

Kiowa trail

Accounts of the Kiowa trail, which traveled from Wichita, Kansas through Harper, Kingman, and Barber counties. This trail's origins date back to the early 1870s and was used primarily for trade.

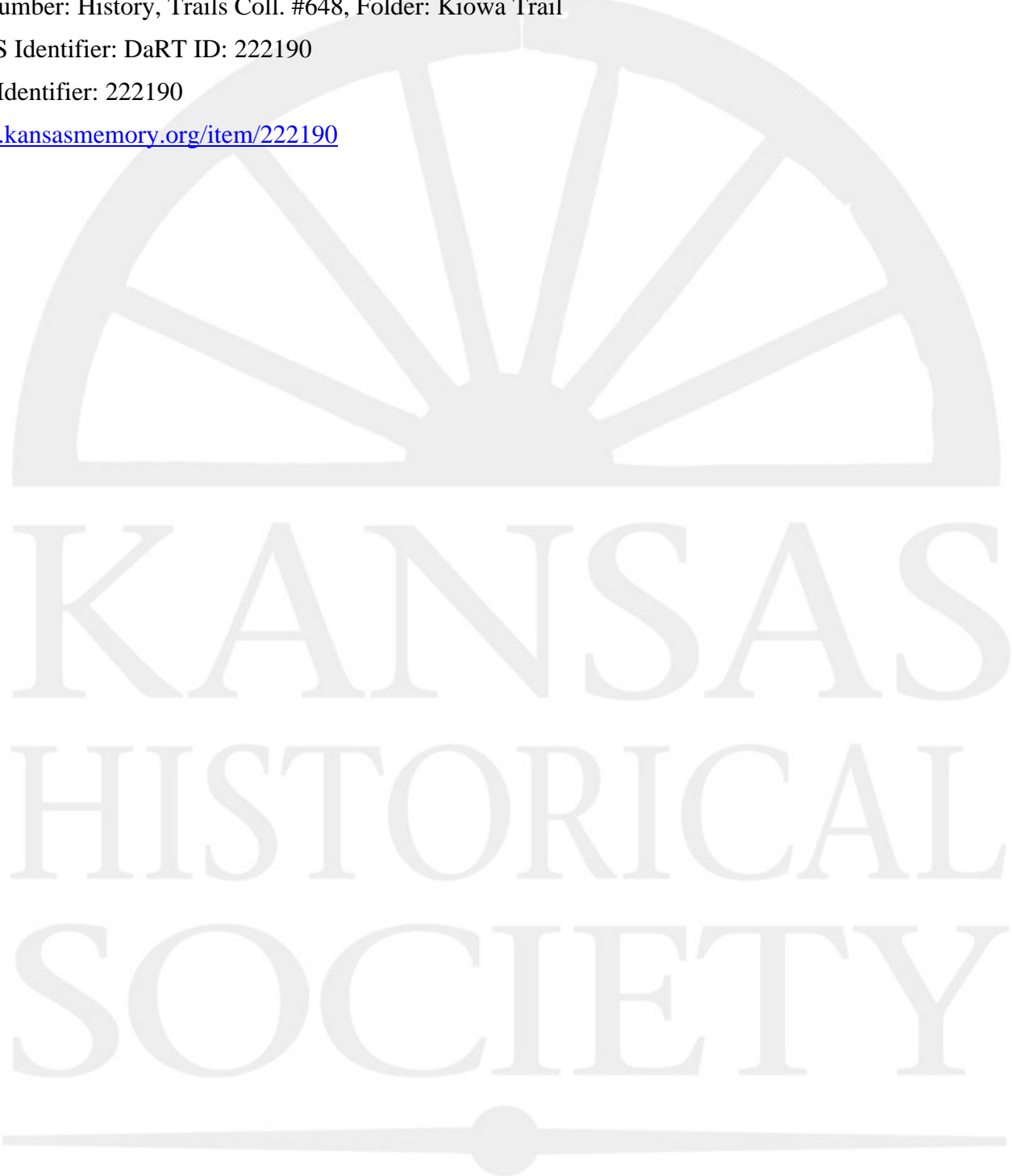
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Kiowa trail

Hist. trail
2/35

K I O W A T R A I L .

From notes obtained from an interview with J. T. (Tom) Botkin
Botkin, while he was in the Secretary of
State's Office.

The Kiowa trail started from Wichita and followed an air line from that city to Runnymede in Harper county. From there it ran in a direct line to Harper, from which place it continued to a point about 1 1/2 miles south of Attica, and from there to Old Kiowa.

Capt. L. M. Pratt lived in the trail where it crossed Bluff creek, in 1879.

Al and George Markham lived on trail west of _____?

Tom Terry's spring was north of the trail, about 2 1/2 miles southeast of Attica. He lived in a dug out and had a big spring.

Botkin, father of Tom, established a ranch just west of Attica, in

Kiowa trail

-2-

in 1879. There was a large spring on the ranch. The spring was one-eighth of a mile west of Attica, just 1 1/2 miles north of town.

~~[Notes by Geo. A. Root, taken about 1915.]~~
~~xxxxx~~

I. L. Beeson lived on the trail. The trail crossed his place southwest of Al Markham's and east of Terry's.

[Notes taken by Geo. A. Root, about 1916.]

