

Historical Events & Places Along the Trail

Then & Now

Cherokee Trail Swales in Nowata County, Oklahoma.

Bill & Darlene Maggard photos.



"Crossed the creek...and struck N.W. for Evans' trail. Came to it in about 3 miles, just opposite a long mound." April 29, 1850 Wm. Quesenbury Diary.
Members of the 1849 Evans Cherokee/White Wagon Train were listed and recorded after the Company crossed the Verdigris River (CTD V I p.30)

"Embarked in this train 128 souls, 3 of those women, 2 boys and 4 Nigroes, 304 oxen 31 cows 65 horses 41 mules 40 wagons..." April 29, 1849 Holmes Diary.



The various 1850 groups of emigrants eventually made up into four main wagon companies and one pack company. " They also state that they will cut off 25 miles, by leaving Evans' route about one mile this side of Mrs Coodey's, and crossing the Verdigris six miles above at a place called 'Hickory Bluffs' and intersecting the Evans' trail again some twelve or fifteen miles from the crossing. "...river was past fording...compelled to employ some Osages...[that] constructed a water-craft out of buffalo skins, and crossed their baggage safely...". *Cherokee Advocate* 6 May 1850. (CTD V II. p230)



Beason's Swales Cherokee Trail southern Kansas Jim & Diana Beason's Photos.



"...over one hundred wagons a day...The road was covered with wagons from here
[El Dorado, KS] to Fort Gibson on the way to Pike's Peak." May 6, 1859.
Augusta Stewart.

THE FIRST YEAR IN THE LIFE
OF ELDORADO, K.T. 1858
VOL. II

Augusta's JOURNAL



*Experiences of a Young Pioneer Woman
Pre Civil War in the Kansas Territory*

A BIOGRAPHY BY
Marjorie L. Crump & Ralph E. Crump

Augusta Stewart's family were among the 1857 founders of El Dorado, KS. at the Osage crossing on the Walnut River. Her El Dorado journal documents the heavy traffic on the Cherokee Trail by goldseekers, emigrants and cattle drives. Her lifelong journals provided material for a four volume book series. Augusta became a pioneer woman of Kansas, Colorado, and Montana.

A Trail Preservation Workshop was held at the Galva, Kansas Museum hosted by Director Linda Andersen. A field trip over the Cherokee Trail was conducted by Brian Stuckey.

One of the stops was at Lauren Flaming's house (the landowner) where he showed his collection of Cherokee Trail artifacts he has gathered around the Goessel, Kansas area (photo). A second tour was to Steve Schmidt's place with visible ruts of the Santa Fe Trail, Chisholm Trail, Cherokee and possibly other. It was amazing that one area could contain so many historical ruts.

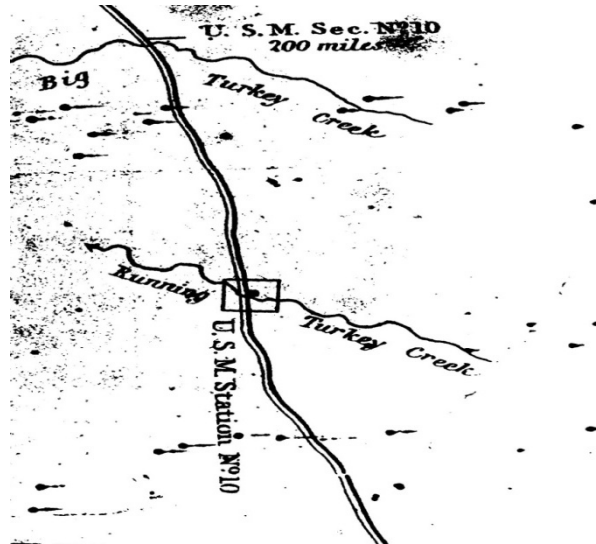


On striking the Santa Fe Trail at Running Turkey Creek "...we obtained a large stone and planted in the fork of the road, and one of our cunning workmen cut these letters upon it.

"To Fayetteville, Ark Capt. Evans' ... Cal. Com'y.
May 12, 1849."

Jack Fletcher and Museum Director Linda Andersen had hopes of this being the right stone. It is located in the Galva Museum, now a source of Cherokee Trail information & history.

