

## National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items

New Submission  Amended Submission

### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Cherokee Trail of Tears in Missouri, 1837-1839

### B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

- I. Bengé Route of the Trail of Tears through Missouri, 1838
- II. Northern Route of the Trail of Tears through Missouri, 1837 to 1839

### C. Form Prepared by

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### D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)



FEBRUARY 18, 2014

Signature and title of certifying official Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

Date

**Missouri Department of Natural Resources**

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**Table of Contents for Written Narrative**

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Cherokee Trail of Tears in Missouri, 1837-1839  
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## Introduction

In 2000 the National Park Service funded a nationwide historic context and Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) entitled “Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.”<sup>1</sup> The document provides a historic overview of intergovernmental relations between the United States and the Cherokee Nation, events leading to the forced removal of the Cherokee from the southeastern states, and the location of and experience along the various trail routes. At that time, however, very little research had been completed on the roads of Missouri and likely routes of the Cherokee through the state. The Cherokee were known to have taken three general routes through Missouri: the Northern Route taken by 11 detachments; the Hildebrand Route, a variation on the Northern Route; and the Bengé Route. The Bengé Route, notably, was largely speculative and possible routes suggested by the *Map Supplement for the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail*<sup>2</sup> and Duane King’s “Report on the Cherokee Trail of Tears: Correcting and Updating the 1992 Map Supplement”<sup>3</sup> are not consistent with more recent research. The Hildebrand variation of the Northern Route, too, was largely in unknown in 2000 and in places continues to be so.

The purpose of this MPDF is not to replace the historic context provided by the “Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.” That document should be referenced to explore the larger themes and people impacted by the Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears. Instead, the “Cherokee Trail of Tears through Missouri, 1837-1839” MPDF provides more specific context and descriptions of the three routes through Missouri. Archival research on historic roadways has greatly improved our understanding of the routes of Cherokee emigrants through the state; however, survey of extant cultural resources from the period is limited. Archeological survey of Trail of Tears-related sites such as campsites, ferry crossings, and burial places is also extremely limited or non-existent. Historic accounts and archaeological investigations for two known Trail of Tears-related sites in Missouri, Bell’s Tavern in Greene County and the Widow Harris farmstead in Ripley County were used to inform the development of the property types. Recent studies conducted by the Missouri Department of Transportation as part of road improvement projects, and Passport in Time projects sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service on the Mark Twain National Forest have documented a series of historic road segments known to have been used by the Bengé Detachment of the Cherokee. The description and registration requirements for the “Roadbeds and Road Segments” property type was developed based on the findings of these studies. Additional property types have been developed based on known information about the Trail of Tears in Missouri and commonalities with other long-distance trails. As more trail-related sites are identified and studied, property types may be developed or refined and this MPDF amended.

## Overview: The Cherokee Trail of Tears in Missouri

As noted in the introduction, the nationwide MPDF “Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears” provides a historic overview of the complex governmental and tribal relations that led to the forced removal of not only the Cherokee, but the Creek, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Thomason. “National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic and Archeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.” Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. “Comprehensive Management and Use Plan, Map Supplement: Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.” Denver, Colorado, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Duane H. King. “Report on the Cherokee Trail of Tears: Correcting and Updating the 1992 Map Supplement,” unpublished manuscript, 1999.

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Seminole from the southeastern United States. Of these, only the Cherokee took land routes through Missouri, the first arriving in late 1837 and the last detachment departing the state in February 1839. This date span is the period of significance for the "Cherokee Trail of Tears in Missouri" MPDF. Due to its breadth and the various roads taken through the state, Missouri has more miles of the Cherokee Trail of Tears than any other state, over 600 miles (see figure 1).

Thirteen detachments of Cherokee took the overland route through Missouri. Lieutenant B.B. Cannon led the first detachment of approximately 365 Cherokee in late 1837. His route, known commonly as the Northern Route, crossed the Mississippi River into Cape Girardeau County, traversed portions of fifteen counties<sup>4</sup>, and exited into Arkansas from Barry County. Cannon's is significant as the most used route, taken by eleven of the succeeding detachments in 1838-39. The detachment led by Peter Hildebrand took a variation on this route, traveling farther south from Cape Girardeau or St. Francois County through Bollinger, Iron, Reynolds, Texas, Dent and Wright counties, before rejoining the more commonly used route in Webster County.<sup>5</sup> Approximately 11,000 Cherokee traveled through Missouri along the Northern Route and its variations (see figure 1).

Except for a short segment of road through Jackson (Cape Girardeau County), the route taken by the Benge Detachment through Missouri is completely different than those taken the other twelve detachments. Benge entered Missouri in Mississippi County and traversed portions of seven southeastern Missouri counties<sup>6</sup> before crossing the Ripley County border into Arkansas in December 1839 (see figure 1). The Benge Detachment provides an interesting case study of the Cherokee experience on the Trail of Tears in Missouri. Though the Northern Route of the Cherokee was set in 1837, the context for the Benge Route is presented first in this MPDF as an illustration of the experience and conditions of all the Cherokee detachments on the Trail of Tears in Missouri. (See Historic Context I: Benge Route of the Trail of Tears Through Missouri, 1838).

Thousands of Cherokee traveled through Missouri, but they left few first-hand accounts of their journey. The three known travel journals are used extensively throughout the following historic contexts, but are associated with only two of the thirteen Cherokee detachments. They were also not written by members of the Cherokee Nation. The Lt. B.B. Cannon Journal<sup>7</sup> provides a brief account of the Northern Route and was written by the military escort of the first detachment on the Northern Route in 1837. The Taylor detachment had two chroniclers: Dr. W.I. I. Morrow,<sup>8</sup> a physician assigned to care for the detachment; and Daniel S. Butrick,<sup>9</sup> a Methodist missionary who had served among the Cherokee in the southeast and traveled with them to Oklahoma. These documents provide insight into the Northern Route and conditions of the roads, states, and emigrants. Scattered references to the route from governmental reports and financial claims and from witnesses to the emigration also provide some clue to the routes and

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<sup>4</sup> Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Perry, Madison, St. Francois, Washington, Crawford, Phelps, Pulaski, Laclede, Webster, Greene, Christian, Stone, and Barry counties. **Note:** For ease of reference current county names are used here and throughout the document. The current boundaries and names for Missouri's counties were not set until the late 1850s. Bollinger County, for example, was part of Cape Girardeau County during the Cherokee emigration.

<sup>5</sup> Thomason, Section E, 56-60.

<sup>6</sup> Mississippi, Scott, Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Wayne, Butler and Ripley counties.

<sup>7</sup> "B. B. Cannon's Journal of Occurrences with a Party of Cherokee Emigrants. October 1837." Transcribed and published online at Sequoyia National Research Center, <http://ualr.edu/sequoyah/index.php/journal-of-bb-cannon-cherokee-removal-1837/>.

<sup>8</sup> Excerpts published in Vicki Rozema, ed. *Voices of the Trail of Tears*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair Publisher, 2003.

<sup>9</sup> *Cherokee Removal, Monograph One, The Journal of Daniel S. Butrick, May 19, 1838-April 1, 1839*. Park Hill, OK: The Oklahoma Chapter of the Trail of Tears, 1998.

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roadways used by the detachments. Whenever possible, the author has attempted to geo-reference people and places mentioned in sources through land patent and other research. While this makes for an occasionally overly-detailed text, it serves to identify locations for further study through archeological investigation, and deeper research into oral and family histories.

Just as our understanding of the route of the Trail of Tears has changed since 2000, it continues to evolve as additional sources come to light. The following contexts are just another step in the evolution of understanding of the Trail of Tears, and may need to be revisited and revised as researchers discover more information.

### I. **Historic Context:** Bengé Route of the Trail of Tears through Missouri, 1838

Note: Some of the events presented in this context succeeded those described in Historic Context II: Northern Route of the Trail of Tears Through Missouri, 1837-1839. However, very little was known about the Bengé Route when the “Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears” MPDF was completed in 2000. Additional research has provided new insight into both the route and the detachment. The following context and descriptions of the conditions along the Bengé Route in Missouri provide a case study through which the larger experience of the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears in Missouri can be viewed.

#### **The Bengé Detachment:**

John Bengé led the Bengé detachment and was assisted by assistant conductor George Lowrey, physician William P. Rowles, an interpreter, commissars and wagon masters. The Bengé detachment, consisting of approximately 1100 Cherokee including 144 enslaved Blacks, departed the Wills Valley in northeastern Alabama in early October 1838.

In recent years, some authors have envisioned the departure of the Cherokee detachments from various forts in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee as a mass exodus accompanied by all due ceremony. In reality, pressured by the size of detachments, lack of supplies and departure deadlines, the leave-taking was more hurried than grandly orchestrated. On September 28, 1838 the Commanding Officer at Fort Payne [Alabama] directed the Bengé detachment to start their journey by October 1, using the threat of cutting off rations to speed the departure. As of September 29, the entire detachment consisted of 1090 persons with “three families yet to come in.” By the time that Bengé reached Missouri, this number swelled to approximately 1200 as stragglers caught up to the detachment.<sup>10</sup> To manage the departure, the detachment’s conductors organized several groups. The first of three hundred and five persons, accompanied by fifteen wagons, departed on the 29<sup>th</sup> with an additional twenty wagons scheduled to leave the next day. The conductors vowed to “continue our best exertions until the whole detachment is underway.”<sup>11</sup> The majority of Bengé detachment members departed the Fort Payne area by October 3.

<sup>10</sup> The total enumeration of the Bengé detachment varies from 1079 to 1200, with 3 births and 33 deaths along the route. The enumerations were likely accurate at the various times taken. There is evidence in the historic record of Cherokee joining or catching up with the detachment along the route.

<sup>11</sup> George Lowrey, “Letter from George Lowrey, September 29, 1838,” in *The Papers of Chief John Ross, vol. 1*, ed. Gary E. Moulton (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 673-674. The multi-day departure described in the letter accounts for the range of departure dates noted in historic accounts and reports. However, Lowrey’s account is not substantiated by other accounts—notably the “Employee’s Roll.” The roll lists those hired to manage

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The threat of no rations was a major motivator for a group already facing supply issues. George Lowrey wrote that “at least Two thirds [of the Benge detachment] is in destitute condition and in want of shoes, Clothing and Blankets.” Lowrey urged Chief John Ross to forward supplies, or provide funds to buy them at (or before) Huntsville, Alabama. Lowrey also requested additional tents for the emigrants as they only had 83 at the time of departure.<sup>12</sup> The detachment’s wagon master requested sixty wagons for the journey, a number that he apparently obtained as sixty wagons (private and public) and 480 horses were counted when the detachment dispersed in Indian Territory.<sup>13</sup>

Procuring supplies was one of the logistical nightmares of the trip. Contractors like John Colburn, who accompanied the Benge detachment into Missouri, were hired to organize supplies along the route. Supplies were purchased out of concessionary funds paid by the U.S. Government for Cherokee lands in the southeast (\$6,537,634). The costs and time of emigration were greatly underestimated by those planning the forced move, with initial projections being \$66.24 per person for an 80 day journey. The “days on the road” for each of the thirteen detachments organized under Chief John Ross ranged from 104 (Deas detachment on the “Water Route”) to 189 (Hicks on the Northern Route through Missouri), leading to massive cost overruns and supply issues.<sup>14</sup>

The Benge detachment spent approximately 106 days on their journey from the Wills Valley in Alabama to the Oklahoma Indian Territory. An exact timeline of the journey is impossible to compile, but there are a few confirmed dates and locations along the route. John Benge and company departed from a camp about eight miles south of Fort Payne in the Wills Valley, Alabama by October 3, 1838. The detachment is known to have crossed the Tennessee River at Gunter’s Ferry (Alabama) on October 10. The group crossed the Tennessee River at Reynoldsburg Landing (Tennessee) on November 3.<sup>15</sup> Approximately two weeks later, the Benge Detachment arrived at Iron Banks on the Kentucky side of the Mississippi River. There it took 10 days for the detachment to cross the river with the last landing on or about November 25<sup>th</sup>.<sup>16</sup> John Colburn places the detachment in Jackson (Cape Girardeau County, Missouri) on November 28<sup>th</sup>. The group exited Missouri near Hick’s (Pittman’s) Ferry on December 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> (see figure 2).<sup>17</sup> An article in the *Batesville News*, places the group near Smithville, Arkansas on December 12,<sup>18</sup> and the detachment disbanded near Woodhall Farms, Indian Territory (Oklahoma) on January 11, 1839. The course of events between known dates must be surmised from accounts of other Cherokee emigrant detachments and a handful of eyewitness accounts.

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the detachment and drive wagons, and notes only three wagons departing on the 29<sup>th</sup> and none on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Starr, 104.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> According to John Colborn, the contractor tasked with supplying the Benge detachment, the first crossing of the Tennessee River took three days, the second crossing at Reynoldsburg took five. “Letter from J.L. Colburn to Matthew St. Clair[e]” reprinted in Gary E. Moulton, *John Ross, Cherokee Chief* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 102-103.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> The “Historic and Archeological Resources the Cherokee Trail of Tears” Multiple Property Documentation Form states that the detachment left Missouri on December 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>. However, additional research on the route indicates a slightly later date.

<sup>18</sup> *Batesville News*, December 13, 1838.

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Between their departure point in Alabama and the disbandment in Indian Territory, the Benge detachment crossed parts of six states and territories, and traveled approximately 800 miles, nearly 160 of them in Missouri. It is thought that the Benge detachment spent about two weeks in Missouri, landing on the west banks of the Mississippi River around November 25<sup>th</sup> and exiting after crossing the Current River into Arkansas on December 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup>, 1838. Historic accounts have only identified one potential camp site near the Widow Harris farmstead in Ripley County. Also, only a few eyewitness accounts noting the passage of what is assumed to be the Benge detachment through Missouri have been found. On December 1, 1838, the *Southern Advocate* (Jackson, MO) reported:

Cherokee Indians - During the present week 1900 of this tribe of Indians, which the Government is engaged in removing, passed through our town. Some of them have considerable wealth, and make a very respectable appearance; but most of them are poor and exceedingly dissipated.<sup>19</sup>

Though the number of Cherokee is much exaggerated, this news item likely refers to the Benge detachment because of the date. All of the detachments of Cherokee emigrants passing through Missouri would have also traveled to or very near Jackson. Most detachments taking the Northern Route (See Historic Context II, E.21) arrived later in December 1838 or in January or February 1839.

Washington McMinn reported of witnessing the Cherokee cross his family farm in Bollinger County as a child. Though only aged five at the time of the Cherokee emigration, the passage left an impression on the boy—an impression likely strengthened in the years to come by tales from his parents and neighbors. According to regional histories, McMinn mentioned “a peculiarity which he observed among the passing tribes which is not generally known, or of which note is seldom taken, that the Cherokee tribes had in their possession many African slaves.”<sup>20</sup> The McMinn farm was on the Arkansas to Cape Girardeau Road in present day Bollinger County (see figures 2 & 3). The Benge detachment was the only group of Cherokee emigrants that would have passed near the farm.

Oral traditions also make reference to the Benge detachment in Missouri, some more credible than others. Harris family members place the Cherokee emigrants on the family farm in Ripley County (see figures 2 & 3). The “Widow Harris” farm had long been a stop on the Natchitoches Trace in southern Missouri, and scientists and explorers such as Henry Schoolcraft (1819), John Bell of Long’s Expedition (1819), and G. H. Featherstonhaugh (1834) recorded their stops at and interactions with the family. The Harris farm would have been a likely stop for the Cherokee, and this is confirmed by family members. In an interview with Dr. John Hume in the 1880s, Mrs. Washington Harris, the daughter-in-law of the Widow (Sally) Harris, recalled:

Yes I saw the Indians when General Jackson moved them through. They stopped and camped in that field down there across the road. They filled the field plumb full. A squaw and baby died down there and they buried them up there in that grave yard where our folks is buried. My husband’s brother and Old Jimmy Green went and showed them the road to Indian Ford. They

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<sup>19</sup> “Cherokee Indians,” *Southern Advocate*, December 1, 1838. Transcribed in Russell Weisman, e-mail to author, December 6, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> *A History of Southeast Missouri*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1888), 839. Published online at: <http://www.sos.mo.gov/mdh/>. Accessed 6/2012.

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came in below Lowery's old place up the river along that old ford. Old man Hicks wanted to make them pay 50c apiece for putting them over. That would have been 5,000 dollars.<sup>21</sup>

The Harris farm, described in more detail later in the text, is located about six miles north of Hick's (Pittman's) Ferry near the Missouri-Arkansas border (see figures 2 & 3).

### The Benge Route

The Benge Route of the Trail of Tears has been called the "most obscure" of those taken by the Cherokee departing Alabama in 1838.<sup>22</sup> Most detachments taking an overland route from departure points in Alabama and Tennessee to lands in present-day Oklahoma followed in the footsteps of Lt. B. B. Cannon, who led a detachment west in 1837 (see Historic Context II, E.21). Called the Northern Route, eleven detachments crossed the Mississippi River at several ferry crossings near Cape Girardeau in late 1838 and early 1839. The western landing of two of these ferries, Bainbridge and Green's ferries, are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>23</sup> From Cape Girardeau, those on the Northern Route moved across the state in a high wide arc through central Missouri and exited through Barry County in the southwestern corner of the state. A detachment led by John Bell avoided Missouri altogether, making its way nearly due west through Tennessee and Arkansas. Bell, who led a group of "pro-treaty" Cherokee, chose his route in part to avoid the other thirteen detachments who were opposed to the Treaty of New Echota. This treaty, despite lack of support from the Cherokee National Council and Principal Chief John Ross, was ratified in 1836 and outlined the terms that expelled the Cherokee from their lands in the southeastern United States.

Historians have speculated why John Benge chose his peculiar route west. Like the eleven detachments on the Northern Route and those taking a water route west, Benge's group was organized and under the umbrella leadership of Principle Chief John Ross, so political division was not a motivating factor. Part of the route may have been determined by geography. The Wills Valley in Alabama, from whence the Benge detachment departed, was approximately 100 miles south and west of the departure points of the other eleven overland detachments. To join those on the Northern Route, Benge would have added unnecessary miles his journey. Benge's choice may have been driven by the need to provision the approximately 1100 people under his care. The eleven detachments on the Northern Route varied in size from several hundred to nearly 2000 people each, with accompanying wagons, horses, and other livestock. The sheer number of emigrants put a severe strain on resources and inhabitants of what were still, in many respects, frontiers. Depletion of stores and wildlife during the winter months impacted not only the well-being of the Cherokee but the inhabitants of the remote areas of the states through which they passed.

