completed to West Ottawa creek, within five miles of Ottawa, and the intention to run the construction train into Ottawa, Saturday, December 28, was made known.<sup>64</sup>

Delivery of two passenger cars and a baggage car to the Galveston road had been expected in the first week in December but as the month was running out they failed to appear. The cars had been manufactured at Trenton, N. J. The approaching deadline for the completion of the road prompted John Speer, editor of the *Kansas Daily Tribune* and a director of the road, to make a last-minute trip to Quincy, Ill., to hurry the delivery of the coaches and the baggage car. On December 29, he reported they had been brought west as far as Leavenworth and would be run to Lawrence the following day by special train so as to be available for use on the first train into Ottawa on December 31.<sup>65</sup>

On the morning of the last day of the year—hours before the county bond deadline—there remained a third of a mile of rail to be laid to the Ottawa townsite. That morning the construction train with one passenger car and three carloads of iron ran to the end of the track. Included in its passengers were George P. Lee, an officer of the Chicago & Northwestern railway and a director of the Galveston road, and Daniel L. Wells, the principal contractor for building the railway from Lawrence to Ottawa. Mr. Sturges, president of the road, had gone down on an engine at daylight to the end of the rail.<sup>66</sup>

The construction train literally laid its own track into Ottawa to beat the January 1 deadline. A newspaper account said:

The train took down iron for eighteen hundred and sixty feet of road, and from the moment that the cars were stopped till it was unloaded, laid down, well spiked, and the train run over it, was precisely an hour, and this done with a single set of track-layers—being a third of a mile and one hundred feet.

This visit of passengers was unheralded to the citizens of Ottawa; but it was known that the iron rails would cross the city line and the cars enter the city that day, and four or five hundred of the citizens of the town and surrounding country were there to witness that interesting event, and when the passenger cars arrived, loud cheers for Ottawa and Lawrence and the Gal-

64. *Ibid.*, December 22, 24, 25, 1867.

65. Leavenworth *Daily Conservative*, December 28, 1867; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, November 26, December 29, 1867.

66. *Ibid.*, January 1, 1868.



veston Railroad Company greeted the visitors. The crowd principally stayed on the ground till the track was down, and as the rails crossed the city line, the welkin rang with cheers, and soon the passenger car entered the city of Ottawa. Mr. Sturges remained only till he saw the cars within the city limits, and then took an engine and left to make connection with the Union Pacific road, and made the trip to Lawrence in one hour and twelve minutes. His departure was very generally regretted, but important business compelled him to return east.<sup>67</sup>

Daily passenger and freight service to Ottawa was inaugurated on New Year's and by January 4 the Galveston road was carrying the mail, the stages having been taken off north of Ottawa.<sup>68</sup>

Razing of the temporary Kansas river bridge was under way two weeks later. Workers began removing rails from the bridge and by January 16 the sills and timbers were being taken up and loaded on cars for removal down the road. The whole structure was being razed to the level of the ice, leaving only a small part of it in the river, and the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston was left without a direct railroad or boat connection.<sup>69</sup>

No further construction work of consequence toward extending the road south of Ottawa was attempted before the summer of 1869 and it was not until August of that year that material was received for the erection of a bridge over the Marais des Cygnes at Ottawa.<sup>70</sup> However, the business on the railroad even without direct connection was shown to be on the increase. In February an addition had been built to the Ottawa depot and the trains were crowded with both passengers and freight.<sup>71</sup>

May saw negotiations opened by other railroad owners to acquire an interest in the Galveston road and James F. Joy, railroad capitalist and then director of the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf railroad (Frisco), was exhibiting interest in the road.<sup>72</sup>

The Galveston road had acquired another engine, "The Comet," to pull the passenger train. By June 11 the locomotive was standing across the Kansas river in North Lawrence. But not having had a bridge at Lawrence for nearly a year and a half, the railroad faced the problem of getting it across. A temporary track on blocks or the procurement of a boat from Kansas City to ferry it over were two means considered. Purchase of material for two

67. *Ibid.*

68. *Ibid.*, January 1, 3, 4, 1868.

69. *Ibid.*, January 15, 17, 1868.

70. *Ibid.*, August 3, 1869.

71. *Ibid.*, February 12, 13, 1869.

72. *Ibid.*, May 12-14, 1869; *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1869-70*, p. 407.