Kiowa trail

Hist.
Trails

From notes taken by Geo. A. Root in 19112 and 1913, in interviews with
J. T. (son) Root, then Asst. Secy of State

The Kiowa Trail.

[1915 was Secy. of State]

The Kiowa Trail dates its origin back to about the year 1871, at ~~which~~ which time the first settlement was made in Barber county. A man named Griffin, the pioneer in that section, settled at a point about a mile from where the old town of Sun City was later located. ^{(He was killed} While on a hunt for buffalo in the territory a few months later.

In the spring of 1872, Ed. H. Moseley took a small stock of merchandise to that locality for the purpose of trading with the Indians. He was accompanied by two men named Lockwood and Leonard, both of whom engaged in farming. Moseley located his trading house on the Medicine

Lodge river, on Sec. 28, T. 34 S., R. 11 W., and the small settlement springing up at this point was called Kiowa. To distinguish it from the present town of the name located on Sec. 11, T. 35, S., R. 11 W., it is now known as "Old Kiowa."

With the ^{establishment} ~~of~~ of Moseley's trading house came the opening of a trail which would connect the new settlement with the most centrally located point at which the buffalo hides and such other products of the frontier might be disposed of, and where any needed supplies applicable to the wants of the hunters and Indians could be obtained. The most logical point for this purpose was at Wichita, which was the junction of the Chisholm and Abilene cattle trails, the pioneer north and south road west of the 97th meridian, and the one which connected the great cattle country of the south ^{Texas to} with the Union Pacific Railroad ^{to the north,} the nearest transportation point. Moseley was well acquainted among the Indians, having been trading with them for years previously. He was a natural born hunter and spent much of his time hunting buffalo and preparing the hides for shipment. He was engaged in this occupation in his new location, which seems to have embittered the Indians against all who followed this business, and he was killed in an attack by them on July 30, 1872.

Kiowa trail

-2-

This battle was not entirely one-sided, according to the story of Dave Long, an old timer of Harper county, who had been told that after the fight there were sixteen dead Indians counted lying about the premises--~~all~~ ^{by Moseley.} every one of whom had been shot through the head. According to this authority Moseley was killed by Osages who were disguised as Comanches and Kiowas. He apparently thought that the Osages were friendly to him, but recognizing some of the ~~disguised Osages among the~~ ^{through their disguises,} attacking party he stepped outside the stockade to speak with them, when one of the ~~Indians~~ shot and killed him. His companions, Lockwood and Brainard, saved their lives by keeping within the stockade which surrounded the premises.

During 1877 and 1878 several parties settled along the old thoroughfare, among whom were Capt. L. M. Pratt, whose ranch was situated at a point where the trail crossed Bluff Creek. Al^d and George Markham also had a ranch on the trail a little farther to the southwest. I. L. Beeson, another pioneer ranchman, was located on the trail southwest of the Markham ranch, the road crossing his land. Thomas Terry, another settler and the last one until reaching the end of the trail, was located at a point about two and one-half miles southeast of the present Attica, and to the southwest of the Beeson ranch. He lived in a dugout and his claim was possessed of a fine spring of living water which was situated about half a mile from the road.

About April, 1879, Richard Botkin with his family, located a ranch at the big spring a few rods west of the present town of Attica, where he was associated with his sons J. T. and C. E. Botkin in the stock business. The old spring at this ranch was a favorite watering place for travelers to the southwest, notwithstanding the fact that it was ~~located~~ situated about a mile and a half north of the old trail. Although the ranch property has changed hands several times since then, the old spring is still known as the "Botkin Spring."

About five or six miles to the southwest of Harper, and to the

Kiowa trail

John G. Kille, of Attica.	Knows about the Kiowa trail
Henry Shannon of Attica.	" " " " "
George Markham, Attica.	" " " " "
Alex Markham, Attica.	" " " " "



Kiowa trail

-3-

left of the Kiowa Trail, were some zigzag mounds that resembled ancient earthworks. These embankments were plainly visible in the 70s and early 80s, and ran in a southwest direction. They were in the form of the old-fashioned railfence, the angles being about 100 feet apart. No one along the line of the trail in early days knew for what purpose they were intended, it being the general opinion that it was the work of some pre-historic race.

As originally traveled the Kiowa trail started from Wichita, passed in a southwest direction close to the present Clearwater and on out of Sedgwick county, entering Harper county near old Runnymede of later days, close to the present Harper, a little south of the present Attica, and on to its terminus in Barber County at Kiowa. This town was abandoned some years later for a site about three or four miles south. The Orient Railway from Wichita follows the old trail pretty closely for a portion of the distance. Old timers say that in early *days* the trail in Harper and Barber counties was marked for quite a distance by piles of old buffalo bones. There was a scarcity of timber in these counties, but as for buffalo bones old settlers vouch for them being so plentiful that when the grass was burned in the spring, ~~then~~ ^(in the sunlight) the bleached bones glistened on the slopes for miles in every direction. After the building of the railroad westward the use of the Kiowa trail diminished ^{(owing to the settlement of the country,} until its final abandonment, and the thousands of tons of ~~blanched~~ ^{(that once were so much in evidence,} buffalo bones have been hauled to the mills of the far east to be ground up for fertilizer to enrich the impoverished farms of the older states.