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<sup>21</sup> Dr. John Hume, "Interview with Mrs. Wash Harris, Early Settler, 1881 and 1889," (Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Missouri). Quoted in Jerry Ponder, "DRAFT National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Cedar Lodge Historic District, Doniphan vic., Ripley County, Missouri," on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, Jefferson City.

<sup>22</sup> "Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears," E. 71.

<sup>23</sup> Philip Thomason and Teresa Douglass, "National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form: Bainbridge Ferry, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 6/21/07. Published online at: <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/07000573.pdf>, accessed 12/16/2013. Philip Thomason and Teresa Douglass, "National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form: Green's Ferry, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 6/21/07.

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Two other possibilities may have impacted the route. The Northern Route required travel through Illinois, a free state. Many in the Benge detachment were slaveholders, and approximately 144 members of the detachment were enslaved. Legally, merely traveling through a free state would not have impacted the property rights of slaveholders at that period of history. Some, however, may have voiced concerns about the more militant abolitionists in southern Illinois. More influential may have been family ties to the "Old Settlers," Cherokee who began to settle west of the Mississippi in the 1790s through 1820s. The earliest of these, a group of Chickamauga Cherokee led by The Bowl, moved to the St. Francis River valley in southeast Missouri and northeastern Arkansas in 1794. Their number was bolstered in c. 1810 by a group of nearly 1200 Cherokee emigrants organized by Tolontaskee (a.k.a. Tah-lon-tee-skee). In 1811-12 the New Madrid Earthquakes destroyed much of the "Old Settlers" settlement on the St. Francis River, driving most of them to northwestern Arkansas. Tolontaskee was a significant leader of the Western Cherokee living in Arkansas and may have traveled east many times to ensure the rights of his people within the political structure of the larger Cherokee Nation.<sup>24</sup> Tolontaskee was also brother to George Lowry, a high ranking Cherokee leader under John Ross, and uncle to George C. Lowrey (son of George Lowry) who was a co-conductor of the Benge detachment. Advice from Tolontaskee and other family members already in the West may have taken Benge through the St. Francis River valley and northern Arkansas.

The exact route of the Benge Detachment through Missouri has been a point of conjecture. Scholars know where the detachment entered Missouri, and a general location where it exited. The points in between have been debated and several alternatives proposed. It is known that the Benge Detachment crossed the Mississippi River at Iron Banks [Columbus], Kentucky. A study conducted for the National Park Service (NPS) and published in 1992, suggests that from there the detachment moved north northwest at an angle later followed by the Belmont Branch of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad (constructed in 1869) through Charleston (Mississippi County). At Charleston, the detachment is thought to have followed an existing road through Benton (Scott County) to a point just south of Cape Girardeau. From there, the detachment may have moved west-southwest through southern Bollinger County to (Old) Greenville (Wayne County).<sup>25</sup> From Greenville, the group followed the Natchitoches Trace (a.k.a. Southwest Trail or Military Road) south through Butler County, and crossed the Current River into Arkansas at the southern border of Ripley County.<sup>26</sup>

Noted scholar of the Trail of Tears, Duane King, suggested a different route for the Benge detachment across southeast Missouri. In a 1999 review of the National Park Service's Trail of Tears study and maps, King noted that "a more logical route after crossing at the Iron Banks (Columbus) is a more southerly road than shown in the 1992 mapping supplement. . . It is likely they traveled through present day Poplar Bluff to connect with the Natchitoches Trace."<sup>27</sup> By following King's suggested route, the Benge

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<sup>24</sup> Charles Russell Logan, "The Promised Land: The Cherokee, Arkansas, and the Removal, 1798-1839," Little Rock: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, n.d. Published online at:

[http://www.arkansaspreservation.com/pdf/publications/chokeee\\_removal.pdf](http://www.arkansaspreservation.com/pdf/publications/chokeee_removal.pdf). Accessed July 26, 2012.

<sup>25</sup> The current town of Greenville is located approximately 2 miles north of the original town site. The town was relocated in c. 1940 when the US Corps of Engineers constructed Lake Wappapello as a flood control measure. The historic town site is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The courthouse square and street layout are still evident.

<sup>26</sup> The 1992 NPS study depicting the route was published as: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Comprehensive Management and Use Plan, Map Supplement: Trail of Tears National Historic Trail," (Denver: National Park Service, 1992).

<sup>27</sup> Duane H. King, "Report on the Cherokee Trail of Tears: Correcting and Updating the 1992 Map Supplement," unpublished manuscript, 1999.

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detachment would have faced a nearly insurmountable obstacle—the “Big Swamp” of Southeast Missouri. The swamp covered approximately 4 million acres and stretched from just south of Cape Girardeau through the western half of the Missouri Bootheel and into northeastern Arkansas. J. H. Young’s map of the United States, published in 1834, provides a good illustration of the width and breadth of this swampland (see figure 4).

Based on historic maps and topography, the route proposed by the National Park Service is the more credible one. More recent and intensive research conducted by Russell Weisman, Senior Historic Preservation Specialist with the Missouri Department of Transportation, has more clearly defined the route taken by the Benge detachment—a route that diverges somewhat from the one mapped in the National Park Service study.

Weisman used state laws and surveys designating “State Roads,” historic maps, and travel accounts from the 1830s through 1850s to determine the most likely route followed by the Benge detachment. Weisman notes that there are “just a couple of places where the exact route is somewhat uncertain.”<sup>28</sup> Field notes and survey maps for some early state roads in Missouri have yet to be located, and at times the Benge detachment veered from the officially surveyed roads on the suggestion of locals. These route alternatives are difficult to pinpoint. However, portions of the route are well defined and segments of the historic roadbed, abandoned by later road rerouting, can be seen at several points along the route. According to Weisman’s research, the Benge detachment followed parts of two state roads through Missouri. One, designated in 1822 and surveyed in 1823-24, led from the western banks of the Mississippi River across from Iron Banks (Kentucky) north through Jackson (Cape Girardeau County), and ultimately to Chariton on the Missouri River.<sup>29</sup>

The second state road followed by Benge was the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road. This route was initially authorized by the Legislature in 1835, but not surveyed and marked until the summer of 1837. The surveyed route followed the general path of an earlier road carved out by settlers and was possibly in use by c. 1820.<sup>30</sup> The route connected Cape Girardeau, Jackson (both in Cape Girardeau County), and Greenville (Wayne County) to the Arkansas Territory. The road south of Greenville was also part of the historic Natchitoches Trace connecting St. Louis, Missouri with Natchitoches, Louisiana. Of the two, the exact path of the state road from Iron Banks to Jackson is the murkiest. Copies of the field notes and survey maps for this route may exist and finding them is a priority for researchers.<sup>31</sup> In the meantime, much of the route can be inferred from mid-19<sup>th</sup> century travel accounts, historic maps, and known points that the state road connected. State roads were meant, in part, to connect commercial and governmental centers (county seats). It is known that the 1824 state road connected the river landing across from Iron Banks (shown as Baldwinville on some early maps, see Figure 3) with Benton (Scott County seat), Cape Girardeau (important river town), Jackson (Cape Girardeau County seat), Fredericktown (Madison County seat), and points beyond.

<sup>28</sup> Russell Weisman, email to author, April 23, 2012.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> The road commissioners for this route were William Haines, Col. N. S. Burkhart, and James Logan. The surveyor was Maj. Angus L. Langham.

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Upon landing in Missouri, Weisman's research indicates that the Benge detachment followed the 1824 state road north along a natural sandy river levy to the historic site of O'Bryan's Landing<sup>32</sup> about 8 miles north along the river from where the Benge detachment crossed the Mississippi (see figures 2 & 3). From there, they traveled west northwest along O'Bryan Ridge through Matthew's Prairie (present day Charleston, Mississippi County). North from Charleston, the road passed the Marias des Peches (Fish Lake). A portion of this lake and historic road swales are still intact; the area is now the Robert G. Delaney Lake Conservation Area on Mississippi County Road 222 (see figures 5, 6 & 7). After sloggling through a the low area of Northcutt Swamp (T27N R15E Sec 15), the road entered the Benton Ridge, an area of uplands approximately 150 feet higher than the surrounding lowlands that extended from just south of Benton north toward Cape Girardeau.<sup>33</sup>

North from Benton, the 1823 State Road followed the historic alignment of the "King's Highway." Marked out in 1789, this earlier roadway connected New Madrid (New Madrid County) and St. Louis along even earlier American Indian traces.<sup>34</sup> Just south of Cape Girardeau, the road traversed yet another area of swampy lowlands. At the swamp, the road crossed one of the only (possibly the only) state-funded road improvement on the 1824 state road. In 1829 (and again in 1832) the Missouri General Assembly authorized the construction of a three mile long earthen causeway across the swamp, completed by Andrew Ramsey and company in 1835.<sup>35</sup> After crossing the causeway, the road traveled through Cape Girardeau to Jackson's town square.

In many respects, all roads in southeast Missouri ran to, through or from Jackson. Historic maps show roads like wheel spokes radiating from Jackson, connecting it to Cape Girardeau, river landings on the Mississippi River, St. Louis, Fredericktown, Greenville and New Madrid. The road between Jackson and Greenville (Wayne County) was the next leg of the journey for the Benge detachment. There had been a road between the two communities, about 65 miles apart, since the 1820s. In 1837, the route was given "official" recognition when the Missouri General Assembly authorized the survey of a state road connecting Cape Girardeau and the federally-designated Military Road through Arkansas. Aaron Snider, the surveyor appointed by the road commissioners, completed the survey and presented the route in March 1837. The entire route stretched 110 miles 7 chains 66 links (approximately 110.1 miles).<sup>36</sup> At the time of the Cherokee emigration, there were no towns between Jackson (Cape Girardeau County) and Greenville (Wayne County), nor from Greenville to the Missouri-Arkansas border. There may have been small community or commercial nodes along the route centered on important enterprises such as mills and ferry crossings. For example, the surveyor notes for the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas state road references the National Register listed Bollinger Mill<sup>37</sup> on the Whitewater River approximately seven

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<sup>32</sup> O'Bryan's Landing was located near the junction of the southwest corner of T26 R17 S36 and the northwest corner of T25 R17 S1. Following the river, O'Bryan's Landing site is approximately 8 miles north of the landing site across from Iron Banks. The route as outlined in the text is based on research conducted by Russell Weisman. Weisman outlined the route and provided citations to the author in a series of e-mails in winter and spring 2011-2012.

<sup>33</sup> Howard L. Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri*, v. 5. St. Louis: Southern History Company, 1901, 127. Accessed June 4, 2012, <http://digital.library.umsystem.edu>.

<sup>34</sup> Louis Houck. *A History of Missouri*, v. 2 (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons Co., 1908), 149-50. Accessed June 4, 2012, <http://digital.library.umsystem.edu>.

<sup>35</sup> Russell Weisman, email to author, November 1, 2011.

<sup>36</sup> "Commissioners Report of the Survey of a State Road from Cape Girardeau to intersect the Military Road in the Arkansas State near Pittmans Ferry," Missouri State Archive, Jefferson City, Missouri.

<sup>37</sup> Priscilla Evans, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Bollinger Mill, Cape Girardeau County," listed in the National Register on May 27, 1971.

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miles west of Jackson (see figure 2). Established c. 1800 and rebuilt in 1825, the mill was a center of substantial agricultural community drawing not only locals, but residents from 70 to 100 miles away to grind grain. Mills and ferry crossings, where people had to pass or may have congregated to wait for crossings or better travel conditions, often developed secondary services such as small stores or blacksmith shops.

At Greenville in Wayne County, the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas State Road turned south, following the general path of a historic trace that had long connected St. Louis and Louisiana. The historic trace had many names, the most common of which were the Old Southwest Trail and the Natchitoches Trace. Variations on this route south from Greenville had been followed and written about by numerous travelers prior to the Cherokee emigration, some accounts of the route include those by H. R. Schoolcraft (1819), John Brown Campbell (1820), John R. Bell (1820), G. W. Featherstonhaugh (1834), and Charles Daubeny (1838). It is known (or thought) that, on the recommendation of locals and to avoid some ferry fees, the Benge detachment made minor detours from the surveyed route of the state road between Greenville and Hick's (Pitman's) Ferry on the Missouri and Arkansas border. However, the detachment stayed largely on the route marked by heavy travel for most of the journey. They exited the state on December 9, 1838 after crossing the Current River.

Following the exact route of the Benge detachment on modern roadways and highways is difficult. What were major roadways in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have either been substantially rerouted or completely abandoned. Belmont, the town that grew across the river from Iron Banks (Columbus), Kentucky, was never a large town but had significance as a transfer point for emigrants and trade goods. Its importance peaked in the 1880s as a point where goods shipped to Columbus by rail were ferried to Missouri. Today there are few remnants of Belmont except for a highway that ends at the former ferry landing. In very broad terms, the highways that approximate the Benge route are: from Belmont (Mississippi County) Highway 80 to Highway 77, north through Charleston (Mississippi County) to Scott City (Scott County); Interstate 55 to 72 through Jackson (Cape Girardeau County), then west on Highway 34 through Bollinger County to U.S. Highway 67 (near Silva, Wayne County), then south through Wayne, Butler and Ripley counties to the Missouri/Arkansas border (see figure 2).

In a few areas the modern highway route closely approximates the Benge Detachment's trail on the old 1824 state road. Highway 77 through Diehlstadt, Benton, and Kelso (all in Scott County) appears to be on or very close to the original route state road. Interstate 55, where it crosses the border between Scott and Cape Girardeau counties is just west of the Rock Levee Road and the raised bed of the historic road can be seen from the northbound lanes of the interstate. Likewise, portions of highways 72 and 34 between Jackson and Marble Hill (Bollinger County) are either on the route or closely parallel the original Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road. West of Marble Hill the original route swung well south of the Highway 34 alignment and may have more closely followed the routes of highways 51, FF and H to Zalma (Bollinger County), then west on Highway E through Gipsy (Bollinger County), Lowndes (Wayne County) to Greenville. At least two segments of the abandoned roadbed of the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road between Lowndes and Greenville have been identified and mapped. Both lie roughly parallel though well south of (as much as 2-3 miles in some instances) the highway within the boundaries of the Mark Twain National Forest. Identified segments that retain width and wear patterns characteristic of historic trails and roads are being considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places in association with this MPDF.

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Near Old Greenville (abandoned original county seat of Wayne County), Highway 67 lies on or immediately adjacent to the route of the Cape to Arkansas Road as it was surveyed in 1837. The exception being where the original route jogged to go through the center of Old Greenfield, rather than bypassing the now abandoned town as the new road does. Highway 67 closely approximates the original route for about 4 miles just north and south of the old town. Where Highway 67 now takes a broad S-curve through southern Wayne and northern Butler counties, the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road took a more direct route south and slightly west. Through western Butler County and southeastern Ripley, the historic route follows the current route of various county roads too numerous to name in this document and in several areas have been completely abandoned. Like the abandoned road segments between Lowdnes and Greenville, a few segments of abandoned roadways have been identified and mapped on the Mark Twain National Forest south of Greenville. These abandoned segments are also being evaluated for possible nomination to the National Register under this MPDF. The entire route of the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road between Cape Girardeau and the Current River crossing just west of Currentview, Missouri has been plotted geospatially in GIS so the original Benge Detachment route can be closely followed on existing routes or extant abandoned segments identified.

### Conditions along the Benge Route

In concept, the route taken by the Benge Detachment through Missouri was deceptively simple. It covered approximately 160 miles and followed two established state roads, one from the landing across from Iron Banks, Kentucky to Jackson, and the second from Jackson, through Greenville, south to the Arkansas border. For the Cherokee and other traveling by foot, horse, and wagon in the late 1830s, this route crossed swamps, sparsely populated rugged terrain, and took an estimated 12 to 14 days. Accounts of the weather, roads and descriptions of places along the route provide a better sense of conditions that the Cherokee faced during their winter journey through Missouri in late November and early December 1838.

Weather played a significant role in road conditions and general welfare along the Trail of Tears, though the Benge Detachment seems to have had fewer weather-related delays than the eleven detachments taking the Northern Route around the same time. Initial plans for the mass emigration were for Cherokee detachments to leave from Tennessee and Alabama in June 1838. The U.S. Military supervised the emigration of several detachments of Cherokee at that time. Drought conditions caused shortages in drinking water and forced one group off the water route west onto the roads of Arkansas. Lack of water and fear of illness caused George Lowry to petition Washington to allow the Cherokee to delay migration until autumn and to organize under their own, rather than military, escort. The drought did not break until late September, and as detachments left they faced what meteorologist Mark Rose termed a “treacherous autumn” that was both rainy and cold. In mid-November it was already snowing in the Cumberland Plateau in Tennessee according to General Scott, the officer overseeing the Cherokee removal. Missouri too experienced early winter conditions.<sup>38</sup> Albert Rockwood, a Mormon settler in west central Missouri, wrote on November 11, 1838 that

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<sup>38</sup> Mark A. Rose, “Meteorological Conditions along the Trail of Tears.” (Old Hickory, TN: National Weather Service, n.d). Accessed July 27, 2012, <http://alabamatrailoftears.org/photos/02.pdf>.

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we had a heavey [sic] fall of snow on the 17 & 18 of Octr also on the 7 & 8 of Novr. Also several small flurries since. It has been very cold for a month past the ground is and has been frozen, several inches for a number of weeks.<sup>39</sup>

The first Cherokee detachments to reach the Mississippi River in late November faced a river already sheeted with ice. Ice on the Mississippi River caused delays, trapping some detachments in Illinois for several weeks. Meteorological data on weather conditions in the first two weeks of December 1838, when the Benge Detachment traveled through Missouri, is not readily available. Like other detachments, Benge may have faced some delays at the Mississippi River due to ice flows as it took ten days for the company to cross the river at Iron Banks. Most accounts of the weather from Cherokee detachments are from missionary journals, and most of these comment on conditions prior to or long after the Benge detachment moved into and through Missouri. The best accounts of the weather and road conditions for the Benge Detachment come from their supplier, Jonathan Colburn, who wrote:

the weather was extremely cold and the roads in a very bad condition from the wet weather, the want of work and the great number of wagons with the emigrants which in many places made the road almost impassible at least it was with great difficulty teams with reasonable loads could make but a moderate days journey . . . [After leaving the Benge Detachment] I crossed the Mississippi river the 30<sup>th</sup> November 1838 the ice was then occurring in considerable quantities – enough to make it dangerous . . .

