

Fayetteville road

These letters, maps, and reminiscences relate to the Fayetteville road, also known as the Fayetteville Emigrant Trail. This trail started at Arkansas Post in Arkansas, then headed towards the northeast corner of Oklahoma, crossing the Neosho River, entering the state of Kansas in what is now Montgomery County. The trail crossed the Verdigris River about two miles north of the Kansas state line, went through the present-day site of Coffeyville making its way northwest, finally meeting with the Santa Fe Trail at Turkey Creek in McPherson County, Kansas. In total, this trail crossed the following Kansas counties: Montgomery, Chautauqua, Elk, Butler, Harvey, Marion and McPherson.

Date: Between 1900 and 1910

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Fayetteville, Ark., April 10th 1910

G. W. Martin
Sec Kansas State Hist Soc
My Dear Sir

I am sorry
of 4th inst has been in my
hands for some time & I would
gladly have given it an earlier
reply. but a road that ~~had~~
has not been traveled for over
half a century is usually hard
to travel. I myself know nothing
of the early history of this country
save as I have listened to the
old citizens who lived here
before the war for I was born
& raised in Michigan & came
here with the Union army. I
was only a small lad when the
Mountain Meader Massacre occurred.
However I happen^{to} remember



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Fayetteville, Ark.,

191—

that there was an old road
that ran from here to Independence
thru Kansas. but I had never
heard it called by any partic-
ular name. but ~~yesterday~~ I
thought of an old friend
(Uncle Sam Jobe) who ^{has} lived
here constantly for more than
sixty years. yesterday I had
a chance to interview Uncle
Sam & at once found that I
had struck the right trail. for
answering my first question. do
you know anything of an old
road known as the Fayetteville
road to California. his face
lighted up & with a smile
he answered yes. many back
in the days of the gold excite-
ment in California. Emigrants trailing



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191—

From this and joining Com. time
met in Fayetteville & settled out
for the trip. From here they would
go to Mayeville (45 miles north west
on the Cherokee line & in the
Extreme North West corner of
Arkansas) where grass was
plenty. where they would meet
other parties. there they would
organize. Elect officers & c & c
& when all arrangements were
complete would start on the long
open land journey joining from
Mayeville Northwest by way
of a well defined trail crossing
Grand river at Carvers ferry &
on to Independence Kansas.
He could not tell me much
of the Mountain Meadow Massacre
further than that two little



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girls who were left for dead
were afterwards rescued
finally sent back to relatives
here & he thinks that possibly
they are still living in
Madison Co (the County joining
us on the East.) He sighted
me to several parties who
are likely to be able to give
me more particular information
about the Mountain Meadows affair
& as fast as I can see them I will
find out what they know &
if it is of any historical inter-
est I will write you all
the particulars.

I showed your letter to
Prof J. H. Reynolds Secretary
of our State Historical Society
but he had never heard of