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flatboats apparently was the answer of the engineer, Col. J. B. Vliet. While in Chicago for a directors' meeting he obtained the material for the construction of two boats that were also to be used in crossing cars and materials over the river for the contemplated extension of the railroad. It was announced that each boat would have a capacity of two loaded cars. Construction of the railroad ferry was under way in July.<sup>73</sup>

On June 30 Joy and five Boston capitalists—Nathaniel Thayer, Sidney Bartlett, H. H. Hunnewell, W. F. Weld and John A. Burnham—associated with him as directors of the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf railroad assumed control of the Galveston road and Joy became its president. In July grading was in progress south of Ottawa to the Pottawatomie river.<sup>74</sup>

Leavenworth was displaying an interest in obtaining a direct connection with the southern Kansas trade and the Leavenworth board of trade requested the county commissioners of Leavenworth to transfer the county's Kansas Pacific railroad stock to aid in the construction of the Lawrence bridge.<sup>75</sup>

In September the railroad ferry on the Kaw was taking cars and iron over the river and "working well." The *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, reported "some ten or twelve car-loads [of iron] were brought across the river on the ferry boat yesterday [October 1], and a portion run down to Ottawa. The cars and all are crossed, and after being unloaded the cars are recrossed and sent back. . . . The loaded cars are crossed with greatest dispatch."<sup>76</sup>

However, the railroad soon showed a preference for a bridge, and construction of a temporary span was under way in October. It was nearly completed in early November, a large force of workmen and a pile driver having been employed for several days. A description of the road's second temporary Kansas river bridge was given by the *Kansas Daily Tribune*:

The bridge is located a short distance below the wagon bridge, and angles across the river to allow the cars to run alongside the high bank, on the south side. Five substantial log cribs, filled with stone, have been constructed on the south side, on a rock bottom, with the exception of the last, which rests on sand. For the rest of the way piles were driven into the sand to a depth of twelve feet, and standing high enough to give the bridge an

73. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, June 11, 26, July 22, 1869.

74. *Ibid.*, July 3, 18, 1869; *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1869-70*, p. 407.

75. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, August 25, 1869.

76. *Ibid.*, September 9, October 2, 1869.



altitude of eight feet above low-water mark. Dirt embankments are thrown up at each end to the water's edge. The work is of a very substantial character, and will doubtless serve the purpose until a permanent bridge can be erected. The cost will not exceed twelve or fifteen hundred dollars.

The old ferry boat, with the tracks built to accommodate it, together with attendant expenses cost the company in all about ten thousand dollars. Hence, there is no question as to the economy of a bridge, to say nothing of the increased facilities for crossing cars and materials.<sup>77</sup>

By December another locomotive, the "Torrent," was received by the Galveston road from Detroit. In January, 1870, the motive power of the road had been increased to eight engines, with the recent arrival of four new locomotives from the Manchester works. Four of the engines were second-hand. Meanwhile, the track of the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston had been laid two miles south of the Franklin-Anderson county line.<sup>78</sup>

Joy soon expressed the hope that a permanent bridge could be constructed at Lawrence and on February 22 announced the bridge would be built at once. The span was not constructed immediately, but late in the summer of that year the road received a direct connection from another direction. The Kansas City and Santa Fe railroad was completed from Olathe to Ottawa on August 22, 1870, and use of the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf railroad tracks from Olathe to Kansas City gave the Galveston road a continuous rail connection to the Missouri river.<sup>79</sup>

By the spring of 1871 the Galveston road was attempting to compete with the Kansas Pacific for freight and passengers to Kansas City over the longer route via Ottawa and Olathe by reducing rates and advertising that "passengers will please observe that by taking this route [via Ottawa and Olathe to Kansas City] they will not be obliged to cross the river at Lawrence."<sup>80</sup> However, the road had not given up the idea of a Lawrence bridge. In the 1871 annual report, the directors said:

In order to make connections with the Kansas Pacific Railroad, at Lawrence, thereby getting direct connections with Leavenworth, over the Leavenworth branch of that road, as well as to transact with convenience the business coming from or going to the main line of that road, it has become necessary that a bridge be constructed at Lawrence, across the Kansas river.<sup>81</sup>

In May, 1871, newspapers announced the Kansas Pacific and the

77. *Ibid.*, October 26, November 2, 1869.

78. *Ibid.*, November 26, 1869, January 1, 22, 1870.

79. *Ibid.*, February 25, 1870; *Report of the Directors of the Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad Company* (Chicago, 1871), pp. 19, 20.

80. *Kansas Weekly Tribune*, Lawrence, April 27, May 18, 1871.

81. *Report of the Directors of the Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad Company* (1871), p. 21.



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Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad Company had made a contract to build a railroad bridge across the Kansas river "cojointly."<sup>82</sup>

By October of that year the boat upon which the pile driver was to be placed was in position on the south side of the river. After interruptions of winter, work was under way on the second span of the structure in January, 1872, and it was completed two months later.<sup>83</sup>

In March, 1873, the dream of through service over the new Kansas river bridge to Leavenworth, the northern terminus of the Leavenworth, Lawrence and Galveston railroad under the terms of its 1864 amended charter, was realized. After extended negotiations it was announced that a contract had been signed between the Kansas Pacific and Galveston road to operate jointly through trains from Lawrence to Leavenworth and the first through train passed through Lawrence over the branch to Leavenworth the same month.<sup>84</sup>

82. *Kansas Daily Tribune*, Lawrence, May 7, 1871.