Despite poor conditions, Colburn noted that “I discovered every disposition and anxiety in all the Cherokee’s of Benge’s detachment to prosecute their journey and to loose [sic] no time that could possibly be avoided—indeed they traveled many days when the weather was so uncomfortable that I though[t] it imprudent . . .”<sup>40</sup>

Weather had a profound effect on road conditions, though the 1830s definition of “road” was very different from our concept of roadways even in the finest weather. Today’s roughest gravel roads would have seemed like superhighways to travelers through rural Missouri in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. In early statehood period Missouri, the state’s General Assembly spent much of each session designating state roads. The Assembly provided some funding for surveying roads, but with few exceptions allocated no money for clearing or maintaining them. As noted by historian Howard Conard, “State Roads authorized by the Legislature were 60 feet wide and passed through more than one county. . . . the citizens along the route then cut out and worked the road.”<sup>41</sup>

Depending on citizens to clear and maintain roads was an iffy proposition, especially in sparsely populated areas of the state. G. W. Featherstonhaugh, describing his tour through the Slave States in 1834-35, provides a description of a well-maintained road in the trans-Mississippi West:

From this place [Current River crossing on the Missouri/Arkansas border] we were happy to learn that a road had been cut out, through the Territory of Arkansas, by authority of the government of the United States, called the “Military Road.” Entering upon it, we found the trees had been

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<sup>39</sup> Dean C. Jessee, David J. Whittaker, ed. “The Last Months of Mormonism in Missouri: The Albert Perry Rockwood Journal,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 28:1 (1988), 5-41. Typed as transcribed in the document.

<sup>40</sup> Moulton, 102-103.

<sup>41</sup> Howard L. Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri*. Vol. V, (St. Louis: Southern History Company, 1901). 367. Accessed June 4, 2012, <http://digital.library.umsystem.edu>.

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razed close to the ground, and that the road was distinguished by blazes cut into some of the trees standing on the road-side, so that it could not be mistaken, a great comfort to travelers in such a wilderness.<sup>42</sup>

Featherstonhaugh, who followed essentially the same route from Greenville (Wayne County) to the Arkansas border as the later Benge detachment, did not find the roads of southeast Missouri quite so well marked. His tour predated the official designation and survey of the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road, but even state survey and marking did not guarantee a well-marked or maintained route.

As outlined in "The Route" sub context, the first leg of the Benge Detachment's journey through Missouri followed the 1824 state road. The survey maps for this route have not been located and most available accounts of travelers on the route post-date the Cherokee emigration. However, these later accounts provide insight into the conditions that the Benge-led group would have faced. In early 1845, Solon Robinson wrote a travelogue of his journey in Missouri for the New York State Agricultural Society. His focus was on the farms of southeast Missouri, but he makes a few notes of the roads including this description of his journey to and through Benton (Scott County):

This day [February 2, 1845] in a 20 mile drive over mostly poor sandy black oak barrens and across a small sandy level prairie. I passed through a couple of miles of Cypress swamp along a road the like of which would be a curiosity in any civilized country. I do not blame me inhabitants here for not making a better road for if I may judge from looks they will soon need to travel but a short road and that [in] a conveyance that never jolts the rider. Although much of county is very rich and produces great crops of corn and wheat yet there is so much swamp that it is decidedly sickly. On Monday and in a dull gloomy and rainy day I had to [go] through 14 miles more of swamp and overflowing land to reach Missouri and this is the only road by which half the inhabitants reach Benton their county seat. And over this same road the emigrants from Kentucky Tennessee &c going to Missouri and Arkansas have to drag their loads of "plunder."<sup>43</sup>

Based on what is known of other state road surveys and plats from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the 1824 state road likely identified or connected populated points such as farmsteads along the route (see figure 8). Historic maps label the Missouri side of the Iron Banks Ferry landing as "Baldwinsville," though other than brief references little is known of this community, which was later known as Belmont. From the Baldwinsville area, the Cherokee traveled north along the Mississippi River bank, then northwest through Matthew's Prairie. Matthew's Prairie was not a town as much as a neighborhood of farmsteads. At the time of the Cherokee emigration, preliminary steps toward forming a town had been taken. In 1837 surveyor John Rodney platted the town of Charleston for Thankful Randol, Joseph Moore and W.P. Barnard.<sup>44</sup> The "town" was little more than lines on paper and a "sort of hotel or boarding house" kept by Randol when the Cherokee traveled through the area late in 1838.

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<sup>42</sup> G. W. Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion through the Slave States. Vol. II.* (London: John Murray, 1844), 1. Accessed June 5, 2012, <http://books.google.com>.

<sup>43</sup> Solon Robinson, "Notes of Travel No. IV - In Missouri Kentucky Tennessee and Missouri." *The Cultivator* 2:6 (June 1845), 178-179. Quoted in Russell Weisman, e-mail to author, Russell Weisman to author November 1, 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Goodspeed, 465.

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The first established town that greeted the Cherokee was Benton, the county seat of Scott County.<sup>45</sup> The county commissioners for Scott County located and platted Benton in 1822, just months after the official organization of the county in December 1821.<sup>46</sup> An “eyewitness” moving to Benton in 1838 and recounting his experience in an 1867 news article described Benton as little more than a grouping of log and frame buildings. At the heart of town was the log courthouse described as being roughly 20 feet square with “a board loft, a door on one side, a window on the other, and a chimney in one end” that when not otherwise in use was a shelter “for sheep and hogs, the doors being like our [current] courthouse, seldom closed.”<sup>47</sup> Residences and businesses around the square included a two story double log house [double pen or dog trot?] . . . kept as a hotel, or as statutes then defined it, ‘an inn or tavern.’ On the opposite corner was a dram-shop, then called a grocery, kept by John Ravenscroft, and close by was a small log house, which was John’s domicile. Above these, and across the street, Joseph Hunter had a store and dwelling house—the only buildings in town that could boast paint.<sup>48</sup> Little could be said of the society in town or the contents of its storehouses. The newcomer apparently witnessed two fist fights the morning of his arrival, both between leading citizens of the town. The first fight was between a doctor and the town’s only lawyer, and the other between town founder Col. William Myers and the local blacksmith. Benton had few comforts to offer the weary Cherokee on their march north to Jackson.

Even nearly twenty years after Benge and company traveled through the area, road conditions had not improved nor had Benton developed beyond a small village. The journal of John Darr, emigrating through Missouri in 1858, includes comments on the old 1824 state road after crossing the Mississippi at Iron Banks:

11<sup>th</sup> Nov (1858) Leave our camp on the banks of the Mississippi and wind and drag our way through the swamps and mud for twelve miles. We then pass on to a beautiful swamp prairie on which is located the village of Charleston, a small but lively town in Missouri. Pass over some very fertile lands, and take up camp on the banks of a lake . . . Our days travel was only 17 miles, raining.

12th Nov (1858). Raining, we again resume our journey, pass over hills, swamps and barren plains. The swamps and lakes are alive with ducks, brants, turkeys, prairie chickens, quail and numerous other game, not mention bear, deer, panther and many other wild animals, the country being very sparsely settled. Roads very muddy. On an elevation we came to the village of Benton, a small dull looking place. Three miles north of Benton we take up camp having dragged through the mud 21 miles.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Note: At the time of the Cherokee emigration through Missouri, Scott County also included all of present-day Mississippi County. Mississippi County was organized in 1845 with Charleston as its seat of government.

<sup>46</sup> Goodspeed, 460.

<sup>47</sup> “An Eyewitness Account of Benton, as it was in 1838,” *Commerce Dispatch*, November 30, 1867. Reprinted in Edison Shrum, *The History of Scott County, Missouri Up to the Year 1880*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Benton: Scott County Historical Society, 1995), 173-175.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> John C. Darr, “Diary of an 1858 Wagon Train Journey.” *Atkins (Arkansas) Chronicle*, July 3, 1909 to October 8, 1909. Accessed March 2012, <http://www.argenweb.net/pope/wagon.html>. Quoted in Russell Weisman, e-mail to author, November 1, 2011. NOTE: The lake referred to in the journal is the Marais des Peches (Fish Lake), now the Robert G. Delaney Lake Conservation Area.

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The Benge detachment would have benefitted from the rich wildlife later described by Darr, but would have also suffered through similar road conditions—mud and swamps. Though road maintenance was left largely in the hands of locals, the state did make some effort to improve the road. In 1829, the state authorized funds to construct a three mile causeway through a section of the “Big Swamp” connecting northern Scott County with Cape Girardeau. Known as the “Rock Levee Road,” the causeway was completed in 1837 at a cost of \$1000 per mile.<sup>50</sup> The Rock Levee Road improved a section of the old Kingshighway where it met the newer 1824 state road to cross the swamp. Weisman notes that “The crossing at this location is constrained by a fluke of geography - the swamp is comparatively narrow at this point but it is also the only place where the crossing can be made without having to bridge a stream.” The new causeway was on an old path through the swamp, indicated on an 1805 map of Cape Girardeau (see figure 9). A second road, also entering Cape Girardeau from the south, followed the western bank of the Mississippi River but required a bridge crossing at Cape LaCroix Creek. This roadway was eroded away by changes in the flow of the Mississippi after the 1811-12 New Madrid Earthquakes.

The new causeway was a boon to travelers, but once built the state did little to maintain it. As early as the winter of 1838, during which time many Cherokee detachments were beginning to pass through Cape Girardeau County, the *Southern Advocate* [Jackson, Missouri] was decrying the condition of the road and promoting its significance to the state. An article published on December 1, 1838 stated:

Levee across the “Big Swamp” – we frequently hear the enquire, “Will the Legislature do anything to improve this road” that is, the causeway over the “Big Swamp,” about thirteen miles south of this place . . . The whole Southern delegation will, doubtless, endeavor to procure an appropriation for this purpose . . . ; When it is [smudge- recol]lected, that the road is for the benefit of the whole State – that the farmers of North as well as South Missouri, use it in taking their horses, mules & etc. to market – that much of the emigration to the state, and especially to the Southwestern counties is over this road – that at all seasons of the year but particularly when the navigation of the Mississippi river, above its junction with the Ohio, is interrupted by ice, it is important as a means of communication between all the more northern societies of the state and the Southern country . . .<sup>51</sup>

Similar to a railroad berm the Rock Levee Road is high but fairly narrow, reflecting Robinson’s 1845 description. Robinson wrote, “Across this swamp the road is partly . . . over a raised causeway only 8 feet wide and upon which if two wagons were to meet I suppose one would have to drive over the other as there is but one chance in several miles to drive round.”<sup>52</sup>

To maintain the causeway the State turned the causeway over to a toll road company by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century entrepreneur and railroad builder Louis Houck acquired the road, raising and widening the roadbed. The road saw additional modifications when the surrounding swamps were drained using diversion channels constructed by the Little River Drainage District. Eventually the causeway was abandoned when US Route 61 was constructed in 1925. Portions of this historic causeway can still be seen in Scott and Cape Girardeau counties, and even with modifications signify an important site on the Trail of Tears and an important example of early road building in Missouri (see figures 10 & 11).

<sup>50</sup> Weisman, November 1, 2011.

<sup>51</sup> *The Southern Advocate*, December 1, 1838. Quoted in Russell Weisman, e-mail to author, December 6, 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Robinson, 178-179.

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From Benton, Bengé and his group traveled north approximately 16 miles crossing the swampy area just south of Cape Girardeau on the Rock Levee Road, described above. Established as a trading post in the 1790s, Cape Girardeau became a regional governmental center in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century—housing the seat of government for a territorial district that stretched the width of the state. True prosperity came to Cape Girardeau by way of steamboat traffic on the Mississippi River that between 1830 and 1840 brought “a remarkable expansion of its business.”<sup>53</sup> As a regional import and export point, Cape would have offered a variety of goods and services, though the oncoming winter may have limited stores.

Some ten miles inland from the Mississippi River was Jackson, the county seat of Cape Girardeau County and a thriving community by the late 1830s. Founded in 1815, visitors to and residents of the community provided mixed views of the town in fledgling years. Writing of his time in the area in the late 1810s, Rev. Timothy Flint called Jackson a “considerable village on a hill” but spoke despairingly of Jackson society, writing that his time there “passed more devoid of interest or of attachment, or comfort, or utility, than in any other part of the country.”<sup>54</sup> In contrast, the report of Stephen Long’s expedition that passed through Jackson about the same time, included praise of the village, saying that “after St. Louis and St. Charles [it is] one of the best towns of Missouri . . . and contains at present more than fifty houses which, though of log, seem to aspire to a degree of importance.”<sup>55</sup>

By the late 1830s, Jackson was taking on a more polished character with improved private and public buildings. Just one year before the first Cherokee emigrants on the Trail of Tears passed through town, the county constructed a new courthouse on the town square. The commodious new building shared the square with the old “barn-like” 1818 courthouse until 1839. Completed in 1837, the new two-story brick and stone courthouse was described as being 45 foot square and topped by a cupola.<sup>56</sup> Some of the wealthier residents of the city also constructed finer houses. Approximately one block from the town square is the Frizel-Welling House (National Register listed in 1999).<sup>57</sup> A portion of the frame house was constructed in 1818 (by Frizel), but in 1838 an elegant two-story front-gable Greek Revival style addition was constructed (for Welling).<sup>58</sup> The house and its early wing are examples of the types of houses that may have been common in Jackson at the time of the Cherokee emigration (see figure 12).

Between Jackson and Greenville on the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road, there were no “towns,” though some commercial and community nodes were in evidence along established roads. Conversely, some roads were built to connect existing community centers. West of Jackson, one of the early communities was the “Dutch Settlement” around Bollinger Mill. Frederick Bollinger established the mill and separate distillery in c. 1800 on land granted him by the Spanish government. The grant came with the condition that Bollinger develop the land and help to settle it. The original log mill initially serviced the twenty

<sup>53</sup> Robert Sidney Douglas, *History of Southeast Missouri*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1912), 256.

<sup>54</sup> Timothy Flint, *Recollections of the Last Ten Years Passed in Occasional Residences and Journeying in the Valley of the Mississippi* (Boston: Cummings, Hilliard, and Co, 1826), 232. Accessed March 2012, <http://books.google.com>.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in Douglas, 261-62.

<sup>56</sup> Marian M. Ohman, *Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses* (Columbia: University of Missouri-Columbia Extension Division, 1981), n.p.

<sup>57</sup> Ben Hartsfield and Roger Maserang, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Frizel-Welling House, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri,” listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 25, 1999.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

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North Carolinian families (largely of German decent) that Bollinger brought to the area.<sup>59</sup> As the settlement grew, so too did the mill. Bollinger replaced the log mill and dam in 1825 with a stone mill dam and stone and frame millhouse, the same structures that were in place when the Benge detachment passed the site. The millhouse burned and was reconstructed in brick in 1867.<sup>60</sup> The stone foundation and stone dam dating from the period of the Cherokee Trail of Tears are still in place.

Due to its early settlement date, the “Dutch Settlement” was a well-established and thriving agricultural community by the 1830s. Timothy Flint visited the community in the 1820s and wrote favorably of its general appearance and maintenance. Flint praised the frugality and hard work of the predominantly German settlers, writing of the efficient division and arrangement of the farm buildings and fields. He also noted on the “disposition to build in stone.” Limited archeological study in the area had indicated the presence of scattered farmsteads around Bollinger Mill, though no architectural survey of rural resources has been conducted in the county. There are known buildings in the county that may be representative of the building construction in the “Dutch Settlement.” Though well off the path taken by the Cherokee, the Abraham Byrd House northwest of Jackson is a good example of some of the more commodious farmhouses that would have been found in the county in the 1830s. Byrd constructed the two-story limestone I-house in 1827.<sup>61</sup> Abraham’s brother Stephen Byrd constructed a nearly identical home in c. 1830 (see figure 13).

Flint also praised the self-sufficiency of the settlers who practiced “all the course trades and manufacturers among themselves.”<sup>62</sup> Flint’s only real criticism of the community was the prevalence of alcohol, noting that “almost every farmer had his distillery, and that the pernicious poison, dribbles from the corn . . .”<sup>63</sup> Because of the relative density of population around Bollinger’s Mill, the Cherokee may have been able to purchase or trade for food and other goods to supplement what they carried with them. Additionally, probate records filed after the death of Frederick Bollinger in 1842 indicate that he owned blacksmithing tools.<sup>64</sup> If needed, the Cherokee could have stopped at the site to make repairs.

The rural areas near Cape Girardeau, Jackson and Bollinger Mill were relatively well populated in the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Surveyor notes identify farmsteads and other landmarks along the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road every half mile to mile in current western Cape Girardeau and eastern Bollinger counties (see Figure 8). At the time of the Cherokee emigration, the population of Bollinger County was not sufficient to support county government and the county was not created until 1851. There were scattered farmsteads all along the route between Bollinger Mill and Greenville, including that of the McMinn family. As noted earlier in the text, Washington McMinn distinctly remembers seeing the Cherokee cross his family farm. His parents, Samuel and Mary, settled in Bollinger County in c. 1819.

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<sup>59</sup> Priscilla Evans, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Bollinger Mill, Cape Girardeau County,” listed in the National Register on May 27, 1971.

<sup>60</sup> Evans.

<sup>61</sup> Terri Foley, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Abraham Byrd House, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri,” listed in the National Register on June 21, 2007.

<sup>62</sup> Quoted in M. Colleen Hamilton, et al, “Report of Phase I Cultural Resources Survey of Bollinger Mill State Historic Site, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri,” Archeological Survey, University of Missouri—St. Louis for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks, June 1989, p. 22. Report on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, Jefferson City, Missouri. Note: this report provides a broad overview of the land and household goods of Frederick Bollinger in the years preceding and immediately following the Cherokee emigration.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

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The location of the McMinn farmstead is known. No structures dating from the 1830s are extant, but historic trail swales parallel a modern gravel drive and extend past a post-1860s (?) house and modern outbuildings (see figure 14).