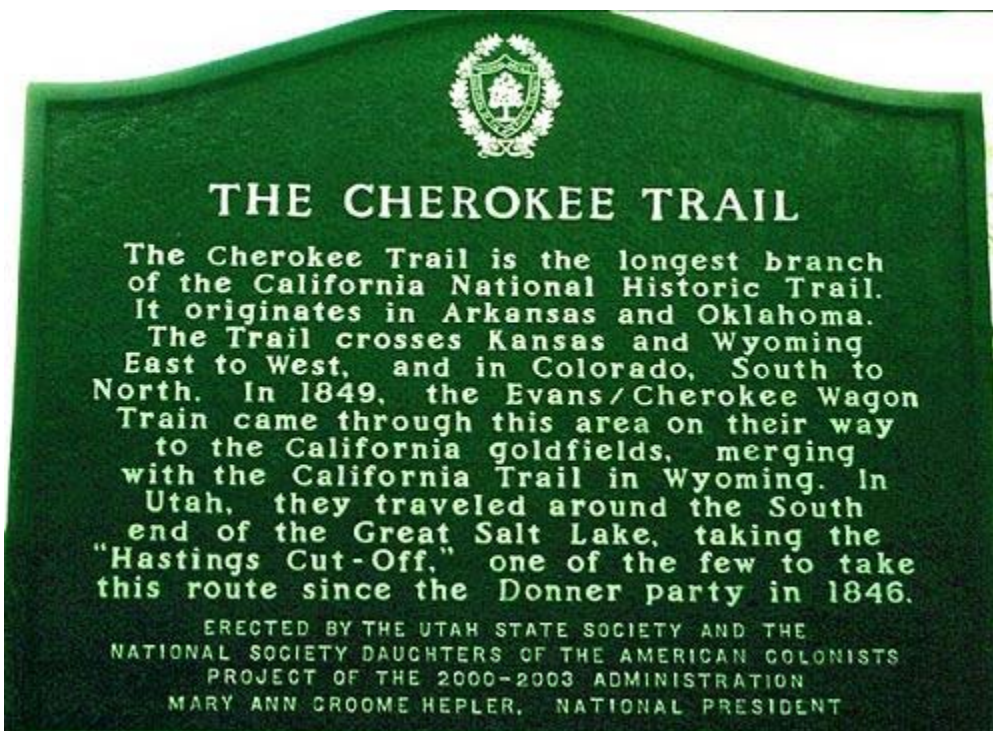
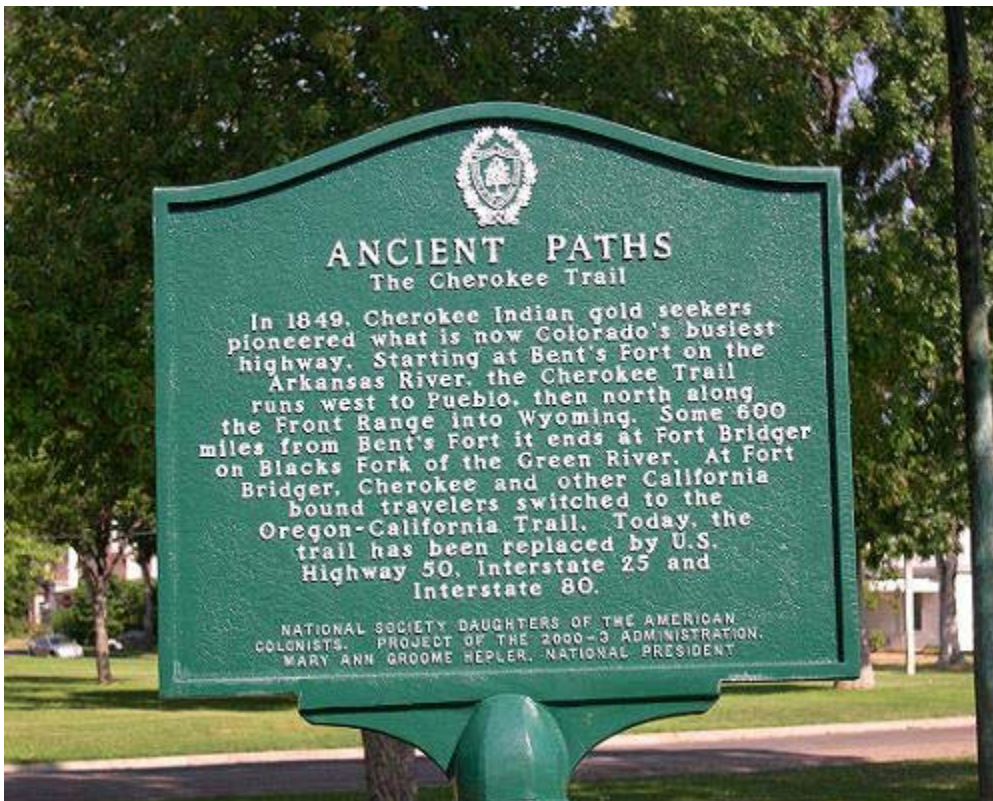
Galva, KS is located near Running Turkey Creek where the Cherokee Trail from the south joins the Santa Fe Trail. The area is marked with a monument to the Fuller Ranch that was established there in 1855 as a Ranch and Post office No. 10.



Cherokee/Overland Stage & Mail Trail Along Front Range of Rockies



This Cherokee Trail marker was placed in Pueblo, Colorado by the National Society Daughters of the American Colonists.



This Cherokee Trail marker was erected by the Utah State and National Society of the Daughters of the American Colonists in Grantsville, Utah. (Lynne Turner president of Utah State Chapter made it happen .)

DONNER PARTY WAGONS

The 1849 Evans wagon train was the first to travel west across the desert (south around the Great Salt Lake) on the Hastings cutoff since the ill-fated 1846 Donner Party. [In 1850 two wagon trains and packers also took the Hastings]. The 49ers left a large wagon and other smaller wagons on the desert near where the Donners reportedly left theirs. Recent research indicates what was thought to be the remains of Donner party wagons are instead remains of Evans' 1849 wagons. A recently found diary from the Evans party notes finding a cache of James Reed's books but does not mention seeing the Donner wagons.

1857

Each year travel over the disease-free Cherokee Trails increased and by 1857 emigrant travel and cattle drives exceeded the Oregon, California, or Mormon trails. Important to the increase in numbers were large wagon trains made up of "extended" families or "the connexion" that had "sold out" and were taking their families and all of their possessions west. From southwest Missouri came a wagon train of "the connexion" one hundred strong captained by Rev. Jonathan Blair that reached California via the 1849 Evans/Cherokee Trail and Sweetwater Cutoff.