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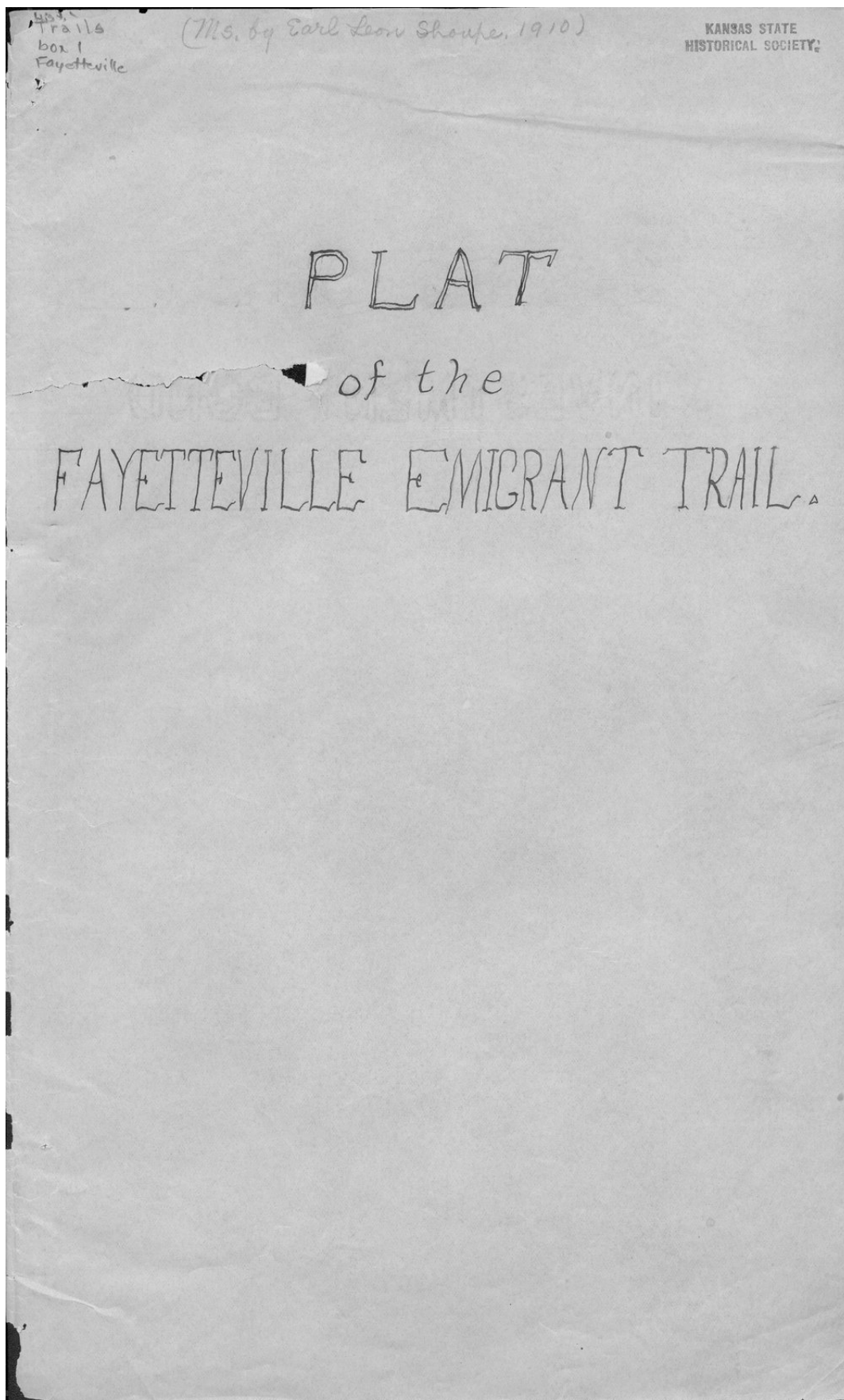
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Fayetteville, Ark., 191

of the Fayetteville to California Road & had never heard that any Washington County (Ark) Citizens were among those murdered at Mountain Meadows. I consider this of great historical interest to his work for Kansas & I shall give him any facts that I may be able to get hold of.

I will certainly write you if I can get anything reliable & I believe that I am on a trail that will lead to something of interest.

Very Truly Yours
E. B. Harrison



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Article "Isaac Murphy" under Arkansas Governors

James R. Mead*, Pioneer in Kansas and Member
Kansas State Historical Society
433 Wabash St., Wichita Kans.

J. H. Fordyce, Historian
2116 Broadway St. Little Rock, Arkansas

* deceased.



The writer is much indebted to Mr. James R. Meade of Wichita for tracing the trail in its general course through Kansas and Oklahoma. Also for information as to its use and general character. Mr. Mead was one of Wichita's most honored citizens being one of the pioneers in southern Kansas and a member of the State Historical Society. He was acquainted with the trail between the years 1863 and 1868.

Mr. J. K. Fordyce of Little Rock Arkansas furnished valuable hints and information as to the course of the trail through Arkansas, its origin and information concerning the Indians of that state.

The exact course of the trail in Kansas was determined almost wholly from the field notes and plats in of the United States Survey of Kansas in the State Auditor's Office at Topeka, Kans. Most of the Arkansas history presented is from Swanton's Early Western Travels.

Cutler's History of Kansas helped to locate the trail and furnished needed information on several doubtful points.