Accounts of travel between Bollinger's Mill and Greenville are limited, despite the use of the road by emigrants to Arkansas and Texas in the 1830s and growing population in Bollinger and Wayne counties by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. John Darr made some minor notes on his travels through the area in 1858. His diary entry for November 15, 1858 states that after reaching the Whitewater River "we tackle the mud again, meeting with hilly and rough country." Like the Cherokee, Darr too crossed the McMinn farm, finding a long-lost aunt (Mary B. McMinn). From the McMinn farm, Darr and company crossed the Castor River, "a small and very clear stream here." He continued by noting that the country was well watered, "but poor and hilly." On November 18<sup>th</sup> Darr wrote that "we now pass over some of the poorest and hilliest country I ever saw."<sup>65</sup>

Like Darr, the Bengé detachment would have met with muddy and rough roads and a general lack of ready supplies. Darr and his party took a different route to the Missouri-Arkansas border after entering Wayne County than did the Cherokee—veering farther west through Carter and Oregon counties. His general description of the availability of supplies may be similar to conditions met by the Cherokee. Darr's November 19 diary entry noted, "finding here and there small settlements in the coves and valleys which grow such as corn, wheat and the laziest people on earth; as if we wanted to buy corn or potatoes we had to gather and dig them. As to flour and meal we could scarcely buy either, as mills were scarce, sorry affairs and usually unhandy, they did not appear to have the energy to go to mill, or had no use for money. Meat we could always get plenty and cheap, as they got it out of the woods."<sup>66</sup>

The Cherokee are known to have hunted to supplement purchased supplies and rations. Describing a Cherokee detachment [Hildebrand's] in the Arcadia Valley in early 1839, Theodore Russell wrote:

I think, the hunters supplied their own meat out of the woods . . . The hunters spread out like a fan, and started through the woods towards the next camping place, about ten miles ahead, and swept everything before them in the way of game. During the day deer could be seen running as if the "Old Scratch" was after them.<sup>67</sup>

Russell describes hunters bringing in fox, squirrels, turkey, deer and "smaller game" to supplement rations of corn and oats.

(Old) Greenville, the historic county seat of Wayne County and the intersection of the Natchitoches Trace and Cape to Arkansas Road, may have been a welcome site to the Cherokee. Like Benton, however, Greenville did not have much to offer based on historic accounts of the community. Henry Schoolcraft, on his tour through Missouri and Arkansas in 1819, made a brief stop in Greenville. Of the town, he wrote, "Here is a village of ten or fifteen houses, including a gristmill; and a public ferry kept by Dr. Bettis."<sup>68</sup> The town had not grown much when, in 1834, G.W. Featherstonhaugh and his son arrived in

<sup>65</sup> Darr.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> James F. Keefe and Lynn Morrow, ed., *A Connecticut Yankee in the Frontier Ozarks: The Writings of Theodore Pease Russell* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988), 115.

<sup>68</sup> Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Journal of a Tour into the Interior of Missouri and Arkansas* (London: Sir Richard Phillips, & Co, 1821), accessed March 2012, <http://books.google.com>.

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the community. Featherstonhaugh praised the scenery around Greenville, noting that the town was “beautifully situated on a rich bottom of land on the east bank of the St. Francis, a fine clear stream about eighty-yards broad.”<sup>69</sup> Of the town, however, he had no positive words and described it as “a poor wretched collection of four or five wooden cabins, where the miserable inhabitants die by inches of chill and fever.” The town did have “that indispensable rendezvous of every settlement, a dirty-looking store, where all the vagabonds congregate together, to discuss politics and whiskey.”<sup>70</sup> George Engelmann, a physician and scientist, stopped in Greenville in 1839, just one year after the Benge Detachment. Engelmann called the town “insignificant” in appearance, but noted that “I am told that a lot of business is transacted here. Our host, Mr. Plott, gets part of his goods there, tho it is 100 miles away [from Plott’s home in Arkansas].”<sup>71</sup> As a regional supply depot and trade center, Greenville may have offered some comforts to the Cherokee despite its lowly buildings and small size.

Greenville became the county seat of Wayne County in 1818, but its roots were in the earlier settlement of Bettis’ Ferry (a.k.a. Cedar Cabin). Dr. Elijah Bettis and his family settled on the St. Francis River in 1807.<sup>72</sup> His son, also named Elijah (who also practiced medicine), ran a ferry on the St. Francis until c. 1830 when he sold it to Thomas Wight. The St. Francis River at the Bettis/Wight Ferry has changed somewhat since the 1830s, due in part to late 19<sup>th</sup> century development of the river and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century flood control efforts. It is still a “fine, clear stream” as described by Featherstonhaugh, but some of the “sandbars and islands overgrown with willows” noted by Engelmann have been removed.<sup>73</sup> The Wight family home site on the banks of the St. Francis River, including the family cemetery, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Old Greenville Archaeological Site.<sup>74</sup> A segment of abandoned Natchitoches Trace roadbed on the south side of the river lies outside the site boundaries, but provides a significant link to the river, surrounding sites, and historic emigration route (see figures 15 & 16).

Between the St. Francis River and Arkansas border lie rough terrain and more river and stream crossings. Schoolcraft described the area, noting:

The Road from Black River to the river St. Francis, a distance of seventeen miles, lies for the first eight miles [south to north], across an elevated ridge of secondary lime-stone rock, intersected by deep valleys, running in all directions, which give it somewhat the appearance of a plain full of high conical hills. These are covered with stony soil that sustains a growth of yellow pine. The remainder of the road is carried along a gravelly, dry valley that winds among similar bluffs to the river, and there terminates in the alluvial formation of the St. Francis.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Featherstonhaugh, 335.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> William G. Bek, “George Engelmann, Man of Science, Part III.” *Missouri Historical Review* 23:4, 525.

<sup>72</sup> James E. and Cynthia R. Price, “Greenville on the St. Francis, Report on a Brief Literature Search and Archaeological Testing Program at the Town of Old Greenville, Wayne County, Missouri,” (Center for Archaeological Research, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri, January 1979). A copy is on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, Jefferson City, Missouri.

<sup>73</sup> Bek, 525.

<sup>74</sup> Suzanne E. Harris, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Old Greenville, Wayne County, Missouri,” listed in the National Register of Historic Places on February 17, 1990.

<sup>75</sup> Schoolcraft, 88.

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Featherstonhaugh, like the Cherokee after him, traveled the opposite direction of Schoolcraft. After crossing the St. Francis River and subsequent 17 miles of ridges and ravines, he and his son forded the Black River. This "broad limpid stream" gave the travelers some problems, the swift flow of which frightened their horse. Forced to wade into the stream to encourage the horse across, the son was knocked from his feet near the stream edge having been "a severe frost during the past night, the water was bitterly cold, and he suffered a great deal."<sup>76</sup> The Cherokee, most of whom were on foot despite numerous wagons and riding horses, likely had similar problems at the Black River and other fords.

The next site of note along the Natchitoches Traces was the home of the Widow Harris (Ripley County), a place visited by Schoolcraft, John Bell, Featherstonhaugh, and the Benge Detachment. The Micajah and Sally Harris family settled along the Natchitoches Trace in 1814 after being driven out of Southeast Missouri by the 1811 and 1812 New Madrid earthquakes. Micajah served as Justice of the Peace and county road commissioner before his death in 1821. Sally continued to live on the family farm with her children until the 1850s. The Harris home was an important site locally, serving as the county court and territorial elections in the late 1810s.<sup>77</sup> It was also visited by numerous travelers on the trace, several of whom wrote about their experiences at the Harris farm.

G. W. Featherstonhaugh provided the most elaborate description of the Harris farm and family. The Harris's "kindly received" the weary travelers, offering them a meal of "fried bits of pork, with worse bread, and no milk." Though disparaging of the provisions, Featherstonhaugh was more complementary of the double cabin (likely a dog-trot), "a very proper arrangement, as there were both males and females in the family."<sup>78</sup> In describing the family he wrote that "Take them together, they were an amiable and good family of people and not without the means of living comfortably if they only knew how to set about it." An extensive historical and archaeological study of the Harris site conducted by James and Cynthia Price in the late 1970s reflected, "Such was the view of an English gentleman toward a family and a place in the Ozarks, a world he little understood."<sup>79</sup> Contrary to Featherstonehaugh's estimation, the Prices found the Harris family to be well-off in comparison to other contemporary settlers in the Missouri Ozarks. Many of the Cherokee likely found the Harris farm similar to what they had left behind.

The Harris farmstead was located approximately six miles north of the Current River and the Arkansas border. As noted earlier in the text, an interview with Mrs. Washington Harris (daughter-in-law of Sally Harris) in the 1880s indicated that the Cherokee camped on the farm and that the burial of a woman and her child occurred while at the site. After leaving the Harris farm, the Benge detachment would have been about a half-day's journey to the Current River crossing at Hick's (Pitman's) Ferry. To avoid the expense of the ferry crossing, Mrs. Washington Harris noted that her brother-in-law and a neighbor showed the detachment an alternative crossing at Indian Ford. A site purported to be Indian Ford is listed in the National Register, though the location of the ford used by the Cherokee at this site has been disputed. After crossing, and possibly camping at the site of the ford, Benge lead his detachment to rejoin the Natchitoches Trace and enter into Arkansas. Within days of exiting Missouri, the company passed through Smithville and Batesville, Arkansas. Scarcely one month later, the detachment arrived in the Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

<sup>76</sup> Featherstonhaugh, 343.

<sup>77</sup> James Price, "The Widow Harris Cabin Site: A Place in the Ozarks." *Ozark Watch* 1:4 (Spring 1988). Accessed January 1, 2012, <http://the.library.org/lochisto/periodicals/ozarkswatch/ow104b.htm>.

<sup>78</sup> Featherstonhaugh, 355.

<sup>79</sup> James Price.

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### II. Historic Context: Northern Route of the Trail of Tears through Missouri, 1837 to 1839

#### Detachments on the Northern Route

Lt. B. B. Cannon led the first large entirely overland detachment of Cherokee following the Treaty of New Echota. Leaving the Cherokee Agency near Charleston, Tennessee in October 1837, Cannon and approximately 365 Cherokee set what became known as the Northern Route of the Trail of Tears. This route was followed by eleven detachments of Cherokee under the direction of John Ross in 1838 and 1839 and took an arching path northwest out of Tennessee, through southern Illinois, central and southwest Missouri and northwestern Arkansas. The following detachments traveled through Missouri in the winter of 1838-39:<sup>80</sup>

Conductor	Assisted by:	Enumeration upon leaving per US military (Per Chief John Ross, in parenthesis)	Enumeration upon arrival	Deaths reported in US military reports	Days on Road
Hair Conrad (replaced by Colston)	Daniel Colston	710 (729)	654	54	143
Elijah Hicks	White Path (died en route -replaced by William Arnold)	859 (858)	744	34	126
Jesse Bushyhead	Roman Nose	846 (950)	898	38	178
Situwakee	Evan Jones	1205 (1255)	1033	71	149
Old Field	Steven Foreman	841 (983)	921	57	153
Moses Daniel	George Still	1031 (1035)	924	48	164
Choowalooka (replaced by Thomas N. Clark before reaching Missouri)	J.D. Wofford	1120 (1150)	970		162
James Brown		745 (850)	717	34	177
George Hicks	Collins McDonald	1031 (1118)	1039		189
Richard Taylor	Red Watt Adair	897 (1029)	942	55	186

A detachment lead by Peter Hildebrand also followed the Northern Route, though the group took a variation of the route out of Cape Girardeau County passing through Fredericktown and traveling through portions of present-day Iron, Reynolds, Dent, Texas, and Wright counties before reconnecting with the Northern Route in Webster County. Hildebrand lead a detachment of 1449 (1766 per Ross) and arrived with 1311. They spent 154 days on the road.<sup>81</sup>

#### The Route: Places and Experiences

<sup>80</sup> Table derived from information provided in "Historic and Archeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears," E,20-21, and Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee Indians*. (Oklahoma City: n.p., 1921, reprinted Baltimore: Genealogical Printing Co., 2004), 103. For reference purposes, the detachments took on the name of their conductor.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

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There is some irony in that so many removal groups organized under John Ross followed in the footsteps of Lt. Cannon's detachment. Cannon led a group of pro-treaty Cherokee that moved west voluntarily, while Ross's supporters protested the treaty and moved west reluctantly—even if under their own management. The use of Cannon's route is also ironic because of Dr. G. S. Townsend's denouncement of it. Townsend, a physician, accompanied Cannon's group and reported in January 1838 of the "deleterious effects" of the "miasmatic exhalations of the immense swamps" near the Mississippi River crossing. Cannon's charges keenly felt the effects of illness and exposure and were delayed several days due to sickness while traveling through Missouri. Townsend also reported that the "experiment just made of land transportation will not justify a repetition, either on account of economy, expedition or comfort to the Emigrants," suggesting instead a water route to extensively reduce overland travel.<sup>82</sup> Townsend's report, provided several months before the departure of the eleven following contingencies, went unheeded.

Cannon's own journal of the trip, in true militaristic fashion, provides no opinion on the pros and cons of the method of transportation or route taken. He reported of births, deaths, and delays with a minimum of words. Standard entries relate starting and stopping times, locations of camps, and rations issued. Only once during Cannon's time in Missouri did events push him into relative loquaciousness. Overall Cannon seemed sympathetic to true sickness among his party, stopping for several days along the road to "make the best possible arrangement for the sick."<sup>83</sup> Self-inflicted misery, however, met with less tolerance. On November 20, 1837 Cannon's party passed through Farmington where several members of the party purchased alcohol. After a rowdy night in camp that forced Cannon out of bed to "quell the disorder," some refused to march on. One can imagine the drama that followed the refusal, though Cannon's words were terse, "Marched at 8 o'clock, A. M. in defiance of threats and attempts to intimidate, none remained behind."<sup>84</sup>

The Cherokee on the Northern Route crossed more miles of Missouri than any other state, passing through fifteen Missouri counties. The contingencies of Cherokee approached the Mississippi River on the Golconda-Hamburg Landing Road through southern Illinois and crossed the river at either the Hamburg Landing (IL)/Bainbridge Ferry (MO) crossing or the Willard Landing (IL)/Green's Ferry (MO) crossing two miles to the north (see figures 17 & 18). Cannon's group crossed at the Bainbridge Ferry on November 12-14, 1837. On the Missouri side, both the Bainbridge<sup>85</sup> and Green's Ferry<sup>86</sup> sites are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (2007) as are segments of the Bainbridge<sup>87</sup> and Green's Ferry roads that lead from the ferry sites westward toward Jackson.

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<sup>82</sup> "Dr. G.S. Townsend's report of a land detachment, January 25, 1838." Republished in Vicki Rozema, ed. *Voices of the Trail of Tears*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair Publisher, 2003, 95-97.

<sup>83</sup> "B. B. Cannon's Journal of Occurrences with a Party of Cherokee Emigrants. October 1837." Transcribed and published online at Sequoia National Research Center, <http://ualr.edu/sequoyah/index.php/journal-of-bb-cannon-choke-removal-1837/>

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Philip Thomason and Teresa Douglass, "National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form: Bainbridge Ferry, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 6/21/07. Published online at: <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/07000573.pdf>, accessed 12/16/2013.

<sup>86</sup> Philip Thomason and Teresa Douglass, "National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form: Green's Ferry, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 6/21/07.

<sup>87</sup> Philip Thomason and Teresa Douglass, "National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form: Bainbridge Ferry Road, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 6/21/07. Published online at: <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/07000577.pdf>, accessed 12/16/2013.

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Much of eastern Missouri along the Mississippi River had long been settled by the 1830s and had an established pattern of roadways. Both the Bainbridge and Greens' ferries had been operating since the early 1800s and roads to and from these crossings to larger settlements in the region were well-worn by the time of the Cherokee removal.<sup>88</sup> Trails and post roads connecting larger towns and settlements had also been established and by the mid-1830s were being marked and at least minimally maintained by the more established counties' courts.

The Jackson to Farmington Road, part of the Northern Route, is a good example of increased local government attention to road marking and maintenance in the years immediately preceding the Cherokee emigration. In March of 1836, for example, the County Court of Cape Girardeau charged the road commissioners responsible for the road "leading from Jackson to Greens old ferry" and from "Jackson to Farmington . . . to enroll all hands so able" to mark the roads in their respective districts.<sup>89</sup> That same day, the court divided the "Jackson to Farmington" road into districts. In August of the following year, Perry County officially marked the existing trail from Jackson to Farmington through the county noting that "as soon as an overseer will be appointed it will thence fourth [sic] be a Public Highway, the said road to be opened forty feet in width."<sup>90</sup>

The State, too, took interest in establishing roadways, though the honor of being a "state road" was dubious at best. Designated state roads were generally on or slight derivations of long-established trails. The Missouri General Assembly provided funds to survey and mark roadways, but with very few exceptions (see Rock Levee Road discussion in Historic Context I, E.15) left the clearing and maintenance of roads to counties or property owners. Cannon and succeeding Cherokee emigrants followed one such state road from Farmington to the Massey Iron Works in Crawford County. On February 3, 1837 the General Assembly passed "An act to establish a state road from Ste. Genevieve to Caledonia, and from Caledonia to Courtois Mines." Per the requirements of the act, road commissioners were to meet in Ste. Genevieve to view and mark a road from Ste. Genevieve to Farmington, thence to Caledonia, Harmony (near Courtois Mines) to the Massey Iron Works. The Assembly set April 1837 as the start date for the survey, but allowed more than a year's grace period for the commissioners to meet and start work. The completed plat of the road was to be provided to the county courts that would then be responsible for opening the road to at least 20 feet in width and maintaining it.<sup>91</sup>

The Northern Route can be best visualized by following present-day maps and roadways. This must be done with the understanding that parts of the route may have long been abandoned due to improved road building technologies, modifications or improvements to roadways or changing settlement and development patterns. Some sections, however, are very likely under or immediately adjacent to existing routes. The Cherokee crossed the Mississippi River into Missouri at Bainbridge and Green's ferries (see figures 17 & 18). Roads leading from the ferries to Jackson intersected east of the present intersection of Highway 177 and MO V. It may have been at this location that the Cannon Party camped on November 14 and 15, 1837. Cannon's journal notes that they "encamped at Mr. Williams" for those two days. At

<sup>88</sup> See Bainbridge Ferry and Green's Ferry National Register of Historic Places nominations referenced in footnotes 85 and 86 for more information.

<sup>89</sup> "Cape Girardeau Court Records," March 16, 1836. Copy of page on file Missouri State Parks Archive, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail files, Jefferson City, Missouri.

<sup>90</sup> "Perry County Court Records," August 10, 1837. Copy of pages 187 and 188 on file Missouri State Parks Archive, Trail of Tears National Historic Trail files, Jefferson City, Missouri.

<sup>91</sup> *Laws of the State of Missouri Passed at the First Session of the Ninth General Assembly*. Jefferson City, MO: Enquirer Office, 1840, 100-101.