From Carroll County, Arkansas another "connexion" train of 120 members was Captained by John Baker and Alexander Fancher. From their wills filed in Arkansas their personal wealth included improved livestock and pedigreed horses making this one of the richest wagon trains to go west. Following the Cherokee Trail to Fort Bridger then to Salt Lake City, they were convinced to go south from Salt Lake on the Southern Trail to Los Angeles. While encamped at what was called Mountain Meadows the train was attacked.

MOUNTAIN MEADOW MASSACRE

"On September 11, 1857, a band of Mormon militia, under a flag of truce, lured unarmed members of an [Arkansas] emigrant company from their fortified encampment and, with some Paiute Indians, killed them. More than 120 men, women, and children perished in the slaughter." *Massacre At Mountain Meadows* by Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley, Glen M. Leonard.



mountainmeadowsmassacre.com/

Mountain Meadows Massacre
by Luscinia Brown-Hovelt and Elizabeth J. Himelfarb

November 30, 1999

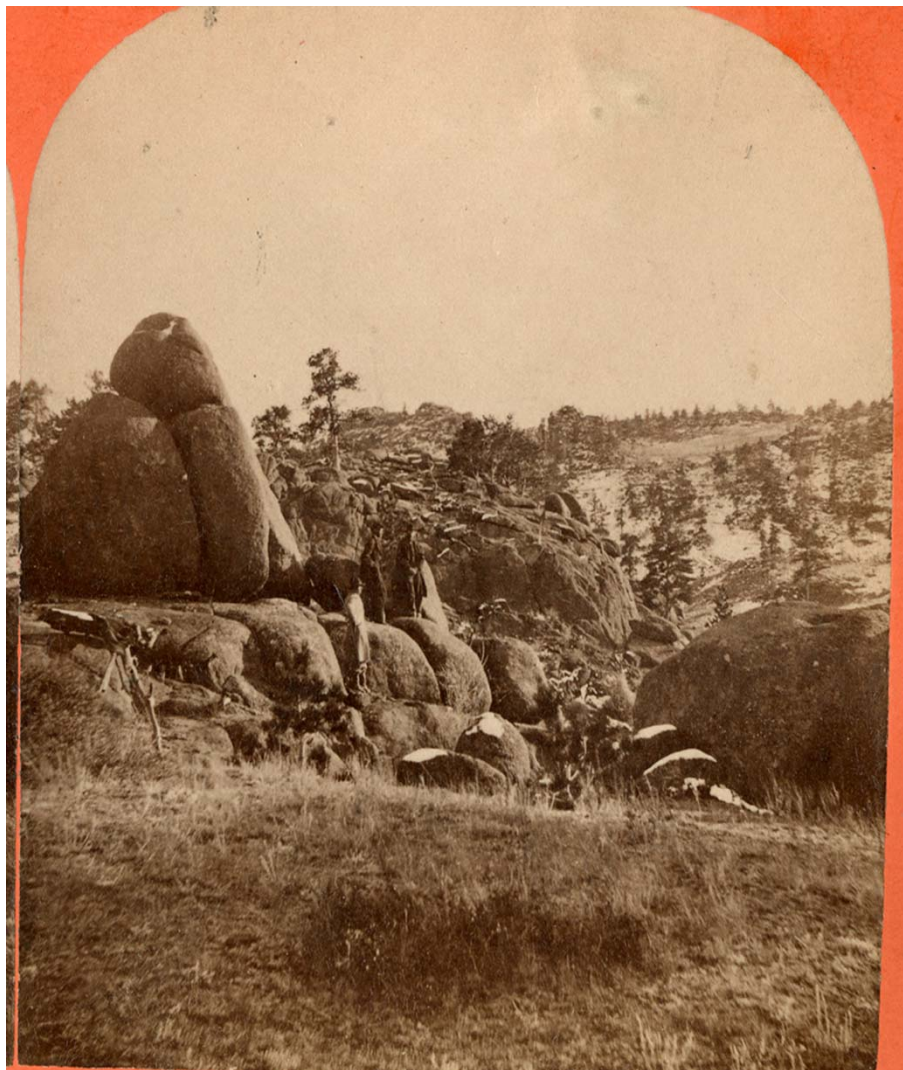
"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints made a distressing discovery while restoring a monument to the victims of the 1857 Mountain Meadows Massacre in southwest Utah: the bones of at least 29 of the 120 pioneer men, women, and children killed in the bloodbath. Ground-penetrating radar revealed three other anomalies, perhaps graves, not threatened by the restoration work. The Church, at the request of descendant families, did not allow the testing of those sites or any further excavation of the site in question.

Despite the church's discomfort at churning up the very remains it had hoped to lay to rest with the renewed monument, this turn of events has provided the opportunity to properly rebury remains hastily interred a year-and-a-half after the massacre by federal troops sent by congress. The bones, together with buttons and various ceramics, emerged when a backhoe took down a wall erected by the troops around the grave site so that a new one might be built."

from *Archaeology* A publication of the Archaeological Institute of America.