The following are several books furnishing general information: H. H. Bancroft's California; Inter-Pocula; National Cyclopaedia of American Biography; Inman's "Old Santa Fe Trail."

For Kansas History Washburn College
First Semester, Feb 4, 1910.
Earl J. Shuck '11.

The Fayetteville Emigrant Trail.

Location:

Runs Northwest and Southeast from Arkansas Post on the Arkansas River in Arkansas to its junction with the old Santa Fe Trail at Turkey Creek in McPherson County Kansas.

Leaving Arkansas Post or Asack the trail ran northwest till it hit the present site of the town of Austin on the Iron Mountain several miles northeast of Little Rock. Thence its course was on north-west - following along the head waters of the small creeks - along the open prairie watershed between the Arkansas and the White rivers. At Fayetteville it was joined from the South by a road from J. B. Smith on the Arkansas. The trail then ran on northwest across the corner of Oklahoma, crossing the Neosho river. It entered Kansas in township 35 South, Range 17 East - in the southeast corner of what is now Montgomery County. Always pursuing its north-western course it crossed the Verdigris river about two miles north of the State line; traversed the site of the city of Coffeyville, following thence along on the

Fayetteville road

northeast side of Orion Creek. Its general course from here to the junction with the Santa Fe Trail was along the headwaters of the small creek - along the watershed between the Arkansas on the southwest and the Neosho and Verdigris rivers on the northeast.

After leaving the Verdigris valley, the trail took the course as indicated on the township map. The counties traversed were Montgomery, Chautauque, Elk, Butler, Harvey, Marion, and McPherson. The more important streams crossed were: the Verdigris river; Wild Cat Creek in Elk County; Rock Creek, Hickory Creek, Little Walnut Creek, Walnut River and White Water river in Butler County; West White water in Harvey; Sand Creek in Marion; and Emma Creek in McPherson County. The place of junction with the Santa Fe Trail was at Turkey Creek near the north line of the township in Township 20 South, Range 2 West McPherson County.

History:

The Fayetteville Road followed the old line of migration of the buffalo from the prairies of the West to the river bottoms of the South. Going as it did across the highlands on the divide between the rivers and obstructed at no



point by impossible streams or other formidable barriers, it afforded the easiest and most direct route from the great Western plains to the southern Mississippi valley.

This was the route taken by the Indians of the West in entering the lowlands on hunting and war expedition and likewise by the valley Indians who as was the native custom, followed the herds of buffalo as they migrated, hunting them on the way and fighting any hostile Indians that they might encounter.

There were two tribes living in Eastern Arkansas, one indigenous, the other emigrant. Many years before the French occupation of the Mississippi Valley, an Illinois tribe of Indians migrated West. At the Mississippi river they divided - one part going up stream, - the other going down. From this circumstance they derived their names - the name of the former O-ma-ha meaning "up the river"; the latter, Iua-paw meaning "down the river".

The Iuapaws, Osarks, or Arkansas, as they were variously called, settled ^{just} west of the Mississippi between the Arkansas and White rivers. Here they came into conflict with the Choctaws and many fierce wars ensued. But such was their power

Fayetteville road

that soon they made good their claim to that territory and it was respected by the native Indians. Their principal village called Osark or Arkansas they established on the bluffs on the Arkansas about fifty miles up from its junction with the Mississippi. A glance at the map will show that this is the key to the lower Valley of the Mississippi from the West. Just as St. Louis ~~on the~~ at the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi, is to the upper Valley. Between these two gateways lay the rough Ozark region.

So it is not surprising that here was founded the first white settlement in the Mississippi Valley.

In 1682 La Salle while on his exploring expedition down the Mississippi, sailed up the Arkansas river and visited the Quapaws. Entering the open space in the center of the village, he raised the Cross with the arms of France and took possession of the region in the name of King Louis XIV.

In 1686, Chevalier de Tonti from a French fort on the Illinois, returning from a rescuing expedition to La Salle's ill-fated Texas colony, ascended the Arkansas as far as the Quapaw village and formed an alliance with that tribe. He left behind red men as the nucleus for a colony. These were

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augmented in 1687 by the arrival of the survivors of La Salle's colony. Also French-Canadians came down the river and settled there. As was the custom with the French, they intermarried with the Indians and soon the two elements were pretty well blended.