83. *Ibid.*, September 28, 1871, January 9, 31, March 15, 17, 1872.

84. *Session Laws*, 1864, ch. 70; *Kansas Daily Tribune*, March 5, 11, 1873.

## Following Pike's Expedition From the Smoky Hill to the Solomon

THEO. H. SCHEFFER

TO get us on this trail properly it seems necessary to state here that the purpose of this research and report is to interpret intimately the details of Zebulon M. Pike's journal and maps as fitting into the terrain he traversed, from the Smoky Hill crossing until he "passed" the Solomon river on his way to the Pawnee Indian village—his first destination. Our sources of published information have been largely two: *The Expedition of Zebulon Montgomery Pike*, by Elliott Coues, and *Zebulon Pike's Arkansaw Journal*, edited by Stephen H. Hart and Archer B. Hulbert.<sup>1</sup> The latter published documents, letters and maps of the expedition that had been taken from Pike by the Spanish authorities of the Southwest and had reposed in the archives at Mexico City for one hundred years where they were found in 1907-1908. Two years later they were restored to the United States, were lost again in War Department archives, and were rediscovered in 1927.<sup>2</sup>

These restored papers have very little to do, however, with the concern of our present research. First, because the precious journal had been saved from the Spanish seizure by one of Pike's soldiers who had secreted it in his clothing, at the leader's request. It appears that this soldier had been wine too generously by the ladies at the Mexican post, and in the hour of Spanish need could not be found; and apparently he was later overlooked.<sup>3</sup> Also transcripts and sketches were saved by Lieut. J. B. Wilkinson, of the expedition, who had been dispatched to the East from the first camp on the Arkansas river.<sup>4</sup> At any rate, Pike seems to have had plenty of material at hand for his own publication of his travels, in 1810, at least so far as the journey to the Arkansas was concerned.

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1. Elliott Coues, *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike* (New York, 1895). 3 vols.; Stephen Harding Hart and Archer Butler Hulbert, eds., *Zebulon Pike's Arkansaw Journal* (Denver, 1932).

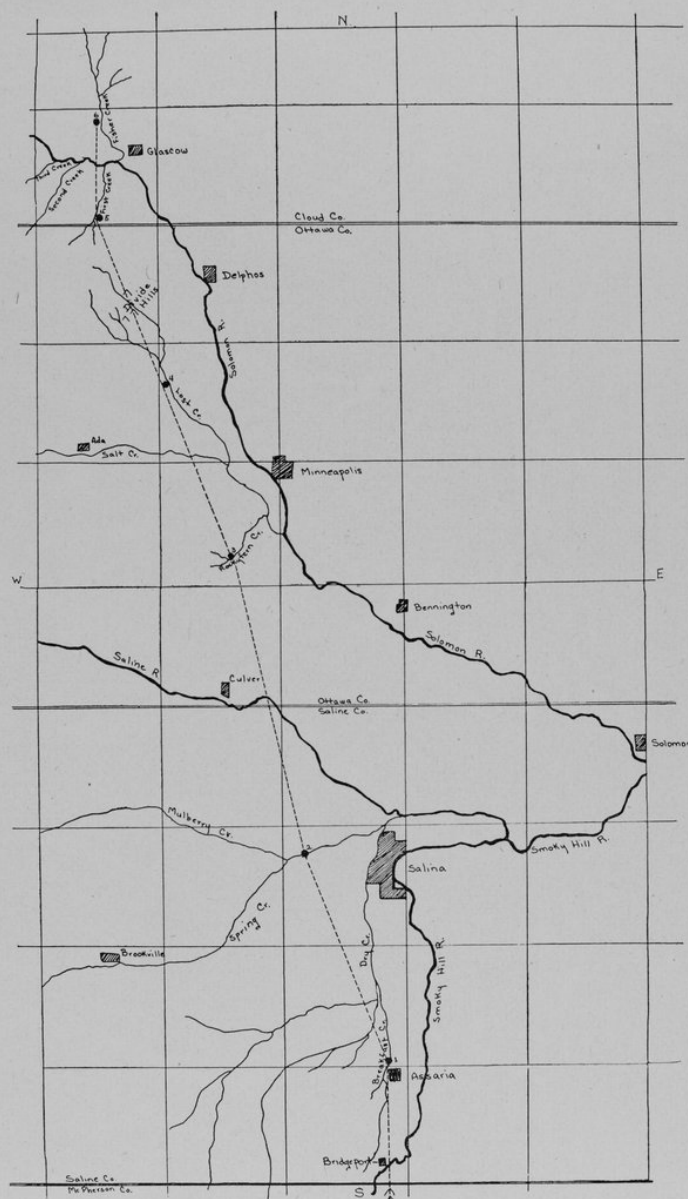
2. H. E. Bolton, "Material for Southwestern History in the Central Archives of Mexico," in *The American Historical Review*, v. 13, p. 523, and "Documents—Papers of Zebulon M. Pike, 1806-1807," in *ibid.*, pp. 798-800; Hart-Hulbert, *op. cit.*, pp. lii-lvii.