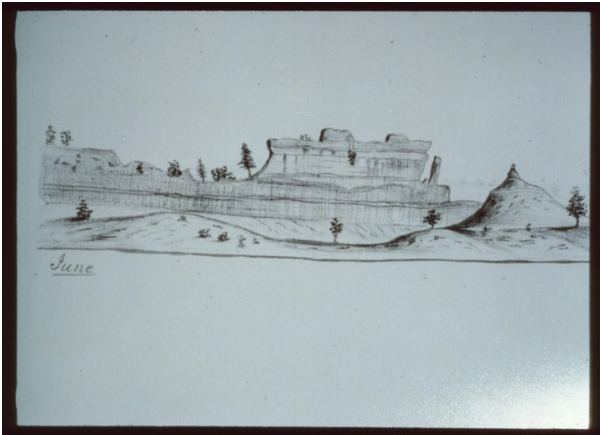
A scene along the Cherokee Trail near U S Highway 287 north of Livermore, Colorado: Picture courtesy of Utah State Historical Society.

Near the 1849 Evans/Cherokee company "Big Grass" camp, later the Virginia Dale Stage Station.



June 23, 1850...In the evening passed through the wildest--most broken country I ever beheld. Rocks of all sizes piled in all shapes. Many places resemble the ruins of stonehenge..." Quesenbury

"20 Thursday Started soon, entering the black hills..." Mitchell (1850)



The William Quesenbury "Cush" drawing of Steamboat Rock and Tug Boat Rock June 23, 1850. (Photo on right). Right bottom photo shows the stone monument marking the site of the Overland Stage & Mail Cherokee Stage Station, also known as Ten Mile or Stonewall Station. Located south of Virginia Dale Stage Station along Highway 287, on Evans' 1849 Cherokee Trail. [Private Property]

"...the red bluffs [sketched]..." June 23, 1850, Quesenbury Diary

"...Camped half a mile to the right of the road...crossed Evans old [1849] Trace...[camped] on a hill by the side of a large, steep Red Mt..." June 29, 1850, Brown's Cherokee Diary.



One station north of Cherokee Stage Station is Virginia Dale, the first division point northwest of Denver. Joseph A. Slade, better known as Jack Slade, was appointed Division and Station Agent. He named the station "Virginia Dale" his wife's maiden name. A mile to the northeast of the station lies Table Mountain, an ideal hide-out as it was flat topped, abundant with grass, with a small lake. On this Robber's Roost, a gang built themselves a Cabin and lookouts and it was thought that Slade was their leader. (*Annals of WY*, April 1961)



Virginia Dale Stage Station on the Overland Stage & Mail route
Labeled "Robber's Roost" by Wm. Henry Jackson in this (his) photo.

Big Grass Campsite 1849 Evans Cherokee White wagon train

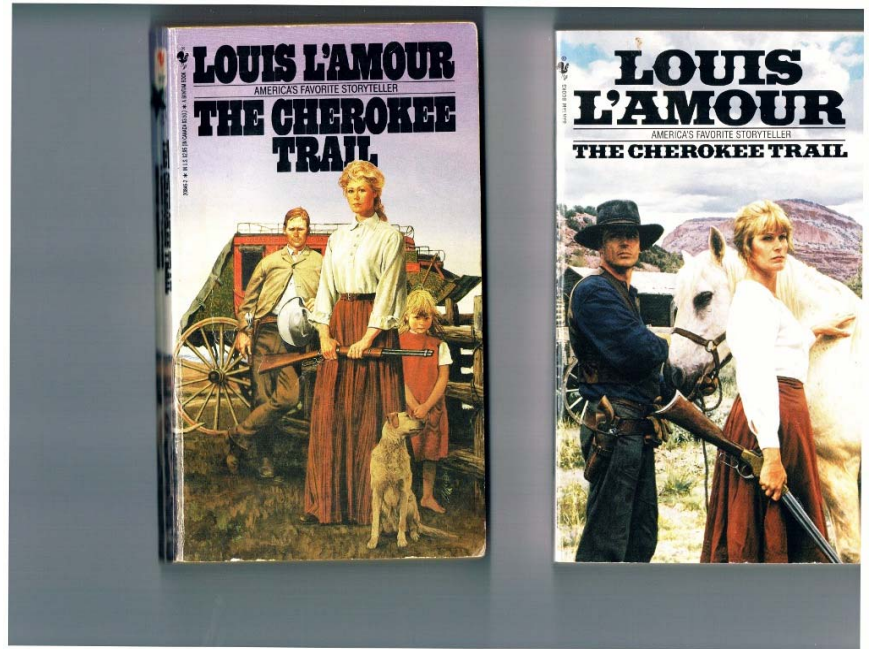
Louis L'Amour

Author's Note

When the Civil War pulled away most of the soldiers guarding the Overland Stage...the stage [line] was routed....over the Cherokee Trail. My story is concerned with that portion of the Cherokee trail that runs north through Laporte to Laramie and the old stage station at Virginia Dale [that] is still standing

The Cherokee Trail

"They said that no women could run a stagecoach station on the perilous Cherokee Trail. But Mary Breydon was out to prove them wrong....known as a women whose beauty matched her courage... a women with a gun on the Cherokee Trail."