During the French occupation, Arkansas or as the village came to be permanently called, was important as a trading center and was the seat of a Jesuit mission.

Under Spanish control it had increased importance as a trading point but was abandoned by the Jesuits in 1763. This importance increased under American rule it being a rendezvous for traders and hunters, a supply point for furs farther out in the wilderness and an outfitting place for expeditions. Boats coming down the Mississippi entered the White River and followed a bayou connecting with the Arkansas, near the post, this route being shorter than that up the Arkansas river.

In the early part of the Civil War, the Confederates fortified Arkansas Post, realizing that if they held this point against the Federals on the Mississippi river, that they could continue to control Arkansas and the country beyond.

Thus, the strategic location of Arkansas Post helps to explain the origin of the Fayetteville Trail. The course of the trail,

Fayetteville road

continued to be used by Indians and buffalo in the early part of last century and to an increasing amount by emigrants to the West. In 1804 United States troops took possession of Arkansas Post and in 1817 Ft. Smith was founded at the junction of the Potomac and Arkansas rivers.

In July, 1847 Captain Clark with his company of Missouri mounted volunteers bound for the Mexican war, travelled the old California or Fayetteville Trail and crossing the Walnut River about a mile below the site of Eldorado, Butler County Kansas, on the evening of the 3^d of July, camped over night. Early the next morning, the sound of their cannon echoed through the valley and thus was celebrated the first Fourth of July in Southern Kansas.

From then on the trail was a scene of constant activity. Long trains of emigrants from Arkansas and the South wended their way toward the Santa Fe Trail where they joined a greater throng pressing on to the gold diggings of California. Troops of soldiers going to and returning from the war, bands of Indians out on their warlike expeditions - all were familiar objects on the road. The stories of the tragedies, the hardships suffered and of the dark deeds committed ^{along its way} are not well known. Proximity has been unusually unfortunate in ~~being~~ ^{being} ~~being~~

Fayetteville road

left ^{with} such meager accounts of its history.
One of the most important camping places on
the Santa Fe Trail was at Turkey Creek at
the junction of the two trails. Here the
emigrants from the South and North would
meet to continue the journey ^{together} across the
desert to golden California. In 1855
Fuller's Ranch was established at this meeting
point for the accommodation of the emigrants.

Not long after its founding, F. S. Smith became
the chief trading post on the frontier, supplying
the region further West. A much used road
connected with the California Trail at Fayetteville
altho. part of the emigration used the route
up the Red river.

In later times when the country along
the trail came to be settled, the emigrants
came along the old road. It was thus
that Eldorado, the county seat of
Butler County was founded.

With the beginning of the war in '61 most
of the Southern emigration was stopped.