3. Zebulon Montgomery Pike, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi, and Through the Western Parts of Louisiana, to the Sources of the Arkansaw, Kans, La Platte, and Pierre Juan, Rivers* . . . (Philadelphia, 1810), appendix to Part III, pp. 58, 59.

4. *Ibid.*, appendix to Part II, pp. 50, 51.



MAP OF LT. ZEBULON M. PIKE'S TRAIL THROUGH PRESENT SALINE  
AND OTTAWA COUNTIES, 1806



Pike's route (shown by the broken line) is marked by the following major stops: (1) The halt for breakfast, September 17, 1806; (2) Mulberry creek camp, September 17-18; (3) Rockyfern creek camp, September 18-21; (4) Lost creek camp, September 21-22; (5) First creek camp, September 22-23; (6) the morning's halt on Fisher creek, September 23.

VIEWS OF ONE OF PIKE'S PROBABLE CAMPSITES IN PRESENT OTTAWA COUNTY



SENTINEL ROCK AT ROCKYFERN CREEK, A BRANCH OF SALT CREEK  
PIKE MADE A THREE-DAY CAMP HERE



ROCKYFERN CREEK AND VIEW FROM SENTINEL ROCK NORTHEAST THROUGH THE  
NORTH ENTRANCE TO PAWNEE GAP





We have been over the ground covered by Pike on the Smoky-to-Solomon part of the journey many times through the years, and more recently in review, with the preparation of this report in mind. Well impressed, we are, with Pike's faithfulness to detail on a small-scale map, along the immediate course of his journey and in the range of his vision. He did not stop to explore the streams he "passed" (crossed by fording) on the mission to the Pawnees. And we are not misled by the cartographer's parlance of creeks that "fall" into a larger stream. Anyhow, these small prairie water courses commonly sneak into the larger outlets. It is true, though, that he sometimes sent the rivers on about their business where they should not go and did not go, as later exploration disclosed. The Saline and the Solomon rivers were both thus led astray into the Republican Fork, instead of the Smoky Hill Fork. And Salt creek, "Little Saline," was overestimated in the magnitude of its lower course.<sup>5</sup>

Our key to the jigsaw puzzle of the trail is found in Pike's own statement, letter to the Secretary of War, dated Pawnee Republic, October 1, 1806. He says, among other things: "From the Osage towns, I have taken the courses and distances, by the route we came, marking each river or rivulet we crossed, pointing out the dividing ridges, &c."<sup>6</sup> This, with the camp marks and the hatching lines for slopes, is our cue. With this understanding, we will proceed to our part of the trail: The year was 1806 and on September 16 we find Pike's party of some thirty whites and Indians<sup>7</sup> camped in the hills east of present Lindsborg, on a branch of Gypsum creek, the third branch of this stream he had encountered. This branch is known locally as Stag creek.<sup>8</sup> How he got there is not our concern, or rather not our problem. Coues and Hart-Hulbert disagree on this point and we cannot speak from first-hand knowledge of the terrain. Here is the journal entry for the next day's march:

*17th September, Wednesday.*—Marched early and struck the main south-east branch of the Kans river: at nine o'clock it appeared to be 25 or 30 yards wide, and is navigable in the flood seasons. We passed it six miles to a small branch to breakfast. Game getting scarce, our provision began to run low. Marched about two o'clock, and encamped at sun-down on a large branch. Killed one buffalo. Distance 21 miles.<sup>9</sup>

5. *Ibid.*, Plate I, "The First Part of Capt. Pike's Chart of the Internal Part of Louisiana."

6. *Ibid.*, appendix to Part II, pp. 45, 46.

7. Hart-Hulbert, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 72; Coues, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

9. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 138.



The "main south-east branch of the Kans river" is the Smoky Hill. At the outset here we have disagreement of the commentators, Coues and Hart-Hulbert, as to where the party ate breakfast. Coues says that "'We passed it six miles to a small branch to breakfast' is a dubious phrase." He interprets it to mean that Pike's party breakfasted on a small dry branch just before crossing the Smoky.<sup>10</sup> Hart-Hulbert says that "breakfast was eaten on Dry creek six miles beyond" the river.<sup>11</sup>