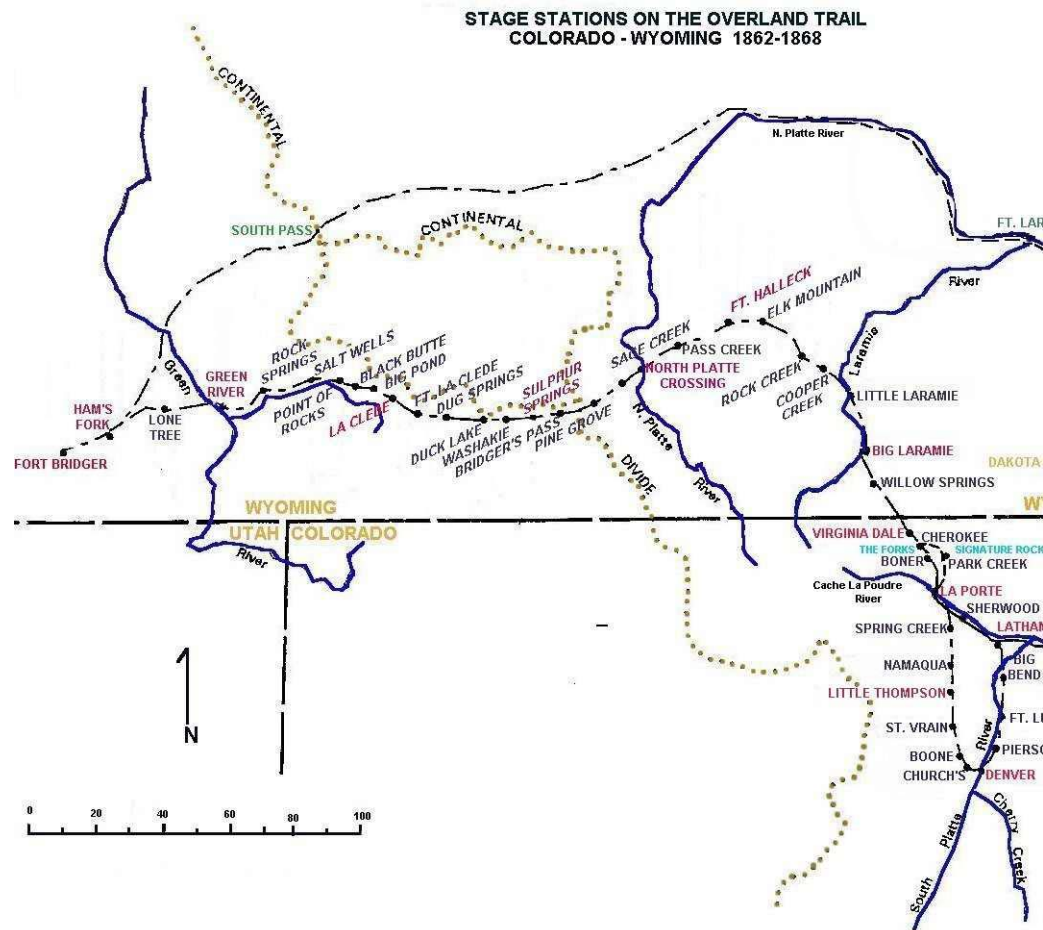
Due to Indian depredations on the Overland Mail Stations along the Oregon-California South Pass Rout, Ben Holladay received permission in July 1862 from the Postmaster General to move his Overland Stage & Mail operations south onto the Cherokee Trail over Bridger Pass to Salt Lake City.

Below: Map of the Overland Stage and Mail Route with Stage Station Locations and Names is from Elizabeth Larson's Overland Trail website.

Outdated but outstanding.

In 1856-8 Lt. Francis Bryan was assigned to build "The most Practicable Road from Fort Riley to Bridger Pass." The road built by Bryan followed the Republican River to the Great Platte, west on the South Platte, along the Lodge Pole Creek (through the Laramie Mountains via Cheyenne Pass) striking the 1849 Evans/Cherokee Trail at the Little Laramie River. It then followed the Evans road to and across the N. Platte River to the foot of the Atlantic Rim. Leaving the Evans road Bryan turned west over Bridger Pass, west along Muddy Creek and Bitter Creek to join the Evans Road at Sulphur Springs/Point of Rocks; then west along Bitter Creek to the Green River and on to Fort Bridger. With ravines filled, creeks bridged and wells dug this now became the new Cherokee Cutoff and the most direct route west and to Salt Lake City. With the "bust" of Pike's Peak thousands of gold seekers took the new cutoff (a guide over the Cherokee Trail was printed in the *Rocky Mtn News*) to Idaho's Salmon River & later Montana's gold strikes.

Remains of the Granger Stage Station west of Lone Pine. Located in the area where the 1849 Evans Cherokee/White wagon train struck the main Oregon-California Trail



This circa 1910 photo of a ranch on the Big Laramie River shows the 1850 Cherokee Trail emerging from the river crossing and continuing west. The Cherokee Trail is the faint white trace from where the river turns west (left) approximately 1 1/2 inches from the right middle side of photo.