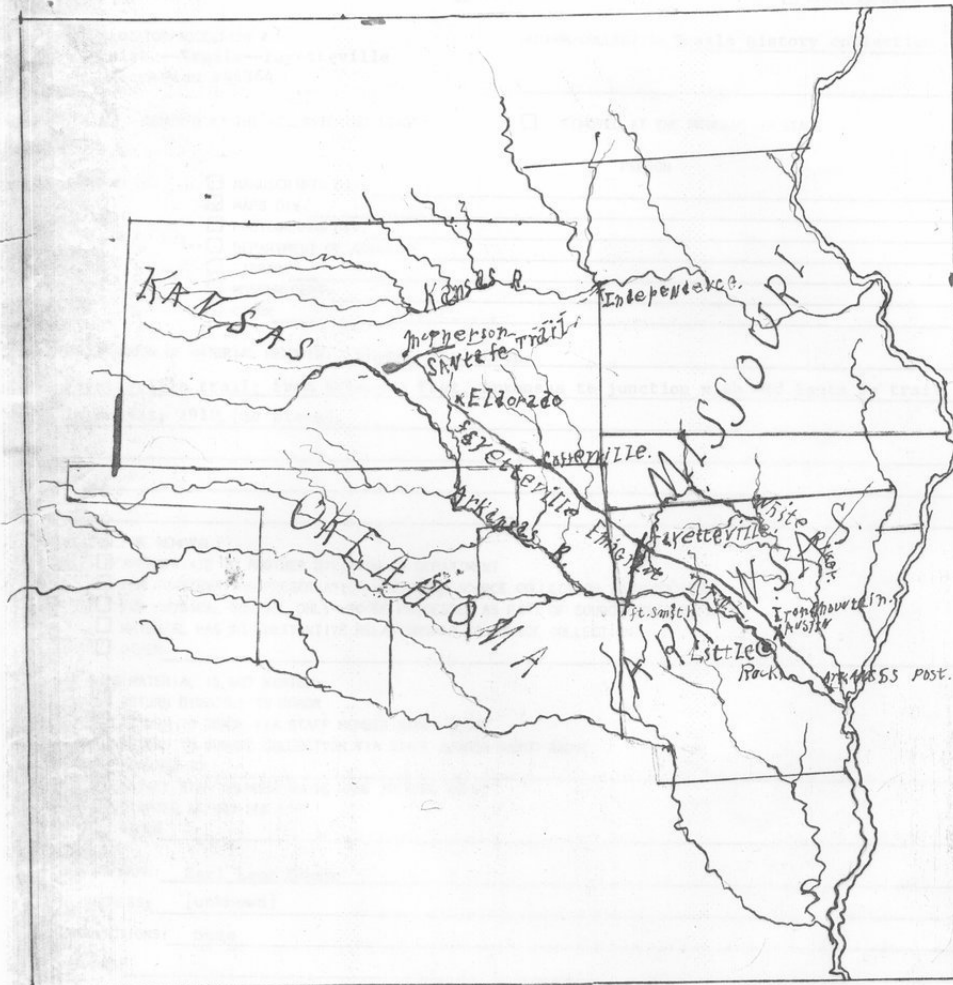
In 1868 the road was still considerably
used. But soon the coming of the
home builders, the opening of the Osage
lands, relegated it, to as it had the
Indians and buffaloes, to history and the
memory of man.

Traces of the trail can still be plainly
seen in land not yet broken up. The
passing of many wagons had cut deep

Fayetteville road

into the ground. Some places it is distinguished
by a sunken way deeply overgrown with grass.
In other places on the hill sides, it is marked
by deep ravines where the heavy rains
have worn deeper the ruts made by the
emigrant wagons.

PLATE I



Fayetteville Trail

from Arkansas Post, Arkansas to Junction with
Old Santa Fe Trail in Kansas.

(made by Earl Leon Shoup, 1910.)



Rose City Park, Portland, Oregon, March 27, 1910.

KANSAS STATE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Hon. Geo. W. Martin,

Secretary State Historical Society,

Topeka, Kansas.

*ans
chil 4/18/10*

Dear Martin:-

Your letter of 17th, asking in regard to what I might know of a California Trail that started from Fayetteville, Arkansas, has remained unanswered for so long because I was trying to gather some data that might be of service to you in ascertaining the facts in regard to the alleged old thoroughfare.

I called on Mr. Himes of our society here and he promised to do all he could to help me. He found a map of the various routes to the Pacific Coast, copyrighted in 1845 and published by Cowperthwait & Co., in 1849. This showed nothing of any trail from Fayetteville, in fact it does not show any Fayetteville, the only towns or posts set down are Fort Smith, Bentonville and Leavenworth. It has the "Oregon Trail," following Fremont's route of 1842, the greater part of which was followed by the Mormon exodus in 1846-52 and all of which was followed by the California travel in 1849-1869 or '70, and which strangely enough has taken the name of the last emigration that used it - "California Trail," instead of the more appropriate name of the "Oregon Trail." Doubtless many citizens of Arkansas joined the rush to California in 1849 and as Fayetteville was at that time one of the important points in the northwestern part of that State it is likely they assembled at that town preparatory to organizing for the trip through the Indian

Fayetteville road

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country, but why there rather than at Ft Smith or Fort Gibson, both of which had the facilities of navigation to procure supplies, while Fayetteville was in the Ozark Mountains, I cannot understand. However, either of the forts would likely have a very small citizen population, whereas Fayetteville would be all of that character and the preponderance of the class that were going probably settled the question of a starting point in favor of the latter.