Our interpretation is that the halt for breakfast was made as Hart-Hulbert states, five or six miles after crossing the river, with evidence to wit: (1) Pike says he "passed" the river to breakfast on the small branch, and that means *crossed* in his usual vernacular. And this sort of pre-prandial march was not an uncommon thing in the day's journey. (2) The small branch is there, within the gauged distance, shown on the north side of the river on Pike's map though obscured a little by the hatching that indicates adjacent higher ground.<sup>12</sup> This is a branch of Dry creek, the most easterly, running nearly northward and parallel to a line of the Union Pacific railway.<sup>13</sup> If the Smoky crossing was at present Bridgeport, as seems the unanimous opinion of commentators, the halt for breakfast was on this branch perhaps a mile and a half above the present town of Assaria, about where U. S. Highway No. 81 adjusts itself to a surveyor's correction. (3) An angle in the line depicting Pike's route of travel, on his map, indicates that he set his course a little more to the northwest at this breakfast halt on the branch.<sup>14</sup> It is not likely that such an abrupt compass change would be made while on the march. (4) The distance from the Smoky crossing to the evening camp was too great to have been covered in the march from 2 p. m. to "sun-down," about 6 p. m., thus near the equinox. May we designate this branch as Breakfast creek, since it does not appear to have any local name.

Now that breakfast is disposed of, we will proceed to the camp at sundown, which, according to mileage and position, must have been on Mulberry creek. Our contentious editors, Hart-Hulbert, say that it was *above* the junction with Spring creek,<sup>15</sup> and Coues

10. Coues, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

11. Hart-Hulbert, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

12. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate I, "The First Part of Capt. Pike's Chart of the Internal Part of Louisiana."

13. John P. Edwards, pub., *Edwards' Atlas of Saline Co. Kansas* (Philadelphia, Pa., and Quincy, Ill., 1884), pp. 5, 29, 45, 59.

14. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate I.

15. Hart-Hulbert, *op. cit.*, p. 73.



that it was *below*.<sup>16</sup> After viewing the terrain recently, we conclude, with Coues, that the crossing was below the mouth of Spring creek; about half way between there and present Salina. For (1) to cross above the junction would mean fording both streams, one about as large as the other at this junction. And Pike's map does not indicate a fork in the stream, something he is rather particular about in marking his camp sites. At the last previous camp he had shown all five branches of Gypsum creek—and they are actually there. (2) On leaving this Mulberry creek camp Pike again alters his course, as shown by the angle on his map;<sup>17</sup> this time a little to the right, north. And this lines him up with the established point of his Saline river crossing, the next day.

Passing to the next journal entry, we trail Pike on to the north; more nearly so than his somewhat askew map seems to indicate:

*18th September, Thursday.*—Marched at our usual hour, and at twelve o'clock halted at a large branch of the Kans, which was strongly impregnated with salt. This day we expected the people of the village to meet us. We marched again at four o'clock. Our route being over a continued series of hills and hollows, we were until eight at night before we arrived at a small dry branch. It was nearly ten o'clock before we found any water. Commenced raining a little before day. Distance 25 miles.<sup>18</sup>

The "large branch of the Kans, which was strongly impregnated with salt" was the Saline river, flowing more directly into the Smoky Hill than into the Kansas river proper. The "people of the village" were the Pawnees, to whom on the morning of September 14 he had sent Dr. Robinson of the party and a Pawnee scout named Frank as embassies.<sup>19</sup> From the terrain, the Saline crossing was probably about a mile east of the present railroad crossing, near Culver and the Saline-Ottawa county line.<sup>20</sup>

This brings us to the Rainy-Days camp, which we unhesitatingly place on a small branch of Salt creek, present Ottawa county, sec. 27 of Center township, about five miles southwest of Minneapolis. Everything seems to fit the picture: (1) There are two springs there, as indicated by small forks of the branch on Pike's map,<sup>21</sup> each issuing from the head of a little glen in the red-brown Dakota sandstone. Their runs combine to form a little stream which passes in review before a small flat which very probably was the camp

16. Coues, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

17. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate I.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

20. George A. Ogle & Co., pub., *Standard Atlas of Ottawa County Kansas* (Chicago, 1918), p. 7.

21. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate I.



site. This stream may have been dry where first contacted at this season, as Pike indicates, but there is perennial water a little way up to the left from his line of march; and the search in the dark would involve some time in locating it. (2) These spring runs are the first source of water the trail party would meet with in the late afternoon march from the Saline river<sup>22</sup> up through Pawnee gap, the traditional outlet to the north. This route is marked by several Indian burial sites along the way and by pictographs on a cliff about three miles from the camp. The Osage members of Pike's party very likely knew the way, as would also the Pawnee who had gone ahead with Dr. Robinson a few days previously. (3) The mileage from the Saline crossing fits the picture very closely, as does the mileage to the next two camps after the break up of this one. It is true, the mileage for the day as given by Pike is excessive,<sup>23</sup> but it often is. And certainly the party would not cover more miles in the evening march than they had in the entire forenoon's travel from Mulberry creek to the Saline, a known distance of not over ten miles.<sup>24</sup> (4) Pike indicates, by hatching on his map, the north-south trend of Pawnee gap and places the camp site on the west side of the gap,<sup>25</sup> where the springs are located. (5) Just back of this camp site is the sentinel cliff, mentioned by Pike,<sup>26</sup> from the highest point of which a remarkable view carries the eye back to the Saline crossing, if not to the Mulberry creek campsite, of the previous night, and on ahead through the northern entrance to Pawnee gap, and on toward the Salt creek crossing of three days later. To the west the skyline limits this still virgin stretch of pasture prairie.