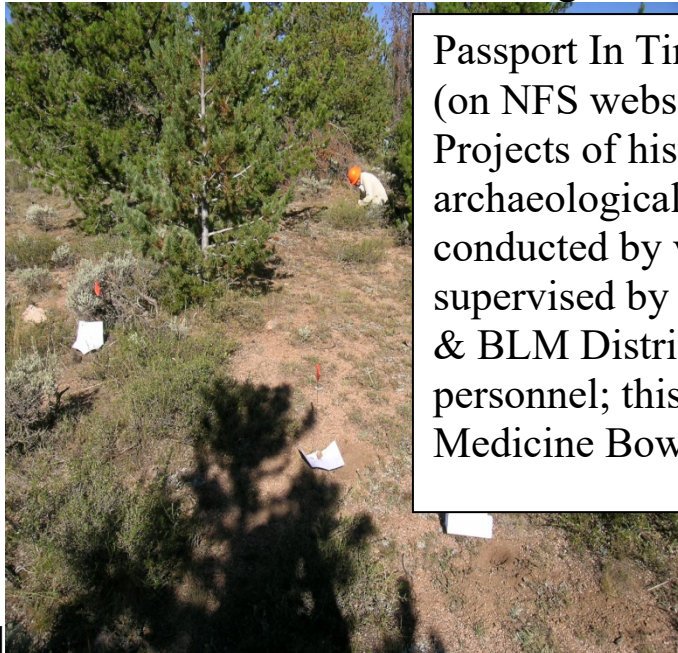


North of the above ranch where the Cherokee Trail crosses the Laramie River onto the west bank are numerous dugways. “Dugways” were the digging or cutting down of the river banks so wagons could exit the river bottoms. Suzanne Hornbuckle , Jack & Pat Fletcher on dugways. Photos Courtesy of Chuck Hornbuckle.

A set of wagon swales
leading west out of the
Laramie River



Locating & mapping the Cherokee



Passport In Time (**PIT**)
(on NFS website)
Projects of historical and
archaeological value are
conducted by volunteers
supervised by the NFS
& BLM District Office
personnel; this one in
Medicine Bow NF.

