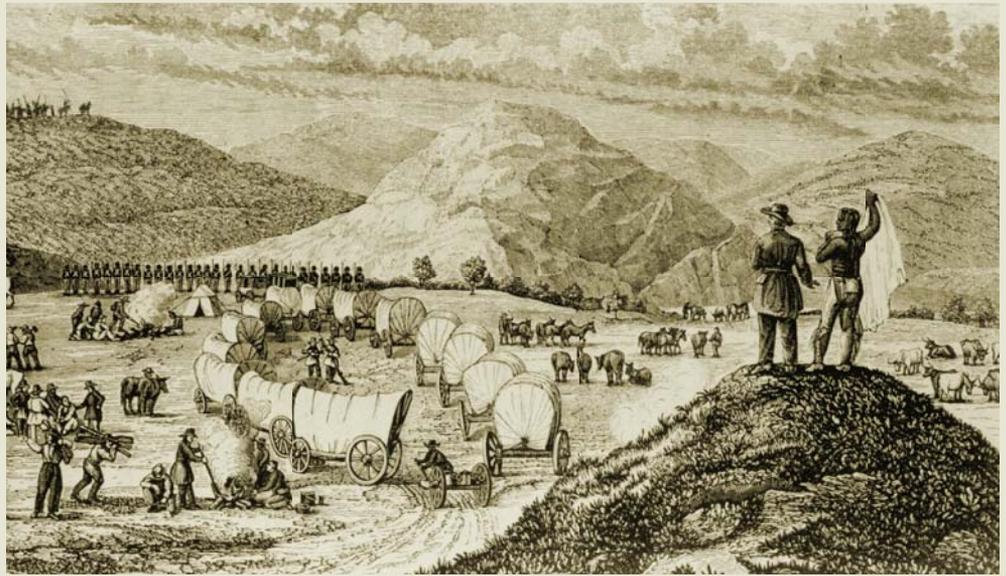


# Santa Fe Trail Sites to the East

Unlike the emigrant trails that took travelers west to Utah, Oregon, and California, the Santa Fe Trail mainly handled commercial traffic moving east and west.

When Santa Fe became part of the United States in 1848 after the Mexican-American War, trade barriers were removed and traffic increased.

The need for the trail ended with the arrival of the railroad in Santa Fe in 1880. Today the Santa Fe Trail is designated a national historic trail by the United States Congress. There are many opportunities along its length to see ruts left by the wheels of the wagon trains.



From Josiah Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*, 1844.



## Network of Trade

The Santa Fe Trail linked a system of international trading routes. Goods heading east were transported on rivers and canals to reach the ports of New York City and New Orleans. El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro connected Santa Fe to Chihuahua, Mexico, and sites farther south.

## First Trip Across the Plains

*Henry made his first trip across the plains on the Trail in 1838 and yearly after that and made friends with Indian Chiefs along the Trail...they looked upon him as a great man. It was his fearlessness and his remarkable strength of character and vitality that appealed to the Indians, therefore the wagons bearing the name H. Mayer & Company were never molested.*

Rebecca Mayer, 1852

For maps and further information about other sites to explore, please visit:

- Fort Larned National Historic Site  
[www.nps.gov/fols](http://www.nps.gov/fols)  
620-285-6911
- Boot Hill Museum  
[www.boothill.org](http://www.boothill.org)  
620-227-8188
- Dodge City Convention & Visitors Bureau  
[www.visitdodgecity.org](http://www.visitdodgecity.org)  
620-225-8186

For more information about the trail:  
[www.nps.gov/safe](http://www.nps.gov/safe) or [santafetrail.org](http://santafetrail.org)



Look for this sign along the roadside to trace the route of the Santa Fe Trail.

Please be courteous when viewing a site on private land.



## Caches Monument

Near here in 1822, a blizzard stopped Santa Fe-bound traders. They dug holes, buried and stored (cached) their goods until they returned from Taos six months later. The holes remained until recent times and became the landmark known as the "Caches" on the trail.



## 100th Meridian Marker

The 100th degree of longitude long served as a boundary between nations: first between France and Spain; later as the boundary for the Louisiana Purchase between Spain and the U.S.; and finally between Mexico and the U.S. after 1821. Located in Dodge City, the meridian symbolizes the physical demarcation where the east ended and the west began.



## Fort Dodge

Fort Dodge, founded in 1865, protected the Santa Fe Trail. Previously used as a campsite by trail travelers, the fort sat at the junction of the wet and dry routes. Fort Dodge troops were also charged with the protection of stagecoaches, mail, and railroad construction crews. The fort was removed from service in 1882. Today the former fort serves as the Kansas State Soldiers Home.



## Wet and Dry Routes Junction

From just west of Great Bend to this point, there were two major routes of the trail, the wet route and the dry route. The Wet Route ran closer to the Arkansas River and the Dry Route ran atop the ridge. Here they joined and multiple ruts are visible to the northeast of the marker.



## Mulberry Creek Crossing

Visit this site to get a better understanding of what a river crossing entailed. An early and less used crossing of the Santa Fe Trail, Mulberry Creek meets the Arkansas River on its south side, near present-day Ford, Kansas.



## Fort Larned National Historic Site

Active from 1859 to 1878, Fort Larned was a major military installation on the Santa Fe Trail. Nine of the 10 original stone buildings remain today. Visit one of the best preserved frontier military posts in the West, as well as on the entire Santa Fe Trail.