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the time land adjacent to the road was owned by a Charles Williams (see figures 17 & 18).<sup>92</sup> A one-half mile portion of the now abandoned Bainbridge Ferry Road is preserved at Trail of Tears State Park and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The “Greens old ferry” road to Jackson roughly followed the paths of routes V and W westward, turning south on Jackson’s Greensferry Road toward the courthouse square. It is known that some of Cherokee on the Northern and Benge routes passed through Jackson’s courthouse square, though it is also likely that some family groups took various parallel routes north and south of the square through the town to avoid congestion.

From Jackson, the Northern Route followed the Jackson to Farmington Road. B.B. Cannon noted in his diary on November 16, 1837, that after passing through Jackson his contingency “encamped at widow Roberts on the road via Farmington.”<sup>93</sup> From Jackson the historic road roughly followed what are now a series of lettered highways and county roads, the bulk of auto traffic long ago moving to highways 72 and 67. The modern highways connecting the two towns are at some points many miles to the south and west of the historic Jackson to Farmington road. The complexity of the historic route following existing roadways is daunting to outline, and is too detailed to describe in this document. As an illustration, the roughly 25 mile trip from Jackson through northeast Bollinger County to the Perry County line follows segments of 13 county roads and rural highways. Some current road names, however, provide clues as to the historic route of the Cherokee such as the Old Jackson Road that extends from the southeast border of St. Francois County northwest through Libertyville and into Farmington (see figure 2).

From Farmington, Cannon and later parties likely followed the state road connecting that town to an important industrial center in Crawford County—the Massey (later Meramec) Iron Works. As noted above, the Missouri General Assembly designated the route a state road in 1837. It is currently unknown how far along the state road commissioners were in surveying and marking the route when Cannon traveled through Missouri in November and December 1837, or even when later contingencies followed in the winter of 1838-39. Cannon’s journal, however, makes note of several towns and places mentioned in the Act including Farmington, Caledonia, the “Courtois diggings,” (a mining area in Washington County) and “Masseys Iron works.”<sup>94</sup>

The brief mention of Caledonia and the “Courtois diggings” in Washington County does not give justice to what at the time was a long settled, if remote, region of the state. Caledonia was in the northern section of the Bellevue Valley, a predominantly agricultural area first settled in c. 1800. By 1817 the settlement boasted a smithy, distillery and store. The town of Caledonia was platted in 1819. The economic prospects for the community were closely tied to the lead mining industry to the north and many of the town and valley’s residents prospered both from supplying the mining district and through investing in its

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<sup>92</sup> Land Patents were issued for portions of T32N, R14W, Sections 18 and 19 to Charles Williams in 1823 and 1837. These lands lay at or very near the intersection of Hwy 177 and MO V. This property is also 4.5 to 5 miles west of Bainbridge Ferry, the distance that Cannon estimated the party had moved from Bainbridge Ferry. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>93</sup> Cannon’s Journal, n.p. In the 1820s and 1830s, several Roberts were living in Cape Girardeau County. A possible candidate for “Widow Roberts” was a Mary Roberts listed as living in Byrd Township in the 1840 census (Jackson is located in Byrd Township). Mary (aged 40-49) was listed as the head of household living with three girls and one boy under the age of 19. Additional research into land records is needed to identify the exact location of Mary Robert’s property.

<sup>94</sup> Cannon’s Journal. Journal entries for November 20, 21, 22 and December 6, 1837.

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mines and furnaces.<sup>95</sup> Despite its relatively long settlement history, in the late 1830s Caledonia and its immediate surroundings (notably to the south) were still seemingly remote. Writing of his visit to the valley in c. 1840, Theodore Russell noted:

Bellevue Valley, although it had a good many farms, and some of them quite large, each with its large family of negroes and all the necessary buildings. . . log houses and negro cabins, log stables and cribs . . . which made quite a town, yet such a farm or plantation was isolated from all the rest of the world . . . back and forward, through winding ways . . . , you had to have a guide, the roads so narrow, the steps so high . . .<sup>96</sup>

The Cherokee on the Northern Route would have passed many of these scattered farms and may have had an opportunity to trade with residents or at the store run by Jane Thompson in Caledonia. Daniel Butrick, who traveled with Taylor's detachment of Cherokee, found Caledonia to be a "handsome village . . . neat and the country around delightful. The people" he wrote, "also appear intelligent and well bred. Thus far we are more than pleased with Missouri . . ."<sup>97</sup>

Exiting Caledonia to the west, the Cherokee traveled past the Courtois diggings and related lead processing works. The road between Caledonia and Massey's Iron Works passed through what has been referred to as a "mining plantation." This was a "paternalistic system in which developers established near monopolistic ownership rights to a mining district, then set about gaining control of various aspects of the mining process by constructing smelters, mills, housing, and businesses that supplied services to mine workers."<sup>98</sup> Though managed by an umbrella mining company, descriptions of the area from the 1820s and '30s provide a rather helter-skelter settlement of miners' shacks and scattered mining works. The "diggings" referred to hand dug mining pits that averaged one to three meters in diameter and up to two meters in depth. Surveys of the area by the US Forest Service have identified hundreds of these hand-dug pits, most dating from c. 1815 to c. 1850.<sup>99</sup> Mining tended to be curtailed during the winter months, but the Cherokee would certainly have seen scattered pits and surrounding spoil piles as they traveled past the mines. The detachments would have also seen the Scotch Hearth smelter (1836) in what later became the town of Palmer, remnants of which are still evident in the Palmer Historic Mining District (National Register listed 2010). The population of the Palmer Historic Mining District was concentrated along the road between Caledonia and the Massey Iron Works, primarily in Harmony (platted 1837) and later Palmer (see figures 17 & 18). Though much of the surface remains of these communities post-date the Cherokee Trail of Tears period, limited archeological testing has found diagnostic domestic ware dating from the 1820s and 1830s. Additionally, day books from the mining company's general store dating from 1834 to 1840 indicate a wide variety of merchandise available to miners and travelers including materials, clothing, dishes, gun flints, and even patent medicines.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> An extensive historic context for Caledonia and the Bellevue Valley can be found in Robert Flanders, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Caledonia Historic District," listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 10/27/1986. Published online at: <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/86003389.pdf>, accessed 9/19/213.

<sup>96</sup> Quoted in Flanders, Caledonia Historic District, 8.4.

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Joan Gilbert, *The Trail of Tears Across Missouri*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1996, 64.

<sup>98</sup> Kristina Hill. "Palmer Historic Mining District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form," listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2010, 8.24.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.5.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* 8.22.

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Lt. B.B. Cannon's party passed through Caledonia on November 21, 1837 and did not arrive at Massey Iron Works until December 6<sup>th</sup>. This had little to do with the distance between the two points, which was approximately 60 miles, nor the condition of the road. The lead mining region north of Caledonia and the iron works farther north and west required a certain amount of infrastructure to be viable. Wetmore's 1837 *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri* makes note of the rich iron resources in Crawford County and states of its industry that "iron [is] hauled to almost all parts of the state in wagons."<sup>101</sup> Instead of poor roads, the Cannon detachment suffered from "overwhelming disease," about which Dr. G. S. Townsend later wrote threatened "the party with destruction."<sup>102</sup> Illness, likely a lingering effect of the long delay at the Mississippi River, delayed the party for several days near the Huzzah (Huzza in Cannon's Journal) Creek. Even when they took up the trail toward the iron works on December 4, 1837, Cannon wrote that there was "scarcely room in the wagons for the sick."<sup>103</sup>

Cannon's camp on the Huzzah was likely on or adjacent to the Peter Brickey farmstead in eastern Crawford County, now part of the Mark Twain National Forest (see figures 17 & 18). The Brickey family played host to both the Butricks and Dr. Morrow, the missionaries and physician that accompanied the Taylor detachment. Daniel Butrick and his wife stayed at least two nights with the family, noting:

Mrs. B & myself travelled Saturday about 25 miles and put up for the Sabbath at the house of Mr. Brickey.

As the day was rainy, I said nothing about a meeting, but spent the day with our kind host, enjoying a quiet & peaceful sabbath [sic] & reading & retirement. All was still & the house was uninterrupted by company or noise. About noon our dear Cherokee friends [in the Taylor detachment] began to pass on to their encampment, nearly a mile beyond us.<sup>104</sup>

The Brickey property is interesting both for its historic connection with the Trail of Tears and as a representation of a resource with multiple trail-related property types. The Brickey property retains an original road segment (still in use), a ford of the Huzzah (now a low water crossing), and is a documented Cherokee campsite. Also on site are archeological remains (foundations) of the 1830s-era house and outbuildings, and at least one Cherokee burial. Daniel Butrick wrote that the Brickeys hosted a couple traveling with an earlier Cherokee detachment, noting: "Here at the house of our host, our young friends Wiley Bigbey & his wife called a few weeks ago, on account of her sickness, & here she expired, and was buried."<sup>105</sup>

The next major landmark along the trail was Massey's Iron Works (also known as the Meramec Iron Works) in Phelps County that began operation in 1826 and by the mid-1830s was a significant industrial complex that spurred settlement and road construction. Remains of the complex, including houses, roadways and iron furnace stacks are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>106</sup> Though extant resources post-date the Trail of Tears by a decade or more, they provide a sense of the expanse and

<sup>101</sup> Alphonso Wetmore. *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri*. St. Louis: C. Keemle, 1837, 69.

<sup>102</sup> Quoted in Gilbert, 61.

<sup>103</sup> Cannon's Journal, December 4, 1837.

<sup>104</sup> Butrick Journal, March 2 & 3, 1839.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Martha Kusiak, "National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form: Meramec Iron Works, Phelps County, Missouri." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 4/16/1969. Published online at: <http://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/69000122.pdf>, accessed 12/16/2013.

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complexity of the industrial complex at the time of the Cherokee migration. The scenic environment that now surrounds the site, however, is much more pristine than in the 1830s. During its heyday, the iron works would have been surrounded by an area largely denuded of trees to supply the smoking charcoal pits that scattered the landscape. Charcoal was essential for stoking the furnaces that processed the iron ore.<sup>107</sup>

It is near Massey's Iron Works that the Northern Route begins to follow the St. Louis-Springfield Road. Like many of the state's early roads, the St. Louis-Springfield Road had long been used by Native Americans and migratory animals. During the 1820s the route drew settlers into southwest Missouri and farther into Arkansas and Texas. By the mid-1830s there was sufficient settlement along and just off the route to support a scattering of post offices, including those at Little Piney, Waynesville, Onyx and Springfield.<sup>108</sup> Neither Little Piney nor Onyx are towns today, though there are identifiable settlements at these locations. In 1837 the Little Piney Post Office was manned by James Harrison, who according to General Land Office Records owned portions of Sections 23 and 24 in Township 37N Range 10W (see figures 19 & 20).<sup>109</sup> This would place the post office on the Little Piney River at present-day Jerome/Arlington, Phelps County. At the time of the Cherokee migration, Harrison was already a fixture on the Little Piney. The *History of Greene County* includes a description of "Jimmy Harrison's" from 1830 and notes that he "kept a little store for the accommodation of the few settlers up and down the Piney and the Gasconade; that was also the court-house for the whole of Southwest Missouri, and so it was the only post-office until 1832."<sup>110</sup> Though not mentioned by name, the Cannon detachment may have made a stop here in 1837. Cannon's journal mentions a stop at the Piney on December 8, 1837 and notes "several drunk." Harrison may have "accommodated" the Cherokee travelers as well as his neighbors at least for the Cannon detachment. Dr. W.I.I. Morrow, a physician with the Richard Taylor detachment of Cherokee, specifically mentions stopping at Harrison's on the Piney on March 4, 1839 but describes him as a "mean man" that would "not let any person connected with the organization [emigration party] stay with him."<sup>111</sup>

From Harrison's the next stop was Waynesville, county seat of Pulaski County (see figures 19 & 20). Waynesville in the late 1830s was typical of rural outposts—sparsely populated and undeveloped, despite its role as a county center of government. Established in 1834, the town apparently only had a scattering of residences and businesses along Roubidoux Creek at the time of the 1837-39 Cherokee migration. According to Goodspeed's history of the region, in 1835 county business was conducted in the cabin of James Bates, a log home that "county fathers fixed up . . . as a temporary courthouse."<sup>112</sup> Despite lack of accommodations, two of the chroniclers of the Cherokee Trail of Tears had pleasant things to say about their stop at Waynesville. Morrow, who traveled with the Cherokee but often found accommodations with local settlers, wrote:

<sup>107</sup> Steven Ludwig, "Meremec Iron Works," *Bittersweet*, Vol. V, #2, Winter 1977. Published online at: <http://thelibrary.org/lochist/periodicals/bittersweet/wi77h.htm>, accessed 12/17/2013.

<sup>108</sup> Wetmore, 275.

<sup>109</sup> Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>110</sup> *History of Greene County, Missouri*. St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1883, 137.

<sup>111</sup> Rozema, 150.

<sup>112</sup> *History of Laclède, Camden, Dallas, Webster, Wright, Texas, Pulaski, Phelps and Dent Counties*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, 147.

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March 5, 1839: traveled 12 miles to Waynesville on Roberdeou [sic] Creek, a branch of the Gasconade - clear and pleasant day stayed with Col. Swinks - a genteel man and pretty wife and quite [quiet?] familiar.<sup>113</sup>

Rev. Daniel Butrick, who also traveled with the Taylor Detachment, noted his experience at Waynesville, stating:

March 12, 1839: We travelled about 12 miles to a settlement called Port Royal [believed to be Waynesville by researchers], on the banks of a beautiful stream, named Rubedoo [sic]. Here we had a delightful place, on the bank of the river, convenient to wood and water. We employed our kind Nancy, a black woman to wash, and dried our clothes in the evening by the fire.<sup>114</sup>

After leaving Waynesville, the Cherokee passed through what both Butrick and Morrow described as a “barren” country that required crossing two branches of the Gasconade River. The first crossing was made at “Stark’s” per the Morrow diary<sup>115</sup> (Cannon’s only mentions camping on the Gasconade). The Stark referred to is very likely Thomas Stark, an early settler in what is now southwestern Pulaski County. Stark received land patents for portions of Sections 19 and 20 in Township 35N Range 14W, land that flanks the Gasconade near the Pulaski and Laclede counties border (see figures 19 & 20).<sup>116</sup> Like Little Piney to the northeast, Stark’s homestead was a well-known crossing by the time of the Trail of Tears and it is mentioned in journals of previous settlers. For example, after leaving camp on the “Rubidoo” on January 11, 1831 Joseph Roundtree wrote “This morning it was very snowy . . . we stayed in camp till nearly 12, and then traveled about 12 miles and encamped at Stark’s.”<sup>117</sup>

The next stop mentioned in journals was at or near the Osage Fork of the Gasconade River, a distance of less than 14 miles from Stark’s. Cannon’s journal notes a halt at “Sumners” which may have been a slight misnomer. A search of state and federal land patent records did not locate a Sumner, but did find land records for a William Saunders. Saunders received a land patent for property approximately one mile southwest of the crossing of the Osage Fork of the Gasconade in 1845.<sup>118</sup> Saunders’ land was not far from “Beans” mentioned in Dr. Morrow’s journal.<sup>119</sup> “Beans” is likely a reference to Moses Bean who was postmaster at the “Onyx” post office in 1837 (and following) (see figures 19 & 20).<sup>120</sup> Bean owned several acres in Laclede County, and received a land patent for property flanking the Osage Fork in 1844 and 1845.<sup>121</sup> Bean’s “Onyx” was approximately where the very small settlement of Drynob (Laclede

<sup>113</sup> Rozema, 151.

<sup>114</sup> Butrick Journal, March 12, 1839.

<sup>115</sup> Rozema, 151.

<sup>116</sup> Based on map comparisons, Stark’s would have been near where Spring Road crosses the Gasconade. The Gasconade Hills Resort camping area is at or near the site. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>117</sup> *History of Greene County, Missouri*, 145.

<sup>118</sup> As mentioned elsewhere in the text, land patents were often issued months or years after the patentee purchased the property. The likely camping spot for Cannon was on Saunders land at the W1/2 NW14 S27 T35N R14W. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>119</sup> Rozema, 151.

<sup>120</sup> Wetmore, 275. Onyx is shown on some mid 1840s maps such as *A New Map of Missouri with its Roads and Distances*. Philadelphia: S. Augustus Mitchell, 1846. Published online at [www.davidrumsey.com](http://www.davidrumsey.com). Accessed September 20, 2013.

<sup>121</sup> Moses Bean received patents for the W1/2NE1/4 S22 T34N R14W (1844); NE1/4NE1/4 S22 T34N R14W, SE1/4NE1/4 S22 T34N R14W, and SW1/4NW1/4 S23 T34N R14W (1845). Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

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County) is today. Dr. Morrow, who only rarely camped with the detachment he attended, must have spent a night at Bean's home, describing it in his journal as "a mean house."<sup>122</sup> Daniel Butrick made no mention of the settlers on the Osage Fork, stating only that on March 14, 1839, "We traveled to the west branch of the Gasconade, not quite as large, where we stayed last night."<sup>123</sup>

Beyond Moses Bean's homestead the Cannon, Morrow and Butrick journals provide additional points of reference along the St. Louis-Springfield Road and, south of Springfield, the Fayetteville Road—points that can be mapped by comparing names to land patent and other records. After Sumners/Saunders, Cannon camped "one mile in advance of Mr. Parkes at a branch."<sup>124</sup> Though no Parkes (or variation thereof) could be found in the Land Patent Record for the area, there is a Park's Creek that branches off the Osage Fork in south central Laclede County (see figures 21 & 22).<sup>125</sup> Park's Creek, which may have taken the name of an early if temporary settler, is roughly half way between the Saunders property and the next Cannon party encampment. Dr. Morrow's journal also makes mention of "Park's" in his entry of March 9, 1839 as geographic reference point. On that date he notes that the detachment camped on creek "four miles southwest of Park's."