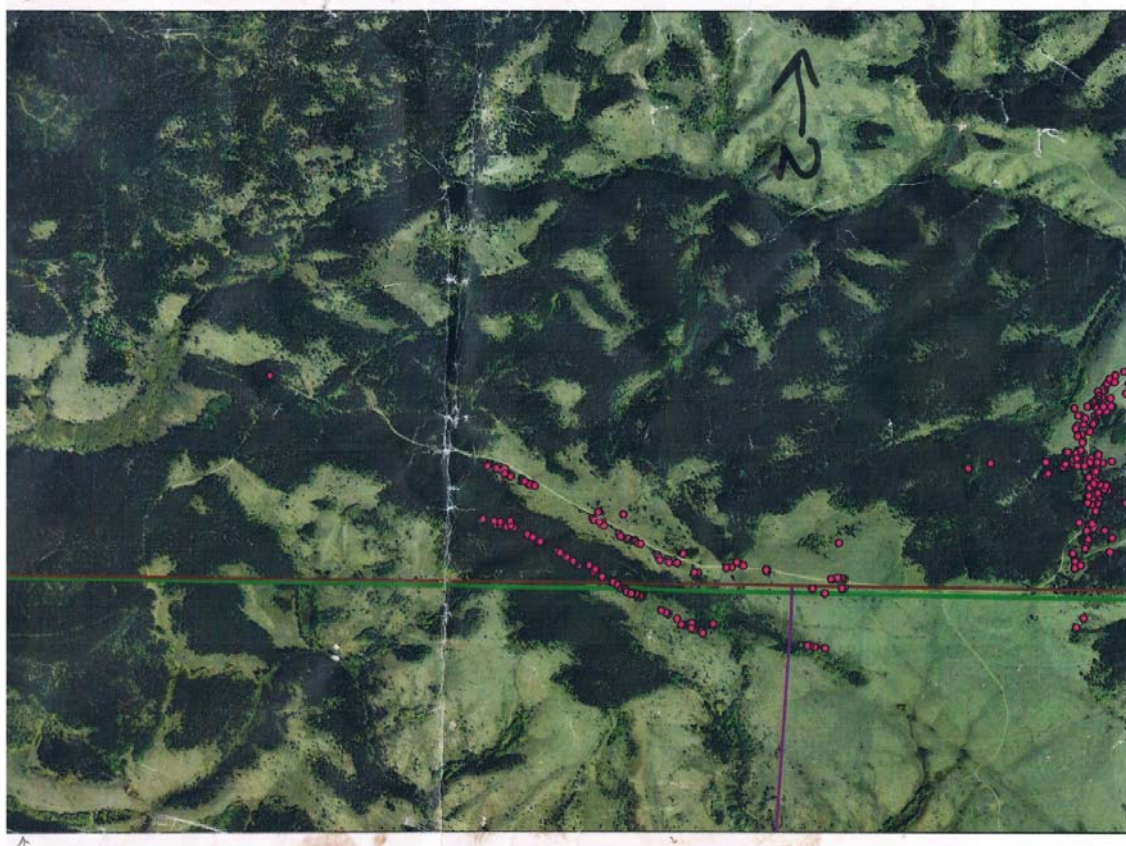
Trail



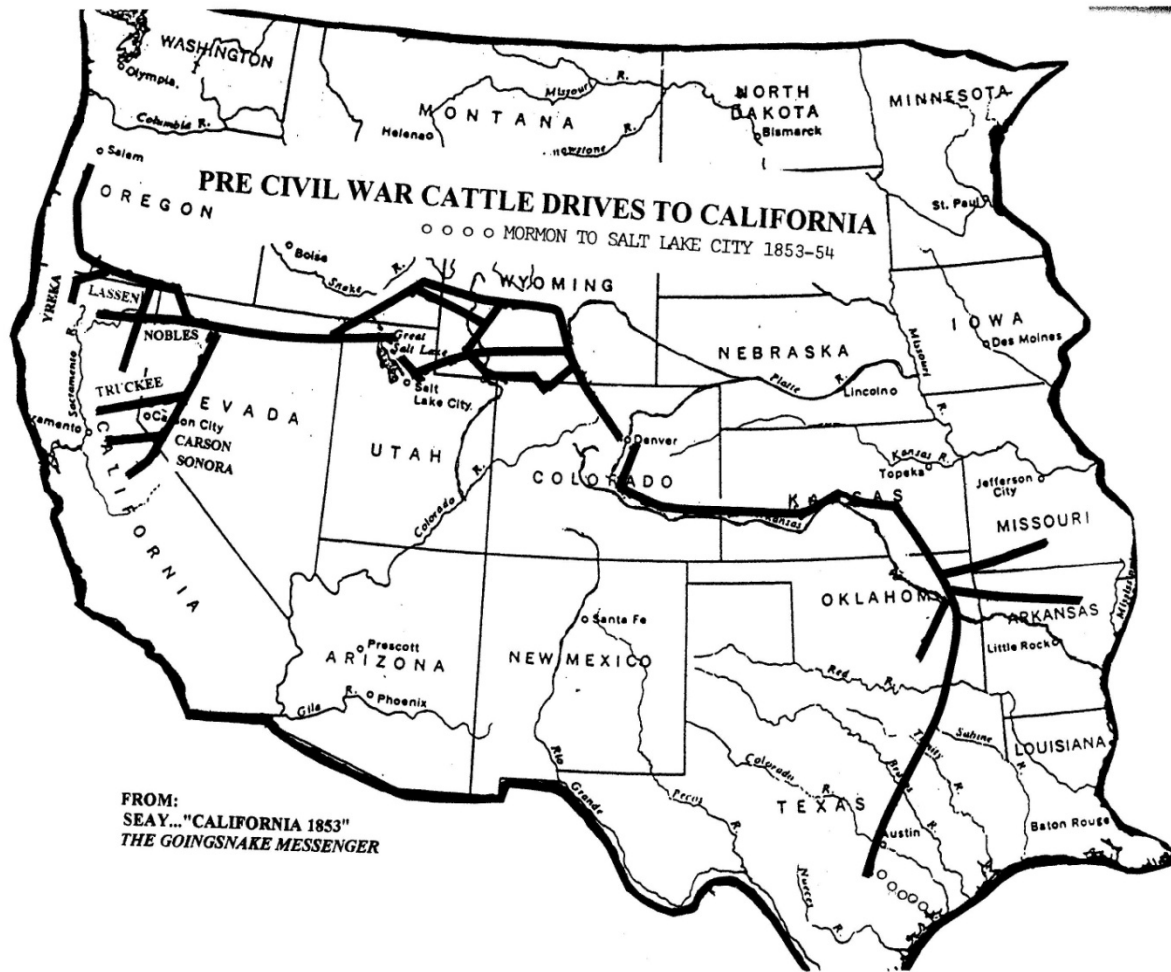
Chuck and Suzanne Hornbuckle (left)

Dr. Koleen Kralick (Medicine Bow National Forest PIT supervisor) and Jack & Pat Fletcher are a few from a group of volunteers working on locating and mapping the Cherokee Trail. Ashley National Forest PIT projects on the Cherokee Trail pertain to the crossing of the Green River around the Flaming Gorge area.

Location sites are plotted on a map to identify trail when no ruts & swales are found



CATTLE DRIVES



Over 100,000 head of cattle were driven west over the Cherokee Trail prior to the Civil War. Additional thousands of head of cattle were taken and used by the numerous wagon trains from Arkansas, SW Missouri, and East Texas.

The first recorded cattle drive over this trail to California was by Samuel Houston Mayes, a Cherokee. So numerous were these cattle drives that by 1854 Arkansas was out of cattle and buyers turned to Texas cattle. The Holmes brothers who had gone with Evans in 1849 herded upgrade Arkansas cattle to Calif. in 1852 and were one of the ten known Texas cattle herders going in 1854. One of the brothers made another cattle drive in 1859. The longest cattle drive by Mormon converts was from Matagorda, Texas to Salt Lake; it took two years. Mormon Creek was named for their overwintering site..

Gravesites of Robert Davidson and child of Hiram Allen on the 1850 Southern Branch Cherokee Trail near Shell Creek.

In 1852 Robert Davidson from Pope County, Ark, driving a small herd of 700 head, died of Tick Fever while encamped with five wagon trains



H.L.W. Peterson Grave Loveland, Colorado

Drover from Osage,
Arkansas, with Calvin Hall
Holmes Cattle/Emigrant
Company

Died on the Big Thompson River
June 13, 1854



....lightning struck 5 of our own men. Killed Mr. Peterson and one
ox....Buried Mr. Wilson Peterson on a mound on the prairie...

The Cherokee Trail is a 900 mile long adventure.



The Oregon-California Trails are a 9,000 mile ADVENTURE!

Come join us in the exciting and ongoing Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), NPS, BLM, and NFS summer projects to help locate, map, and preserve the historic emigrant trails.