In 1857 a company of some hundred and fifty souls started from Northwestern Arkansas, and I think I have been informed from Fayetteville, for California. They were all murdered at Mountain Meadows by agents of Brigham Young, except a few children who were too small to testify, who were adopted by the fiends who were the representing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints! These emigrants doubtless traveled the "California Trail you refer to.

Personally, I know nothing of such a trail. I hunted rebels and bushwhackers pretty much all over that part of Arkansas and found many and many an old abandoned road, deeply gullied and the trees all marked by scars many wagon hubs had made long before, but do not remember of any that ran in the direction you indicate. I am very much interested in this research and will do all I can to help you to success. If I had known of this desire many years ago, I could have gotten all there is or ever was to the story, but I fear many of my old acquaintances are either dead or have impaired memories of events so far back. In fact I do not suppose they would remember me, assuming

Fayetteville road

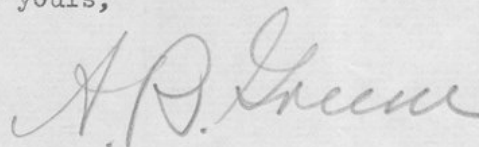
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that they are still "in the land of the living." I suggest that you write to Colonel C. B. Harrison of Fayetteville; Mr. William Rogers and Dr. Lee, Prairie Grove, Arkansas. Dr. Lee is the historian for all that part of the State and if living will likely supply the data you want. Bill Rogers owns most of the battle ground and is one of the richest farmers in that section. He has shown me many attentions and may recall that I have been over the field with him. I think Harrison and Dr. Lee, if living, will be able to give you all the facts about that road. You might inquire at the same time about the emigrants that were the victims of the Mountain Meadow Massacre, as they passed through Kansas and may be over this same trail. One other recourse occurs to me. Write the Postmaster at Fayetteville for the information or for the name or names of persons who can give it. Powell Clayton might be of help to you. He ought to know all about Arkansas.

In the Historical Collections in Portland are a number of original diaries of emigrants from various parts of the country and I am going to examine these to see if they shed any light on this matter, but I cannot find time for the purpose just now.

I enclose a fragment of the Oregonian of recent date containing an article I wrote favoring a Memorial Hall in this city, similar to the one you are building in Kansas.

Very truly yours,





Trails Fayetteville

Really Trail, Fayetteville

JOSEPH S. CHICK

JOSEPH S. CHICK, JR.

J. S. CHICK & SON

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May 3, 1906.

Mr. George W. Martin, Secy.,
Kansas State Historical Society,
Topeka, Kas.

Dear Sir:-

In 1838 I visited the Kaw Mission near the mouth of Mission creek about twenty miles west of Topeka. In going and returning I remember seeing some four or five houses on the north side of the Kaw river which were called the Agency, doubtless they were the four houses to which you refer.

The Couteau trading post, among the Delawares, was about ten miles above the mouth of the Kaw, was near where Grinter Station on the Union Pacific is now located.

California Trail.

I have no recollection of the California trail from Fayetteville, Arkansas, but if it crossed the Arkansas river west of the mouth of the Verdigris river and entered the Santa Fe trail near the present town of Canton, Kansas, it doubtless continued north to the Oregon or California trail between the Kaw and Platte rivers. It should be born in mind that the Oregon emigration was some years in advance of the California emigration, and the Oregon trail was well established before the discovery of gold in California. The emigrants of 1849 and after years, with hardly an exception, went the northern route and got onto the old Oregon trail as early as practicable. Emigrants from southwest Missouri and Arkansas doubt-



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less intersected the trail further west than those from the more northern points of Missouri and Iowa.

After leaving Council Grove, on the Santa Fe trail, the next prominent camping ground was at the crossing of the Cottonwood river near the present town of Canton. The southern California emigration may have made the Cottonwood a place of rendezvous, and then on to the main Oregon trail.

The Santa Fe trail was not used to any considerable extent by the California emigrants. In 1849 some parties took that route but they were longer getting through and the northern route was considered the only practical way.

Very truly yours,

J. S. Chick

Fayetteville road