The night before, Morrow and the Taylor detachment stayed at "Grigsby's," a "fine farm" ten miles southwest of Bean's homestead. The Grigsby referred to by Morrow could have been one of several Grigsby family members that settled on the Osage Fork in south central Laclede County. Lillard and Achilles Grigsby owned adjacent properties in Sections 27 and 28 of Township 33N R15W approximately ten to eleven miles southwest of Moses Bean. One of these Grigsby farms is the likely camp site. Terrill and Samuel Grigsby both had properties on the Osage Fork three to four miles farther down river near the Wright County border. This second Grigsby settlement may have been the one noted in Morrow's March 9 journal entry when he stated that the party had traveled eleven miles beyond their March 8 camp site [at the Lillard or Achilles Grigsby farm] on a creek "seven miles from Grigsby's (see figure 21)."<sup>126</sup>

Dr. Morrow left the Taylor detachment camp at the creek and moved on to the home of the Burnetts (likely John D. Burnett) approximately six miles from the Taylor encampment. It appears that he stayed at the farm for at least two nights as the Taylor detachment "came up early" the next morning and camped. As it was Sunday, Daniel Butrick preached and the detachment enjoyed a "fine, pleasant day." Burnett's "fine" farm was very near that of "Mr. Eddington's" where the Cannon detachment had camped two years earlier. Cannon's journal entry for December 13, 1837 likely referred to the property of James Edington who is noted in the Goodspeed history of Laclede and surrounding counties as being one of the early pioneers of the region having arrived in c. 1834.<sup>127</sup> Edington owned land east northeast of Marshfield on or near the Osage Fork of the Gasconade River within a mile southwest of the Burnetts (see figure 21).<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Excerpt from Dr. W. I. I. Morrow Journal, published at: <http://www.waynesvillemo.org/encampment.htm>. Accessed 8/2013.

<sup>123</sup> Butrick Journal, March 1839.

<sup>124</sup> Cannon Journal, December 12, 1837.

<sup>125</sup> Park's Creek branches off of the Osage Fork northeast of the intersection of SR J and Omaha Drive in south central Laclede County.

<sup>126</sup> Rozema, 150.

<sup>127</sup> *History of Laclede, Camden, Dallas, Webster, Wright, Texas, Pulaski, Phelps and Dent Counties*, 843.

<sup>128</sup> James Edington received land patents for the following land in 1848 per Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013. Property description: NE1/4 NE1/4S27 T31N R17W, NW1/4 SW1/4 S23 T31N R17W, SW1/4 SW1/4 S23 T31N R17W, Webster County, MO.

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At the time of the Cherokee Removal, Laclede and Webster counties had yet to be organized and were part of Pulaski County. Other than scattered post offices such as the one at Bean's/Onyx, there were no towns between Waynesville and Springfield. Marshfield would not be established until the late 1840s, though there was at least one settler on the future site of the Webster County seat in c. 1830.<sup>129</sup> Farms such as Edington's were often separated by unclaimed and untended land, which may be why no settler's name is associated with Cannon's December 14, 1837 encampment. Cannon and his detachment spent that night along the road adjacent to the James Fork, a river that was near but not crossing the road. The Cannon party camp on the James Fork may have been close to the "Neavis" property mentioned by Morrow. Thomas Neaves received a patent on a portion of Section 17 of T29N R19W, a property that was near a road paralleling but not crossing the James Fork according to early 20<sup>th</sup> century atlases (see figure 21).<sup>130</sup>

As the Cannon and later detachments of Cherokee approached Springfield, they saw more signs of settlement. White settlement began around and southwest of Springfield in the 1810s, slowed somewhat by the Treaty of St. Mary in 1818 that ceded much of southwest Missouri to the Delaware. The Delaware established a vibrant community on the James River in present-day Christian County and built farms along the James River.<sup>131</sup> Pressures from continuing white settlement pushed the Delaware out of Missouri in 1830, and it was just three years later that the population of the region was sufficient to establish Greene County.

One such sign of settlement was the farmstead of Josiah Danforth, the location of Cannon's encampment on December 15, 1837. Danforth migrated to Greene County shortly after 1832 and amassed over 1300 acres prior to his death in 1849.<sup>132</sup> At the time of the Cannon encampment, Danforth had yet to start building the fine brick home that now graces the property (c. 1844). However, the Danforth homestead likely had several log buildings and related farm structures and may have been the center of a small settlement community. Danforth's farm was the location of a log school in 1836,<sup>133</sup> and the family helped establish the New Providence (a.k.a. Danforth) Church in September of the following year.<sup>134</sup> The site also likely had other amenities, including blacksmithing facilities as Cannon stopped there early in the day (around 1:30 p.m.) and noted in his journal that "waggoners [were] having horses shod until late at night."<sup>135</sup> Despite the relative prosperity of the site and support of friends and neighbors, Danforth did not win his bid to have his farm designated the Greene County seat in 1836 (see figures 21 & 22).<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Arthur Paul Moser, *A Directory of Towns, Villages, and Hamlets Past and Present of Webster County, Missouri*, published online by the Springfield-Greene County Library, <http://thelibrary.org/lochist/moser/websterpl.html>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>130</sup> Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013. It should be noted that the distance between the Burnett and Neaves properties is much greater than the 10 miles noted by Morrow. However his distances to the stops fartherwest more closely align with those noted by B.B. Cannon—at least through Springfield and Dye's.

<sup>131</sup> The Delaware settled and established farms up and down the James River, though their community and population center appears to have been in an area often referred to as Delaware Town (or village) or Anderson's village. "Where the Wilson Meets the James: Delaware Town," Center for Archeological Research, Missouri State University, <http://delawaretown.missouristate.edu/delaware.html>. Accessed October 18, 2013.

<sup>132</sup> R.I. Holcombe, ed. *History of Greene County, Missouri*. St. Louis: Western Historical Co., 1883, 706.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 703.

<sup>134</sup> Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck, *Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri, Vol. 1*. Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen & Co., 1915, 647.

<sup>135</sup> Cannon's Journal, December 15, 1837.

<sup>136</sup> George S. Escott, *History and Directory of Springfield and North Springfield, Missouri*. Springfield: [np], 1878, 47.

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After Danforth's homestead, the next stop was Springfield, then and now the gateway of Southwestern Missouri. By 1837, Springfield was moving past frontier outpost and taking on the aspects of a real town. Centered on a public square laid out by town founder John Campbell in 1833, and officially surveyed and platted in 1836, the town boasted as of 1834: a mile-round racetrack, a post office, dry good and grocery stores, at least two blacksmiths, and a furniture maker. By 1835, the town was the site of a district land office and additional population and buildings.<sup>137</sup> Cannon and later parties may have also passed near the newly completed (1837) Greene County courthouse. No illustrations of the building exist, but it was said to be a modest brick building with hipped roof that was stuccoed on the outside and scored to imitate stone.<sup>138</sup>

Cannon's party did not linger in Springfield instead moving west of the community to camp at "Mr. Clicks" for the evening of December 16.<sup>139</sup> Land patent records indicate that a Levi Click owned over 150 acres of land just west of Springfield.<sup>140</sup> Click's property was on the Springfield to Fayetteville Road and the road through his property saw some investment of county funds in 1837. That year, the county commissioners appropriated \$100 to building bridges and other road improvements over Click's and Nowlin's creek branches. These funded "improvements" may have been dubious even at the time. As county historian R.I. Holcombe noted in 1883, "What kind of bridges, two in number, could be built for \$100, besides allowing a sum for "other improvements" may be conjectured but cannot here be described."<sup>141</sup> In any case, later the same year the county appropriated another \$100 for the Click's branch bridge.<sup>142</sup> County investment may have done little to improve road conditions as Click was indicted by the State of Missouri in 1839 for not keeping the road in good repair (see figures 23 & 24).<sup>143</sup>

Despite the camp's proximity to Springfield, Cannon did not mention problems with alcohol or drunkenness experienced at previous camps near larger settlements. Such activities may have been suppressed by the relative nearness to the end of the journey or by the cold and illness prevailing in the camp. Cannon mentioned snowfall while camped at Clicks and the death and burial of two members of the detachment: Elege's wife and Charles Timberlake's son. He also made note of the extremely cold temperatures, prevailing sickness and fatigue experienced by the detachment.<sup>144</sup> In contrast, the Taylor detachment had some disturbances due to alcohol with Morrow writing in his March 13, 1839 entry, "Sprin[g]field is a rich country. Many Indians got drunk."<sup>145</sup>

The cold and sickness overtook the Cannon detachment at their next camping spot on the property of Mr. Dye.<sup>146</sup> William Dye owned property near the former site of Delaware Town (mentioned above) at the

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<sup>137</sup> Escott, 45, 47.

<sup>138</sup> Marian M. Ohman. "Greene County," *Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses*. Columbia: University of Missouri-Columbia Extension, 1981, n.p.

<sup>139</sup> Cannon's Journal, December 16, 1837.

<sup>140</sup> Levi Click was issued land patents for 156 acres in 1843 at the NE/14 S5 T28N R22W, and an additional 84 acres in the E1/2 NW1/4 S4 T28N R22W in 1845. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>141</sup> Holcombe, 183.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>143</sup> "Abstract of Circuit Court Records, 1833-1839," *Greene County Archives Bulletin*, No. 20, September 1992. Published online at: [thelibrary.org/lochist/records/1833toc.htm](http://thelibrary.org/lochist/records/1833toc.htm). Accessed 10/21/ 2013.

<sup>144</sup> Cannon Journal, December 16 & 17, 1837.

<sup>145</sup> Rozema, 151.

<sup>146</sup> Cannon Journal, December 17, 1837.

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conjunction of Wilson's Creek and the James Fork River.<sup>147</sup> Dye also owned a share of Wilson's trading post with Widow Elizabeth Wilson. Elizabeth's husband James had come to the region with the Delaware in the 1820s and established a trading post at Delaware Town. James died in 1834 and was buried on the property in a coffin constructed by William Dye.<sup>148</sup> It is unknown if Cannon's party camped on Dye's farm or at the trading post, or if the two were so close as to make little difference. Later detachments settled at or near the trading post referred to by Dr. Morrow as "Bell's Tavern."<sup>149</sup> Sickness required that Cannon remain on the Dye property for two days, and Dr. Townsend was dispatched back to Springfield for additional medicine. Dreadful Waters, of the Cannon detachment, died and is buried on the Dye property, likely near James Wilson in the Wilson Cemetery. Archeological field schools on the Wilson/Delaware Town property, conducted by the Center for Archeological Research, have identified the remains of Bell's Tavern and the location of the Wilson Cemetery. Though artifacts found at the sites cannot be directly linked to the Cherokee, remains of the 1820s through 1840s occupation provide important context for the Cherokee Removal period (see figures 23 & 24).

Cannon's perfunctory account of camps and the experience along the route provide few clues into road condition or the landscape of southwest Missouri. The Fayetteville Road traveled by Cannon and later Cherokee detachments, however, was a significant settlement route and played a role in key battles of the Civil War including the Battle of Pea Ridge (Arkansas, March 7-8, 1862) and the Battle of Wilson's Creek (Greene and Christian Counties, Missouri, August 10, 1861). Civil War era accounts describe the road and surrounding terrain and indicate a relatively narrow passage through hilly, well watered, terrain. An account of the Battle of Wilson's Creek describes,

The road from Cassville, called the Fayetteville road, crosses both branches mentioned [Tyrell Creek and Skegg's Branch], then runs a mile northward above Skegg's Branch, along the western bank of Wilson's Creek, crosses at a ford and runs northeast to Springfield. The neighboring hills rose about 150 feet above the valley, which, with its slopes was covered with trees and partly quite heavy underbrush. Between Skegg's Branch and the Ford the road is hemmed in by the bluff and the creek; west of it the hill rises to over 130 feet, with slopes cut by ravines . . .<sup>150</sup>

For much of the route from Springfield to the Arkansas border, the Fayetteville Road follows creek and river valleys as described above. Still part of the Ozark Mountains, these valleys offered the path of least resistance for game, Native Americans and early settlers. And whether it was the Delaware along the James or white settlers along the Wilson, Crane or Flat creeks, much of the earliest development occurred along these valleys and the subsequent road. The memories of Henry McCary, republished in a Barry County history, provides settlement links along what would become the Fayetteville road—many of which were still in place when the Cherokee detachments traveled the area. McCary wrote,

When I first came to this place [in c. 1830] there were but few houses from Springfield to Washburn Prairie [in southern Barry County]; one on Wilson's Creek ten or twelve miles . . . south of Springfield. One twelve or thirteen miles of that, and one other, by John Lock, on Flat

<sup>147</sup> Land Patent Records show William Dye, with Joel Haden, receiving a patent for the E1/2NW1/2 Lot/Tract 1 S2 T27N R23W and the E1/2NW1/2 Lot/Tract 2 S2 T27N R23W approximately 83 acres) in 1845. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>148</sup> "Where the Wilson Meets the James: Trail of Tears," Center for Archeological Research, Missouri State University, <http://delawaretown.missouristate.edu/delaware.html>. Accessed 10/18/ 2013.

<sup>149</sup> Rozema, 152.

<sup>150</sup> Robert J. Rombauer. *The Union Cause in St. Louis in 1862*. St. Louis: Nixon-Jones Printing Co., 1909, 314-315.

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Creek, and another by C. J. Corder, on said creek, and one by Col. Littleberry Mason, near where Cassville now stands, on Flat Creek.<sup>151</sup>

The “house” on Wilson’s Creek was likely James Wilson’s or William Dye’s, and the one twelve or thirteen miles south of that may have been the home of Mr. Allen. Allen’s homestead is mentioned by Cannon as an encampment on December 20, 1837.<sup>152</sup> Morrow wrote that the Taylor detachment encamped at Allen’s on March 15, 1839.<sup>153</sup> A John Allen entered land claims for property on Crane Creek near the present town of Crane (Stone County) in the 1830s and received land patents in 1848, 1852 and 1853.<sup>154</sup> A portion of the Allen property appears to be part of the Wire Road Conservation Area, managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation, just north of Crane. Morrow was not impressed by Allen or his property (see figures 23 & 24). To get there, the detachment traveled “through a desert,” and once he arrived Morrow received “a mean dinner.”<sup>155</sup> So disgusted was he with Allen that Morrow took himself farther along the route to Igou’s homestead. “Igou’s” may have been Lewis Igo who owned property nearby.<sup>156</sup>

From the Allen or Igo homesteads, the Fayetteville Road roughly paralleled the Little Crane Creek flowing west southwest into Barry County. Current road names such as the Old Wire Road through and extending southwest of the Wire Road Conservation Area indicate the approximate path of the historic roadway, though post-1830 settlement and changing road building technologies have altered routes. For Cannon and later, Taylor, the next encampment along the Fayetteville Road was on the property of “Lockes on Flat Creek,”<sup>157</sup> almost certainly the same “John Lock” mentioned by Henry McCary (above). Locke’s a landmark in Barry County and his property was used as a reference for denoting township boundaries in Goodspeed’s history of the county. His home was also designated a meeting place for the officers of McDonald township when it organized in 1840.<sup>158</sup> Morrow called Locke a “gambler and a hunter.” The physician also complained that he did not sleep well while staying with Lock as the “girls and boys talked and laughed all night.”<sup>159</sup> Cannon reported little of Locke’s though noted that they buried one member of the attachment (Goddard’s grandchild) while encamped there (see figures 23 & 24).<sup>160</sup>

From Locke’s the road closely followed the Flat Creek valley almost due south for several miles. An early General Land Office Plat of the county shows the “Road from Fayetteville . . . to Springfield” extending diagonally through Section 12 of T24N R27W, past what would have been the Locke property. The road then turned due south through the western half of Section 13, and clipping the northwest corner of Section 24.<sup>161</sup> The route of the road closely followed that of the present day Flat Creek Road (FR1142)

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<sup>151</sup> *History of Newton, Lawrence, Barry and McDonald Counties, Missouri*. Goodspeed Publishing: Chicago, 1888, 573-574.

<sup>152</sup> Cannon’s Journal, December 20, 1837.

<sup>153</sup> Rozema, 151.

<sup>154</sup> Land Patent Records show John Allen receiving a patent for SW1/4 SW1/4 S29 T26N R24W and NE1/4 NW1/4 S32 T26N R24W (1848); NW1/4 NW1/4 S32 T26N R24W (1852); and SE1/4 SW1/4 S29 T26N R24W (1853). Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>155</sup> Rozema, 152.

<sup>156</sup> Igo held land patents on properties just to the northwest (SE1/4 NE1/4 S30 T26N R24W), and south (SE1/4 SW1/4 S4 T25N R24W). Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

<sup>157</sup> Cannon’s Journal, December 21, 1837.

<sup>158</sup> *History of Newton, Lawrence, Barry and McDonald Counties, Missouri*, 597, 615.

<sup>159</sup> Rozema, 152.

<sup>160</sup> Cannon, December 22, 1837.

<sup>161</sup> Map reproduced in *The Trail of Tears in Barry County, Missouri 1837-1838-1839*. Cassville, MO, 2004, 43.

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through Star City, a populated place in Barry County. An original segment of abandoned roadbed exists on the Star City Ranch and has been identified by the National Park Service Long Distance Trails Division as original segment on the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.<sup>162</sup>

Cannon in 1837 and Taylor in 1839 also made their next camp at “McMurtrees,”<sup>163</sup> again a slight misspelling and likely reference to Price McMurtry. McMurtry settled in Barry County prior to 1835, the year that he was appointed a judge of election for one of the Barry County townships.<sup>164</sup> He owned property near or adjacent to that of Littleberry Mason who was mentioned by McCary (above) as being an early Barry County settler. Littleberry Mason is likely the host with whom Dr. Morrow dined on evening of March 17, 1839.<sup>165</sup> McMurtry’s property was graced by a large spring that became a resting and camping site not only for the Cherokee, but travelers and early settlers of the region traveling to Cassville (once established as the county seat in 1845) and Springfield for business. The spring has been modified by late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century man-made retaining walls and buildings but can still be seen off of Highway 37. Highway 37 roughly follows the path of the Fayetteville Road from the Cassville area onto the Washburn Prairie (see figures 23 & 24).

McMurtry’s was the last camping spot in Missouri for the Cherokee of the Cannon and Taylor detachments and possibly others taking the Northern Route. Cannon left one member of their party, Rainfrog’s daughter, buried at or near the encampment.<sup>166</sup> Cannon and later detachments passed the spring, then traveled through Washburn Prairie, a relatively level and open Ozark hollow surrounding the current town of Washburn. From the prairie, the Fayetteville Road headed south southwest crossing Sugar Creek and the Missouri state line into Arkansas. Both Cannon and the Taylor detachments encamped near the present-day town of Pea Ridge, Arkansas. Cannon encamped on what later became the Pea Ridge National Battlefield at “Reddix”<sup>167</sup> (Reddicks or Ruddicks, later known as Elkhorn Tavern). The last detachments of Cherokee (Taylor and Hildebrand), exited Missouri in March 1839.