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Presentations	by leading researchers & noted authors
	Bookstore with Authors' night
Soci	als, pick-up bands and banquets
Pre-	& post- convention 4-wheel drive trips-

If your interest includes ancestors who actually made the arduous journey west, OCTA's ***Paper Trail*** is the premier genealogy source to consult.

OCTA welcomes you to join our association and any or all of our 11 chapters along the trails in the western states. National Headquarters is in Independence, MO.

<http://www.octa-trails.org/>

You can participate in exciting national or chapter projects! OCTA welcomes you to join our association and any or all of our 11 chapters along the trails in the western states.

Chapter meetings and trail events are limited only to the imagination of the beholder. Want to talk to us? Call 888-811-6282. email OCTA@indepmo.org.

Chapters

canvocta@gmail.com (CA & NV)

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[Crossroads](http://www.utahcrossroads.org/) (Utah) <http://www.utahcrossroads.org/>

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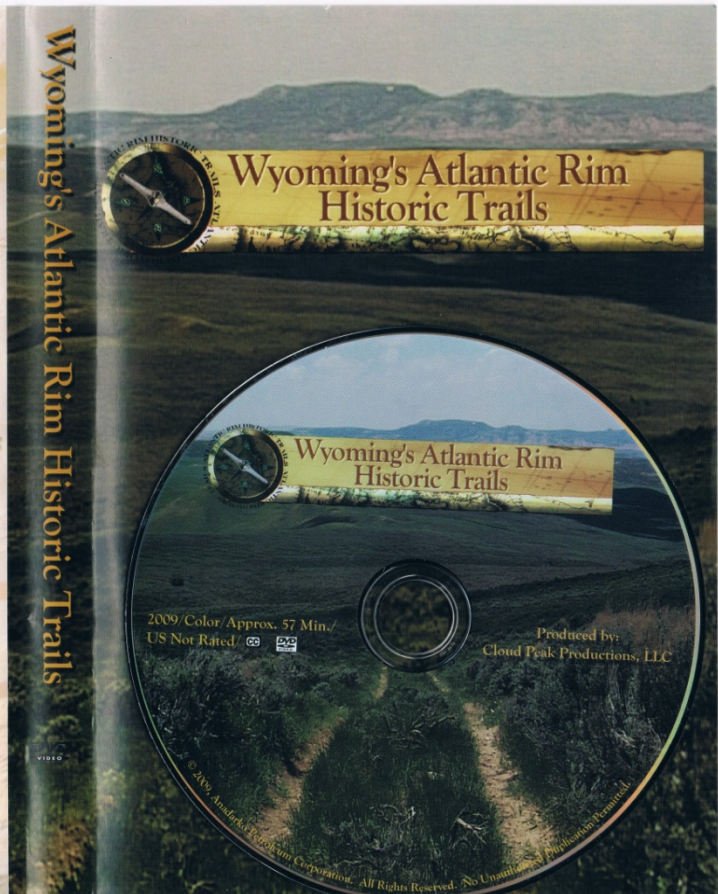
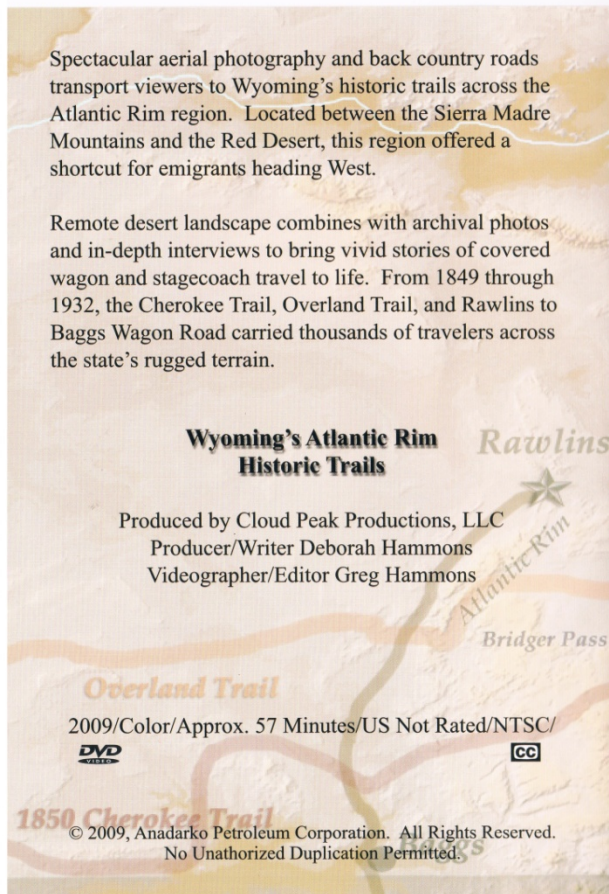
Join OCTA **ASAP** (<http://www.octa-trails.org/>)

and for an additional \$10 join

The Colorado Cherokee Chapter (<http://www.octa-colorado.org/>)

to receive free this Atlantic Rim DVD from Pat & I (while the supply lasts).

This outstanding DVD on the Cherokee Trail and two others was shown four times on Wyoming PBS.



THANK YOU FOR VISITING OUR WEBSITE
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL US IF YOU HAVE
ANY QUESTIONS OR HAVE INFORMATION ON
PERSONS OR PLACES.

Jack & Pat Fletcher

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