The little stream heading in these springs threads its way four or five miles to the northeast and falls into Salt creek.<sup>27</sup> It is not dignified by a name on any map but the place has been known since pioneer days as Rocky Fern. So we may call the stream Rockyfern creek, and let it go at that for posterity. Sometimes it magnifies itself by spring freshets.

Here the party was held up for two days by rains and did not march again until Sunday morning. The situation was rather doleful, for Pike says that "we employed ourselves in reading the Bible, Pope's Essays, and in pricking on our arms with India ink *some*

22. Ogle, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 33.

23. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

24. Edwards' *Atlas of Saline Co. Kansas*, p. 5; Ogle, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

25. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate I.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

27. Ogle, *op. cit.*, p. 5.



*characters*, which will frequently bring to mind our forlorn and dreary situation, as well as the happiest days of our life." More to our particular interest in this research, he says further: "In the rear of our encampment was a hill, on which there was a large rock, where the Indians kept a continual sentinel, as I imagine, to apprise them of the approach of any party, friends or foes, as well as to see if they could discover any game on the prairies."<sup>28</sup> This sentinel rock we have referred to in our evidence for the correct camp site (see accompanying pictures).

Continuing the march for Sunday, September 21, the journal reads, in part:

We marched at eight o'clock, although every appearance of rain, and at eleven o'clock passed a large creek remarkably salt. Stopped at one o'clock on a fresh branch of the salt creek. Our interpreter having killed an elk, we sent out for some meat, which detained us so late that I concluded it best to encamp where we were, in preference to running the risk of finding no water. . . . Distance 10 miles.<sup>29</sup>

The jigsaw puzzle of the trail again matches perfectly here—for the Salt creek crossing, the evening camp, and the march to the Solomon. Only ten miles were made that day, in five hours, with Lieutenant Wilkinson and one of the soldiers ill.<sup>30</sup> The party halted, for the afternoon and the night, on Lost creek, in the close neighborhood of the Rees springs. There are perennial ponds or watering places there, though farther south along the trail the stream suggests the origin of its name by losing itself in the substratum. This again, as in the march up from the Saline, is the first fresh water the party would come across, and dictated Pike's decision to camp there for the night, rather than risk a dry camp farther on. The camp was very probably near the line between secs. 7 and 8, Garfield township (T. 10 S., R. 4 W.).<sup>31</sup> The mileages from the Rockyfern camp to the Salt creek crossing and from there to this one-o'clock encampment adjust themselves quite correctly.

Following the party the next day, Monday, September 22, we pass Lost creek again in two places, indicated on Pike's map, and then cross over a divide shown on the map by the conventional row of hills.<sup>32</sup> The hills are there, in the topography; rather salient landmarks for this part of the country and some of them known

28. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 140.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

31. Ogle, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 32.

32. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate 1.

locally by the names of early settlers. In this day's march we are obliged to accept an emendation in the text of the journal, as supplied by the editors we have already quoted. For, after marching three hours to dinner and, after that, "12 miles" to camp, the day's progress is summed up as 11 miles. Evidently the "12" miles was meant for two miles,<sup>33</sup> which fits the picture perfectly. We quote the journal entry, in part:

*22d September, Monday.*—We did not march until eight o'clock, owing to the indisposition of lieutenant Wilkinson. At eleven waited to dine. Light mists of rain, with flying clouds. We marched again at three o'clock, and continued our route twelve [two] miles to the first branch of the republican fork. . . . Distance 11 miles.<sup>34</sup>

It will be noted that Pike places this camp "on the first branch of the republican fork" (as he supposed). More correctly he calls the river Solomon's fork of the "Kans River" when he crossed it the next morning.<sup>35</sup> Whether by tradition or by local coincidence this creek of the camp site, rising in the extreme northwest corner of Ottawa county and flowing north into Cloud county, is still designated on the map as First creek. There is no other on the right bank, downstream, until we come to Salt creek, for which Pike had already accounted. Just west of it, upstream, and nearly parallel to it are two other small creeks known as Second creek and Third creek, respectively.<sup>36</sup> Between these two streams is a low ridge, plain enough on the terrain and marked on Pike's map by light hatching.<sup>37</sup> The Solomon crossing, then, was less than two miles west of present Glasco. It is not strange that "one of the horses fell and wet his load," for the higher bank of the river here is on the approach side. The journal entry for the crossing date follows:

*23d September, Tuesday.*—Marched early and passed a large fork of the Kans river, which I suppose to be the one generally called Solomon's. One of our horses fell into the water and wet his load. Halted at ten o'clock on a branch of this fork. We marched at half past one o'clock, and encamped at sun-down, on a stream where we had a great difficulty to find water. We were overtaken by a Pawnee, who encamped with us. He offered his horse for our use. Distance 21 miles.<sup>38</sup>