### *Hildebrand’s Variation on the Northern Route Through Missouri*

Peter Hildebrand departed southeastern Tennessee with a party of 1449 (1766, per Cherokee leader John Ross) people in October 1838<sup>168</sup> and traveled the same road with ten other overland detachments following the Northern Route to and across the Mississippi River. In Missouri, however, his party diverged from the primary route. What lead Hildebrand to his decision is unknown, but he may have been influenced by reports of sickness or road conditions passed back from those ahead of him on the trail. Hildebrand’s party had been held up on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers due to heavy ice flows.<sup>169</sup> Thousands of Cherokee crossed the Mississippi and Bainbridge and Green’s Ferry in December 1838 and January 1839, and parties were strung out for miles on both sides of the Mississippi River. The string of emigrants provided opportunities to pass information up and down the line. Daniel Butrick mentioned in his journal entry of December 28 and 29, 1838 that there was “One detachment stopped at the Ohio, two

<sup>162</sup> “Trail of Tears National Historic Trail: Places to Go in Missouri,” National Park Service Webpage, <http://www.nps.gov/trte/planyourvisit/places-to-go-in-missouri.htm>, accessed 12/17/2013.

<sup>163</sup> Cannon’s Journal, December 22, 1837.

<sup>164</sup> *History of Newton, Lawrence, Barry and McDonald Counties, Missouri*, 568.

<sup>165</sup> Rozema, 152.

<sup>166</sup> Cannon’s Journal, December 23, 1837.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Starr, 104.

<sup>169</sup> Butrick Journal, December 26, 1838.

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at the Mississippi, one four miles this side [in Illinois], one 16 . . . one 18, and three miles behind us.”<sup>170</sup> Individuals and family groups also fell behind, caught up with, or switched detachments. This fluctuation allowed for cross-detachment communication and is also the reason why Hildebrand departed with as many as 1766 and arrived in Oklahoma with just 1311 people. It would also explain the increase in number of the Taylor detachment that arrived in Oklahoma the same day.

Historians have speculated on the route of Hildebrand through Missouri for years, and National Historic Trails Route maps have been constantly updated as research brings new facts or ideas to light. Early National Historic Trails Maps, like the one in Figure 25 show the Hildebrand party breaking from the northern route at the Courtois Diggings (see Palmer Mining District above) near the border of Washington and Crawford counties. The most recent map of the Trail of Tears through Missouri shows the Hildebrand Route departing the primary Northern Route a few miles northwest of Jackson (see figure 1). This is much more likely based on accounts of the Cherokee traveling through Fredericktown (Madison County) and near Iron and Shepherds mountains (Iron County). Jackson in the mid-1830s was the crossroads of southeast Missouri with roads and trails branching off in several directions (see figure 4). As noted earlier in this context, Cape Girardeau and neighboring counties were busily marking and improving roadways that connected Jackson to nearby population centers.

The state was also designating a series of state roads, one being the road from Jackson to Iron Mountain. The General Assembly passed an Act in 1838 calling for the survey and marking of a State Road from Jackson to Fredericktown to Iron Mountain and farther to connect with the road between Ste. Genevieve and Massey’s Iron Works.<sup>171</sup> The survey likely had not been finished or even started by the time of the 1838-39 migration. Following earlier precedents, the road was likely already in existence when officially designated as a state route. State road designation would have provided some cachet for the route along with a survey and minimum standards for width and maintenance. The road may have shared a path with the Jackson to Farmington Road leading northwest from Jackson and likely diverged from this road near present day towns of Millersville (Cape Girardeau County), Sedgewickville (Bollinger County) or Yount (Perry County).

Like Farmington, Fredericktown was in the heart of a long-established mining district displaying both the benefits of established settlement and the scars of mining. Describing the landscape around Fredericktown in 1834, explorer and geologist G. W. Featherstonhaugh noted that the mine “diggings were so numerous in every direction and the country is so wasted, that the cattle running at large frequently fall into holes.”<sup>172</sup> Of Fredericktown, he had better things to say, noting “this modern American settlement has been built on a hill, with its court-house and *steeple*, a magnificent object to our now rustic eyes, so long accustomed to log cabins.”<sup>173</sup> Four years later when Hildebrand passed through the region, the mining industry was even more entrenched so the Cherokee would have seen a similar landscape (see figure 17).

The lead mining region around Fredericktown and northward along the main path of the Northern Route may have been helter-skelter in appearance in the 1830s, but had seen more than 100 years of European and American habitation. Hildebrand’s route west of Fredericktown, however, crossed relatively new

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> *Journal of Senate of the State of Missouri 1838*. Jefferson City: Calvin Gunn, 1839, 98-99.

<sup>172</sup> G.W. Featherstonhaugh *Excursion through the Slave States. Vol. I*. London: John Murray, 1844, 323. Published online at: <http://books.google.com>. Accessed 6/5/ 2012.

<sup>173</sup> Featherstonhaugh, 326.

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territory with a mining industry yet in its infancy. The area had great prospects, however, in the form of Iron Mountain. In the 1830s Iron Mountain and its neighboring hills (Iron County), covering over 500 acres, were thought to be almost solid iron and were described by Featherstonhaugh as being “one of the rarest metallic spectacles I have ever seen.”<sup>174</sup> Had Hildebrand and his detachment members been reading available literature on Missouri, they may have expected much more than they found upon arrival at the mountain. Chartered in 1836, the Missouri Iron Company had grand plans for Iron Mountain. In a prospectus published in 1837, the company touted their recently platted town called Missouri City at the mountain’s base. Per their advertisement,

Missouri City . . . has been located and laid out with special reference its becoming, at no distant day, a pleasant retreat for the lovers of literature, the gentleman of leisure and fortune, and the parent or guardian who may seek . . . good society, institutions of education for his children, healthy climate, beautiful scenery, cheap living, and convenient communication with other portions of the west.<sup>175</sup>

When Hildebrand traveled by Iron Mountain more than a year later, the Cherokee may have found the beautiful scenery but little else. Missouri City was a paper town and never became a reality. It would be more than a decade before towns such as Ironton and Pilot Knob (Iron County) developed, and the mining potential of the district realized.

The delay in development was in large part due to difficulty in getting to Iron Mountain. The Missouri Iron Company purchased the charter of a company who had proposed to build a Macadamized road (later amended in favor of a railroad) from the Mississippi River into Washington County<sup>176</sup> with an eye toward extending the road to Missouri City. Like the town of Missouri City, neither road nor railroad were constructed. The road traveled by Hildebrand was likely not much more than a worn trail through a narrow valley along what is now Highway 72 between Fredericktown and Ironton. Highway 72 is relatively straight and benefited from modern construction methods. The meandering route of Madison County Road 504 just west of Fredericktown may be the more likely route of Hildebrand or at least may give a better sense of the route’s original winding nature. The county road, which roughly follows the path of Highway 72 for a few miles, wanders around hills and obstacles taking the path of least resistance through the undulating terrain. A county map from c. 1880 shows the “Ironton Road” following the rough course of Highway 72, though swinging slightly north of the modern route near the Roselle community in far northwestern Madison County. Aerial maps of the county show remnants of the old road lying north of the highway.<sup>177</sup>

There is no known correspondence or journals associated with the Peter Hildebrand detachment, but there are some eye witness accounts and reports. Theodore Russell, for example, places a Cherokee detachment near Iron Mountain in late winter (possibly February) 1839. Russell, who came to the Arcadia Valley (Iron County) with his family in the mid-1830s, wrote extensively about his experiences in the region. He described a detachment of Cherokee camped at the base of Shepherds Mountain (a

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<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

<sup>175</sup> *Prospectus of the Missouri Iron Company*. Hartford: P. Canfield, 1837, 21. Published online at books.google.com. Accessed 9/27/2013.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>177</sup> *Map of Madison County, Missouri, showing the lands of B.B. Cahoon, of Fredericktown, Madison County, Missouri*. [Fredericktown, MO], 1882. Published online at: <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html>. Accessed 10/17/2013.

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mountain flanked by Ironton to the southeast and Pilot Knob to the northeast). Russell's experience with the Cherokee in the Arcadia Valley gives historians a brief glimpse into emigrant camps on the Trail of Tears. According to Russell, scouts traveled in front of the main body of the detachment tasked with finding suitable camping spots and additional supplies. As each family or small group entered the camp, they went "beyond the first, and so on until the last arrival is the farthest in advance and so the first to move on in the morning." The camp visited by Russell stretched "for nearly a mile" along the foot of Shepherds Mountain.<sup>178</sup> He described it as bustling with activity as women ground corn for bread, and children sought what entertainment they could. Russell, in his teens at the time of his tour, described "groups of boys at different places at play. . . some were pitching arrows, some . . . shooting at a target on a tree with bows and arrows. . ." Girls were observed "playing with a kind of battledore" (similar to badminton). Russell also described slaves cooking, and families sitting at tables "set with just as nice dishes" as found in "white folks'" homes.<sup>179</sup>

Immediately west of Shepherds Mountain, Hildebrand's travel options were limited. The terrain is extremely hilly and riddled with valleys and ravines. Featherstonhaugh described his view of the area in 1834 as "scarce anything to be seen but a succession of ridges covered with their eternal forests."<sup>180</sup> Even today, most major roadways avoid the heavily dissected terrain by circumventing it to the north or south (see figures 17 & 18). Hildebrand had the option of traveling northwest to connect with the White River Trace in the Palmer Mining District or from a cut-off route near Caledonia. This seems to be the route favored by earlier historians of the Trail of Tears. The recent (2013) National Park Service marking of over 30 miles of original Hildebrand Route through the Mark Twain National Forest, however, places Hildebrand on the road less taken heading southwest from Shepherds Mountain into Reynolds County.

From Shepherds Mountain, the road south into Reynolds County may have followed along creek drainages to the Black River. South of the mountain there is a relatively wide valley through which Stout Creek flows. South of this valley Highway 21 follows portions of the Big Creek Valley before turning southwest along the Mill Creek valley that leads almost to Lesterville and the conjunction of three forks of the Black River (see Figure 17 & 18). The area around Lesterville was one of the earliest parts of Reynolds County to be settled. Its name is credited to the c. 1819 settlement of Jesse Lester and the establishment of the Lester post office in 1838. The Lester post office was said to be about three miles west of the current town location. Additional emigrants soon came to the three forks region of Reynolds County including John Buford and several of his relatives. John owned property in the immediate vicinity of Lesterville, receiving land patents in 1833. Documents related to the certification of the Hildebrand route through Reynolds County state that Buford sold fodder to the detachment in early 1839.<sup>181</sup>

Two branches of the Black River branched west and northwest from Buford's property. While early roads often followed creek and river drainages, as they were relatively straight and level, the West and Middle forks of the Black take an extremely undulating path through often narrow rock-bluffed valleys. Instead of attempting the river valleys, Hildebrand followed a ridge road located approximately half way between the two forks. Per topographic maps of the area the road stays consistently around 1100 feet

<sup>178</sup> Shepherds Mountain is located immediately northwest of Ironton and southwest of Pilot Knob.

<sup>179</sup> James F. Keefe and Lynn Morrow, ed. *A Connecticut Yankee in the Frontier Ozarks: The Writings of Theodore Pease Russell* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988), 114-116.

<sup>180</sup> Featherstonhaugh, 149.

<sup>181</sup> Correspondence. Frank Norris, National Park Service, Long Distance Trails Division, to Tiffany Patterson, October 13, 2013. Document on file with author.

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above sea level, providing a relatively level if high and rocky path. The roadway, recently signed as original Hildebrand route through the Mark Twain National Forest, extends northwest into Iron County, before sharply turning back into Reynolds County and west into Dent County.

Somewhere in Dent County, Hildebrand's detachment made a connection to the White River Trace (or Road), a secondary trace that connected east central Missouri with the White River in southwest Missouri. Some sources suggest that from Shepherds Mountain, Hildebrand turned northwest to connect with the White River Trace in southern Washington County. This route would then have entered Dent County at its northeastern corner through what is now the Indian Trails State Forest, a property owned and managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation.<sup>182</sup> More recent analysis of the route from Lesterville indicates that Hildebrand may have entered the east-central portion of the county where the Reynolds County panhandle creates an irregular border.<sup>183</sup> From there, Hildebrand had several options to connect with the White River Trace. The trace cut a diagonal path through the county from near the northeast corner of Dent County to the northeast corner of Texas County (see figure 19).

Hildebrand's route through Dent County is speculative. Current thinking is that Hildebrand's detachment traveled west-northwest through the center section of the county, a few miles south of Salem (which did not exist in the 1830s).<sup>184</sup> An analysis of pre-1840 land settlement patterns in Dent County may indicate a more northerly arch to the route. A search of Bureau of Land Management Land Patents in Dent County issued prior to 1840 indicates that settlement concentrated along two narrow north-south running strips. Both bands of settlement centered on water sources: the Watery Fork of the Meramec River in eastern Dent County, and the Bennett Prong of the Dry Fork Branch of the Meramec in the western portion. There was also a small cluster of settlers on Spring Creek just north of Salem. The river forks that were the focus of settlement were not navigable, so an informal trail or local road system may have developed to connect settlers along the two Meramec River forks. This may have pulled Hildebrand's detachment farther north through the county (see figure 26).

An attraction of the more northerly path through the county was the trading post on the Ephraim Bressie farmstead located on Spring Creek north of present day Salem. It may have been near Bressie's that Hildebrand made his connection to the White River Trace. County histories indicate that Bressie made much of his location on the trace, having a trading post and smithy on the site before 1840 and "a kind of travelers' inn"<sup>185</sup> there by the early 1850s. Bressie received a land patent for 40 acres in T34N R6W Section 2 in 1841 (north and slightly west of Salem) and additional land in 1849 and 1855, but settled these properties months or years before patents were issued.<sup>186</sup> From Bressie's the trail traveled west southwest through what is now the White River Trace Conservation Area, a more than 2000 acre state-owned and managed property sandwiched between State Route H to the North and CC to the east and south. The old road through the conservation area has long been abandoned, though as late as the early

<sup>182</sup> *White River Trace-Trail of Tears*. Dent County Historical Society, 1986. Brochure on file in the archive of Missouri State Parks, 1159 E. Elm, Jefferson City, MO.

<sup>183</sup> Frank Norris, Mike Taylor, and Otis Halfmoon. "The National Historic Trail System," *Proceedings of the 2009 George Wright Society Conference*, 258-262, published online at: <http://www.georgewright.org/0946norris.pdf>, accessed 12/18/2013.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> Margaret Vicker. "White River Trails," *White River Valley Historical Quarterly*, v.4, #3, Spring 1971.

<sup>186</sup> Bressie received his first land patent on T34N R6W E ½ NW1/2, Lot/Track5 of Section 2 in 1841. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office land patent search, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. Accessed 10/18/2013.

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1990s there were “still indentations in the dirt where the trail [could] be picked out.”<sup>187</sup> These trail swales have not been formally surveyed or documented (see figure 26).

Though much less storied than the St. Louis to Springfield Road, the White River Trace made a significant contribution to the settlement of the Ozarks and southwest Missouri. In a 1910 publication on the soils of the Ozarks, C.F. Marbut described the rough route of the White River Trace. Starting in Potosi, the route headed southwest traveling about one mile north of Webster (in the Palmer Mining District, no longer a town), crossing the Huzzah Creek near Davisville (Crawford County), then southwest through Dent County, crossing the headwaters of the Dry Fork branch of the Meramec to the Licking vicinity, thence south of Success to Turley or Flat Rock (Roubideaux) (four communities in Texas County), then to Hartville (Wright County) and into Springfield (see figures 21 & 22).<sup>188</sup>

In the mid-1830s, much of the area between the lead and iron mining districts of Southeast Missouri and Springfield was sparsely populated. Larger settlements and subsequent post offices tended to be closer to the St. Louis to Springfield Road and county lines were in constant flux. The boundaries of Iron, Dent, Texas, and other Missouri Ozark counties through which the Trail of Tears passed were in some cases decades from formation. Settlement patterns of the 1840s and 1850s significantly shifted where roads were needed and maintained. As early as 1889, the White River Trace through Dent County was said to be “not now used.”<sup>189</sup> Its general path through Dent and neighboring Texas County can be identified by Marbut’s description (above), historic accounts, and more recent mentions of trail remnants on state-owned properties.

Beyond Dent County, the next settlement of note along the White River Trace was near a buffalo (salt) lick in northwestern Texas County. The town of Licking eventually grew up just east of the lick in the 1850s, but settlement of the area preceded the town by more than two decades. In 1831 and 1832, several members of the Sherrill family and others moved with ox-drawn wagons to the area from St. Francois County.<sup>190</sup> Though there were no stores or trading posts at Licking settlement, Hildebrand and his detachment may have been able to trade with settlers to supplement rations. Also, the lick was known to draw game which could have been hunted to supplement food stores (see figures 21 & 22).

From the Licking settlement, the White River Trace headed west toward the Big Piney River and the newly established town of Ellsworth (platted 1837). Ellsworth no longer exists, but was located on the Boiling Springs Road (Texas County Road 2480) just west of where the road crosses the Big Piney via a low water crossing. This low water crossing may be located at or near the historic ford used by the Cherokee to cross the river. Goodspeed’s history of the region notes that the White River Trace was used as a rough dividing line between Roubidoux and Upton townships when they were formed in the 1850s, which makes sense based on Marbut’s description of the route of the road (see above, E. 39). Marbut mentions that the road went through the towns of Success and either Turley or Roubidoux (the village, not the township). All of these towns post-date the Cherokee removal, but are located one to two miles south of the southern Rubidoux Township border (see figures 21 & 22).

<sup>187</sup> Lori Simms, “The White River Trace and the Trail of Tears,” *Missouri Conservationist*, August 1992, 25-27.

<sup>188</sup> C.F. Marbut. *Research Bulletin No. 3: Soils of the Ozark Region*. Columbia: University of Missouri, College of Agriculture, June 1910, 252.

<sup>189</sup> *History of Laclède, Camden, Dallas, Webster, Wright, Texas, Pulaski, Phelps and Dent Counties, Missouri*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing, 1889, 582.

<sup>190</sup> *History of Laclède, Camden, Dallas, Webster, Wright, Texas, Pulaski, Phelps and Dent Counties, Missouri*, 1147.