To continue on Pike's trail after crossing the Solomon would bring us onto debatable ground, literally. And we do not now care

33. Coues, *op. cit.*, p. 407; Hart-Hulbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 75, 76.

34. Pike, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

35. *Ibid.*

36. John P. Edwards, pub., *Edwards' Atlas of Cloud County Kansas* (Quincy, Ill., 1885), pp. 5, 65; Ogle, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

37. Pike, *op. cit.*, Plate I.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 141.





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to dig up a hatchet which has been buried these twenty years and go on the Pawnee warpath again, for scalps or glory. We have enjoyed this research the more that, during the years of its continuance, we did not know of the interstate controversy of the monument site and therefore were able to follow the gleam of guide lights without prejudice.

In summary, we wish to emphasize that in following this course through Saline and Ottawa counties we had at least twenty adjustments to make in fitting streams, camps, ridges, divides, trail angles and mileages into the topography and terrain. We have every confidence that the picture is complete.

## The Report of the Wyandot Exploring Delegation, 1831

Edited by J. ORIN OLIPHANT

### I. INTRODUCTION

EARLY in the autumn of 1831, James B. Gardiner, as special agent of the United States government, was endeavoring to persuade the Wyandot Indians to exchange the lands they then held in Ohio for lands in the country lying west of the state of Missouri. During the course of the negotiation, both parties agreed that a delegation should be sent to examine the Western lands that had been offered to the Wyandots. For that purpose six persons were appointed. The leader of this delegation was William Walker, a member of the Wyandot nation and a man of considerable education.

In October, 1831, Gardiner accompanied the Wyandot delegation from Upper Sandusky, Ohio, to Cincinnati, from which city Walker and his five companions set out by boat, near the end of October, on the journey to their Western destination. Gardiner presumed that the delegation, with good luck, might complete its mission and arrive home by Christmas. Meanwhile, as he informed the Office of Indian Affairs, he purposed to employ a part of his time in adjusting "the details of a *final treaty* with the Wyandot chiefs."<sup>1</sup>

As late as January 4, 1832, Gardiner was confident that he could soon conclude a satisfactory treaty with the Wyandots, for he had just heard, on what he believed to be excellent authority, that the exploring party was on the way home and that the members of this party were "highly pleased with the country assigned them." "I flatter myself," he wrote to Lewis Cass, Secretary of War, "that I shall be able, in four or five weeks, to present you with a definitive treaty with this sagacious, intelligent and *crafty* tribe of Indians, which will be of the highest importance to a large section of this state, and greatly in aid of the benevolent policy of the Government."<sup>2</sup>

Before the next day was ended, however, Gardiner's hope of

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1. James B. Gardiner to S. S. Hamilton, November 1, 1831, in The National Archives: Records of the Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Incoming Letters, 1831-1832, "Wyandots."

2. Gardiner to Lewis Cass, January 4, 1832.—*Ibid.*





achieving a triumph was vanishing, for in the afternoon of January 5 Col. Thomas B. Vanhorne had informed him that Walker had declared in Dayton, Ohio, as the exploring party was passing through that town on the way home, that the report of the delegation would be unfavorable to the proposed exchange of lands. Believing that it was not improbable that, on hearing such a report, "the *whites*, half-breeds, and the 'Christian party,' so called," would be against treating on "any reasonable terms," and believing also that the "pagan" or "savage party" would listen to "reason," Gardiner asked permission of Lewis Cass to make a treaty with this latter group for the cession of their part of the Wyandot reservation. "*They* have Chiefs and Headmen among them," he added, "whom they recognize and obey."<sup>3</sup>

The news that Gardiner had received from Colonel Vanhorne turned out to be correct, for the report of the exploring delegation was emphatically unfavorable to the proposed exchange of lands. This report, presumably written by Walker, is reproduced below.

Gardiner was much disturbed at the turn affairs had taken. In a long letter to Lewis Cass, dated at Lebanon, Ohio, on January 28, 1832, he reviewed his negotiations with the Wyandots and complained bitterly of what he believed to be the duplicity of William Walker and of one of Walker's companions named Silas Armstrong. Because of its important bearing upon the report of the delegation, this letter is also reproduced below.

As to the truthfulness of Gardiner's charges, the present-day student of this subject, having nothing on which to base a judgment except the evidence prepared by Gardiner for Cass, is at a loss what to conclude. From Henry C. Brish, William Brish, and George W. Gist, men who had just returned to Ohio from conducting the Seneca Indians from that state to the Indian country west of the Mississippi river, Gardiner collected depositions which he submitted to Cass as proof of his contention that the Wyandot delegation had made a dishonest report.<sup>4</sup> All these men affirmed under oath that they had talked with Walker in St. Louis after the return of the Wyandot delegation to that city from its exploring tour, and that they had gained from him the impression that the members of this delegation were so well pleased with the new tract that had been offered to the Wyandots that they would recommend an exchange of lands. They also gave testimony that tended to arouse suspi-

3. Gardiner to Cass, January 5, 1832.—*Ibid.*

4. Deposition of Henry C. Brish on January 28, 1832, and depositions of William Brish and George W. Gist on January 16, 1832.—*Ibid.*



cion as to the correctness of some of the statements in the report of the delegation. Furthermore, Gardiner submitted the answers of Silas Armstrong to questions that Gardiner had asked him as additional proof that the delegation had not adequately examined the tract of land offered to the Wyandots by the United States government.<sup>5</sup> Upon the testimony thus obtained Gardiner based several of the conclusions he set forth in his letter to Lewis Cass of January 28, 1832.

From a careful reading of the above-mentioned documents one might conclude that the delegation had not fully complied with its instructions relative to the exploration it had been sent to make. One might conclude also that some of the statements in the report of the delegation were open to question.<sup>6</sup> And, finally, one might well believe that the members of the delegation at the last moment had changed their minds as to the recommendation they would make to the Wyandot chiefs.

But if all these points be granted, it does not follow necessarily that the report of the delegation was "made," as Gardiner intimated it had been, in advance of the exploration, and that therefore the delegation had gone on a needless journey at the expense of the United States. The evidence that Gardiner offered in support of this charge was a deposition of George Williams, a member of the Wyandot nation.<sup>7</sup> Williams, who had been nominated by Gardiner to be one of the exploring party and who had not been accepted, affirmed that John Baptiste, a member of the delegation, had told him that all the members of the delegation had been chosen by the Wyandot chiefs because they were known to be opposed in principle to the removal of the Wyandots from Ohio, and that Williams had not been selected because he was known to favor such removal provided that the Western tract offered to the Wyandots proved to be an acceptable one. But the unsupported testimony of Williams, who doubtless was disgruntled, does not definitely prove anything. It raises a suspicion, but a suspicion only, that Gardiner as well as the Wyandot chiefs had attempted to "pack" the delegation.

As to Gardiner's strictures on the conduct of Walker and of Armstrong, we can only say that they may or may not have been justified.

5. Examination of Silas Armstrong, undated [January, 1832].—*Ibid.*

6. Neither the statement in the report as to the condition of the corn crop in Missouri in 1831 nor the further statement in the report as to the unfriendly disposition of the inhabitants of Missouri to Indians was confirmed by the above-mentioned depositions.—*Ibid.*

7. Deposition of George Williams, January 25, 1832.—*Ibid.*





Lacking sufficient evidence, therefore, to warrant our making a judgment in the case of Gardiner against Walker and others, we must content ourselves with examining Gardiner's charges in the light of his obvious chagrin. During 1831 he had completed four treaties of exchange with other bands of Indians residing in Ohio,<sup>8</sup> and naturally he was eager to impress the Jackson administration by a record of complete success. If he had been outgeneraled by the Wyandots in a war of wits, as he may well have been, his wrath is understandable. Even his success in negotiating a treaty with the band of Wyandots residing at the Big Spring was but slight compensation to him for the failure of his negotiation with the main body of Wyandots, for the former, though consenting to give up their lands in Ohio, refused to accept lands west of the Mississippi river. The treaty that Gardiner concluded with them on January 19, 1832, was, therefore, a treaty of purchase rather than a treaty of exchange.<sup>9</sup>

As a commentary on his version of his dealings with the Wyandots, it may be observed that Gardiner's methods in concluding four of the five treaties he made with the Indians in Ohio were seriously questioned in the senate.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, these four treaties were approved by the senate and were proclaimed on April 6, 1832.<sup>11</sup> That Gardiner had not lost favor with the administration is proved by the fact that he was appointed to superintend the removals for which these treaties provided.<sup>12</sup>

The tract of land that William Walker and his companions were sent to examine in 1831, though then lying beyond the western boundary of Missouri, is now within the limits of that state. By an act of congress of June 7, 1836, the provisions of which were agreed to by the legislature of Missouri on December 16, 1836, an area containing this tract—the so-called "Platte Purchase"—was joined to the state of Missouri. By the addition of this area, an odd-shaped tract which on a map looks like the state of Idaho turned upside down, the Missouri river became the western boundary of the state of Missouri from the mouth of the Kansas river northwestward to the point where the Missouri river intersects "the parallel of latitude which passes through the rapids of the river

8. Charles J. Kappler, ed., *Indian Affairs; Laws and Treaties* (Washington, 1904), v. 2, pp. 325-339.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 339-341.

10. Annie Heloise Abel, "The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation West of the Mississippi River," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1906* (Washington, 1908), v. 1, p. 384.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 385.

12. *Ibid.*, citing a letter from Cass to Gardiner, May 17, 1832.