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From the vicinity of Turley, Hildebrand entered Wright County near the former Astoria community. White settlement of Wright County preceded the Cherokee Removal by only a few short years, with county histories placing the first permanent settlers in the county in c. 1836.<sup>191</sup> Wright County is described as being on a “broad undulating plateau” through which “creeks and rivers have worn their deep broad channels and valleys.” The White River Trace likely followed some of these creek and river valleys, notably that of a branch of the Gasconade River that swung southwest to the vicinity of present-day Hartsville and thence west northwest toward Marshfield (Webster County). It was just east of Hartsville (Wright County) that Hildebrand’s detachment was said to have met up with early settler Jesse Robinett. A journal by Jesse Robinett is said to exist that briefly details the sale of fodder to the Hildebrand detachment (see figures 21 & 22).<sup>192</sup>

From Robinett’s property, the White River Trace possibly paralleled the north side of the Woods Ford Branch of the Gasconade River branch west northwest nearly to the western border of Webster County. Much of Webster County’s land area remained unclaimed in the late 1830s, but a density of early land claims in the area around Hartsville and to its southwest may suggest a slightly more southern route. Per a Bureau of Land Management Land Patent search, there is a density of land claims along the Gasconade River in the southern portions of Township 29 N Ranges 15 and 16W in western Wright, and along tributaries of the James River in Township 29 Ranges 16 and 17 in eastern Webster County. If the White River Trace continued up the James River though Webster County, Hildebrand would have reconnected with the main branch of the Northern Route southwest of Marshfield. Hildebrand continued along the Northern Route through Springfield and southwest Missouri as outlined in the “The Route: Places and Experiences” sub-context (E.22).

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid, 359.

<sup>192</sup> The Robinett (Robnett) diary as a resource has been mentioned in recent Trail of Tears-related news articles such as “Trail of Tears Reenactment Friday, Oct.11, in Centerville,” *Wayne County Journal*, online edition, 10/2/1913, [http://www.waynejournalbanner.com/news/article\\_3b7c9b5c-2b95-11e3-9f1f-001a4bcf6878.html](http://www.waynejournalbanner.com/news/article_3b7c9b5c-2b95-11e3-9f1f-001a4bcf6878.html). However, the author has not had an opportunity to find the journal or discover a clearer reference.

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## Property Types

### Property Type I. Transportation Sites

For the purposes of this multiple property documentation form, transportation sites include two subtypes: roadbed and road segments, and ford and ferry crossings/landings that were created by or for traffic (by foot, pack animal, or animal-drawn wagons).<sup>193</sup> By and large, the transportation sites in Missouri associated with the Trail of Tears originated as animal migration (deer, etc.) or Native American trails adopted by European and American settlers. Many of these early routes became postal, state or locally designated roads in the 1820s and 1830s with routes delineated through state or county funded surveys. Though officially “roads,” lack of funding for maintenance and often extreme weather conditions meant that routes often veered to avoid obstacles, widened or narrowed unexpectedly, and were at times completely impassable at natural river fords. With few exceptions, improvements to roadways were limited to private enterprises at ferry landings/crossings though evidence of such sites is predominantly limited to the historic record and to archeological resources.

Evidence of historic transportation sites from the early statehood period are found predominantly in reports of the General Assembly designating state roads and funding surveys, in reports of the county courts of similar purpose, and in General Land Office surveys. Identifying the roadways taken by the Cherokee through Missouri depends largely on correlating diaries or reports from Cherokee delegations to known roadways. Or, for the Benge and Hildebrand routes, connecting known entrance and exit points in the state by way of contemporary roadways.

Even 175 years after their sojourn in Missouri, much of the area that the Cherokee crossed is still rural. Population centers of the late 1830s, such as Jackson (Cape Girardeau County), Farmington (St. Francois County), Waynesville (Pulaski County) and Springfield (Greene County), remain so but have expanded significantly. Springfield, notably, is a large urbanized area with even greater suburban development. Springfield and Greene County, however, were the first areas of the state to mark original trail segments. Many of these segments have been modified by later transportation development such as railroads and engineered roads, but some original trail swales remain. Along some portions of the historic Trail of Tears, areas of the state have actually depopulated. The Benge Route passes through Old Greenville (Wayne County), a town that was abandoned and rebuilt several miles to the north in the late 1930s for the construction of Lake Wappapello. Likewise, many original segments of the trail have been identified in units of the Mark Twain National Forest. The Forest contains historic trail-related sites such as the Palmer Mining District in Washington County and the Peter Brickey farmstead in Crawford County that were inhabited at the time of the Cherokee migration.

Be they rural or urban, care should be taken when identifying boundaries for eligible transportation sites. Boundaries should avoid modern visual and physical intrusions, though a sufficient amount of adjacent land should be a consideration in evaluating boundaries and integrity. The nature of travel along the Trail of Tears should also be a consideration. While modern Westerns have given us the image of “circling the wagons” for night-time camps, journals of those accompanying the Cherokee and later accounts paint a different picture. Though loosely bound together under the leadership of a conductor, physician and various interpreters, Cherokee detachments often strung out over some distance along the trail.

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<sup>193</sup> Definition modified from the *Santa Fe Trail Multiple Property Documentation Form (Amended Submission)*.

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Missionaries and physicians accompanying the groups often stayed in towns or farmsteads while their trail companions camped—with or without the benefit of wagons and tents. Families were commonly left behind to tend to the sick or bury the dead, only to catch up later. Detachments temporarily divided at river crossings and fords. Theodore Russell's account of his visit to a Cherokee migration camp in the Arcadia Valley (Iron County, Hildebrand detachment) describes family groups camping along the roadside for a mile or more. In many cases there was likely scant delineation between roadbed and campsite.

When possible, boundaries should be determined by natural and topographical features to maintain site context. Ideally, the view shed from the transportation site should be used, though land management and owner consent may significantly limit the extent to which boundaries can be drawn. For practical purposes, these predominantly linear resources shall include at least 50 meters (164 feet) of land area around the resource to fully incorporate the transportation site and potential historic features associated with wagon movement, horse and pedestrian travel, and other significant historic use such as road-side camp sites.<sup>194</sup>

A. *Subtype: Roadbeds and Road Segments*

*Description:*

Between the fall of 1837 and the spring of 1839, thousands of Cherokee traversed the roadways of Missouri on their forced migration from the southeastern United States to Indian Territory in current day Oklahoma. Despite more than 50 years of settlement and over 15 years of statehood, Missouri at the time of the forced migration of the Cherokee was largely unsettled and well maintained roads were few and far between. Most of the state's roads originated as game or American Indian trails that followed the path of least resistance across the state's diverse and often treacherous landscape. This is the case with Kingshighway that was marked out in c. 1789 as an overland connector between New Madrid and St. Louis.<sup>195</sup> Portions of this road, notably north of Benton (Scott County), where it joined with a State Road designated in 1821, may have been used by the Benge Detachment.

Following statehood in 1821, the Missouri General Assembly designated a rash of "State Roads." Except in rare cases, this designation meant little more than minimal funding for surveying and marking the roads. Actual maintenance was left to counties who, in turn, relied heavily on the forced or volunteer labor of those living on and using the roadways. Many of these state-designated routes followed existing trails, though surveyors marking the routes may have varied from existing paths to better connect important resources or avoid obstacles and owner conflict. A good example of this is the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road designated as a state route in 1835 and surveyed in 1837. The general route of this road had been in use as a post road since c. 1820 and was likely a discernible trail before that time. Comparisons of General Land Office plats and the state-funded road survey notes show some minor variations between the routes. This road was followed by the Benge Detachment between Jackson and the Missouri/Arkansas border in 1838.

<sup>194</sup> The 50 meter guideline is utilized in other trail-related multiple property documentation forms such as that prepared for the Santa Fe Trail. Though the Trail of Tears followed designated roadways, unlike much of the early Santa Fe trail route, the lack of maintenance on historic Missouri roads and the early definition of "road" in legislation indicate that through much of Missouri even "state roads" were not much more than worn trails.

<sup>195</sup> Louis Houck. *A History of Missouri*, v. 2. Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons Co., 1908. Accessed January 2012, 150. <http://digital.library.umsystem.edu>.

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Lack of state and local government funding, and in some cases lack of population, meant that many of the state's roads were little more than tracks or trails in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Contemporary and later descriptions of the routes taken by the Cherokee describe wet, muddy, rocky, and swampy road conditions, difficult stream crossings and, at times, natural disasters such as extreme weather (see Section E: Conditions along the Benge Route). Despite often poor conditions, these roads usually followed the best or only paths through the state. They avoided deep ravines, multi-million acre swamps, and impassible river and stream crossings. Because of their logical and relatively obstruction-free paths, many of these early roadways are still in use albeit modified from their original path.

One known exception to the "state designated but not funded" roads that make up portions of the Trail of Tears in Missouri is the Rock Levee Road in Scott and Cape Girardeau counties. As described in Section E, this three-mile causeway was part of the 1823 state road connecting Iron Banks with Cape Girardeau. Constructed in 1835 with state funds, this raised road allowed easier (at least drier) passage through the Big Swamp south of Cape Girardeau. This road segment also differs from other abandoned roadbeds along Missouri's portion of the Tears in that it is raised several feet above the surrounding landscape. Other abandoned segments are evidenced by long wide swales rather than high raised berms.

In their basic form, Cherokee Trail of Tears roadbeds and Road segments are resources created by or for traffic (foot, horses/pack animals, and animal-powered wagons). These resources are man-made landscape features (e.g., trail ruts caused by repeated use and/or erosion and later road segments that were constructed and/or engineered over existing trail ruts), and naturally occurring landscape features utilized and adapted by man because of their characteristics (e.g., stream and river crossings and river landings).<sup>196</sup> Based on research on the roads used during the Trail of Tears and survey of existing conditions, roadbeds and road segments take on three basic forms:

- Modern public roads: road segments still in current use, if substantially altered. These segments are portions of the original Trail of Tears that have been widened, graded, and resurfaced (with gravel or pavement), to conform to modern road standards. They may contain other modern (post 1830s) engineering features such as shoulders, drainage ditches, culverts and bridges.
- Limited use, passable roadways: road segment is still used on a limited basis—usually as a foot path, farm access road, or fire/forestry road—and receives little or no maintenance. Major features such as swales, cuts and fillslopes, are often still evident and some may have improvements such as widening, gravel surfaces, low-water crossings and limited drainage features.
- Abandoned, impassible roadway: fragments no longer used or maintained. These segments are original routes used by the Cherokee that have since been abandoned for new roads conforming to modern road or highway standards. These segments are evidenced by swales created by repeated use and/or erosion, road cuts, berms and fillslopes. Despite overgrowth, these segments are often readily distinguishable as long wide depressions.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> This definition is borrowed from: Kansas State Historical Society, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail (amended submission)." Accepted by the National Register of Historic Places, 2013.

<sup>197</sup> These three general typologies were borrowed from Demian Hess, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Minnesota Military Roads." Listed in the National Register February 7, 1991. However, their definitions were modified based on known conditions of Trail of Tears-related roadways in Missouri.

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### *Significance:*

Under this Multiple Property Documentation Form roadbeds and road segments will be primarily significant under Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/Native American for their historic use by the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. As noted in the nationwide MPDF "Historic and Archaeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears":

Roadbeds provide a physical link and sense of time and place of the actual Cherokee experience. They provide an understanding of the difficulties inherent in overland travel in the 1830s and the challenges faced by the Cherokee on a daily basis. Roadbeds will also be significant under criterion A for the information they impart regarding the actual routes taken by the detachments on their journey west.<sup>198</sup>

Survey and documentation of nominated roadbeds and road segments may also yield archeological data and evidence significance under Criterion D. Historic accounts of the Cherokee along the trail describe the loss and abandonment of personal possessions, breakdowns of wagons, stops for meal breaks and camping, and hunting for game to supplement rations. Remnants of these events and activities would have littered the roadway. While connecting artifacts directly with the Cherokee would be difficult if not impossible, extant archeological artifacts dating from the period of migration would add to the knowledge of travel and conditions along the route, types of vehicles used during migration, and possibly typical possessions of migrants.

The roads that were part of the Northern, Hildebrand and Benge routes of the Trail of Tears may also have significance beyond their association with this one event. South of Greenville (Wayne County), for example, the Cape Girardeau to Arkansas Road used by the Benge Detachment followed the route of the Natchitoches/Southwest Trace. This historic trail became a significant route for explorers of the west, volunteers traveling to fight for Texas independence from Mexico, settlers to the Arkansas Territory, and a strategic Civil War era road. Though road segments can be nominated solely for their significant association with the Trail of Tears, preparers of nominations are encouraged to explore the wider significance of these segments for areas such as Transportation and Exploration/Settlement. The larger historic context may provide additional insight into why these roads were chosen by the leaders of the Cherokee detachments.

### *Registration Requirements:*

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this cover document, a roadbed or road segment must have clear and demonstrable association with the Cherokee Trail of Tears routes through Missouri. Nominated examples of the property type must also retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance. Assessing integrity of historic roadbeds to a narrow time period (c. 1837 to 1839) is difficult due both to abandonment of early road segments and continued use and improvements to roadways. By definition, all Trail of Tears-related road segments must retain integrity of location. However, many of the identified or identifiable segments will not retain integrity of design, materials or workmanship. Assessments, therefore, will rely heavily on aspects of feeling, setting and association, using the following guidelines:

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<sup>198</sup> Thomason, Section F, 10. "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic and Archeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears." Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.

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1. Route: It must be possible to demonstrate that the roadbed or segment closely conforms to the route at the time of the Trail of Tears.
2. Physical appearance: The roadbed or segment should be unpaved, and segments must be relatively clear and passable (by foot or motorized vehicle). Completely abandoned road segments should be evidenced by ruts or swales.
3. Sense of function or destination: The roadbed or segment should be long enough to evoke a sense of destination. As a general rule of thumb, an observer standing at one end of the segment should not be able to see the other end.
4. Setting: The property should be in a setting characteristic of the original road. In general, sites should be in a secluded, rural area with no modern intrusions such as recent roads or buildings. Extant period (1830s) resources, however, will enhance the setting and historic association.<sup>199</sup>

B. Subtype: Fords and Ferry Crossings/Landings

*Description:*

The Cherokee traversed some 600 miles of Missouri roadways, travels that required almost daily water crossings. Lt. B.B. Cannon, by no means verbose, makes mention of ten Missouri creeks, “branches,” and rivers in his journal. By and large Missouri’s early roads crossed these streams and rivers at natural or somewhat man-modified fords. Fords offered relatively safe passage through shallow sections of water with low banks. As an example Wilson’s Creek, crossed by the Fayetteville Road south of Springfield, was described as being “everywhere fordable for foot and horseman.”<sup>200</sup> Some fords across larger creeks or rivers along important roads also developed small commercial and communication nodes similar to those found at ferry sites—possibly with a settler’s home doubling as a trading post and post office. Bridges, outside of larger urban areas, were almost non-existent though Greene County made some efforts to construct bridges on the St. Louis to Fayetteville Road in the 1830s (See Historic Context II). Ferries or at least ferry licenses were more common than bridges but need varied by location and season. Ferries required a state or county license and had government-set maximum fee rates, but were built and developed with private funds.

Ferries were a necessity for the Cherokee as they faced crossing the Mississippi River. Cannon and the eleven additional detachments that followed the Northern Route chose either the Bainbridge or Green’s Ferry north of Cape Girardeau. The Benge detachment ferried across the river at Iron Banks, Kentucky and landed in Belmont (Mississippi County), Missouri. The three Mississippi ferries used by the Cherokee were thought to be horse ferries, but no known evidence or illustrations of them exist. Ferry landings had natural or man-modified sloping banks and a variety of ancillary resources such as a ferry operator’s residence, tavern or trading post, warehouses, and other features. There are no historic above ground physical remnants of these three Mississippi ferry landings and archeological evidence is

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<sup>199</sup> These assessment guidelines were borrowed from Demian Hess, “National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Minnesota Military Roads.” Listed in the National Register February 7, 1991. However, their definitions were modified based on known conditions of Trail of Tears-related roadways in Missouri.

<sup>200</sup> Rombauer, 316.

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uncertain due to flooding and scouring. The historic locations of all three sites have been identified through historic research and archeological evidence of related auxiliary resources may be found. The Bainbridge and Green's ferry landings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places as significant sites for their association with the Trail of Tears.

As there are no above ground physical references to these historic ferry sites, it is difficult to ascertain what they looked like. By the mid-1830s a "horse" ferry was in operation at Bainbridge and presumably Green's and the Belmont ferry. Horse ferries used two or more horses on a treadmill or turntable to power a paddlewheel. Steam ferries were available at some points of the Mississippi River, but horse power was considered safer and less expensive.<sup>201</sup> The Bainbridge crossing may have been somewhat distinct as, per the account of Rev. Daniel Butrick, "At this place a sand bar in the middle extends probably half across the bed of the river, leaving two sluices of about an equal width on each side. Therefore it is like two rivers, crossed by two ferries, that is, two sets of boats, one conveying passengers to the bar, and the other from it."<sup>202</sup>

Away from the Mississippi, rivers crossed by the Cherokee in Missouri tended to be smaller and the ferries themselves less elaborate. The St. Francois River crossing at Greenville, for example, would have been seasonal and was apparently operated via man power. A description of the ferry crossing in the 1870s, then operated by Joe Lutes and John Gibson, noted that the:

ferry thrived in the wet season while the river was too deep or swift to ford – John was a big man the muscle in the operation – lived on the Wight farm – Joe lived in Pleasant Valley near the Jim Lee farm – John towed boat upstream – Joe steered it across with steering oar while John used a sweeping oar to give the boat momentum.<sup>203</sup>

Large or small, most ferry sites offered at least some additional amenities of features such as the homes of the ferry operators, warehouses, and trading posts or taverns. Remnants of these features, be they extant or identifiable in the archeological record, provide significant information and context for transportation and the experience of the Cherokee along the Trail of Tears.

### *Significance:*

Under this Multiple Property Documentation Form fords and ferry crossings/landings will be primarily significant under Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/Native American for their historic use by the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. Ferries and fords were, like the roads that connected them, "essential components in getting the Cherokee and their possessions to their final destination."<sup>204</sup> The location of easily fordable sections along Missouri's rivers and streams and sites adequate for developing ferries often influenced the path of roads and trails. Proximity of fords to the main road route may also have lured Cherokee conductors away from main road routes. Local lore in Ripley County hints that the Benge detachment avoided a ferry and associated fees by skewing from the primary route of the Southwest Trace to cross the river at Indian Ford (listed in the National Register in 2007).

<sup>201</sup> See Bainbridge Ferry and Green Ferry National Register nominations previously cited.

<sup>202</sup> *Butrick Journal*, 57.

<sup>203</sup> "Thoughts and Things of Long Ago," *Greenville Sun*, March 7, 1940.

<sup>204</sup> Thomason, Section F, 14.

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Survey and documentation of nominated ferry sites and fords may also yield archeological data and evidence significance under Criterion D. Ferry sites, notably, were often centers of small communities. The National Register listed Bainbridge Ferry site, for example, had at various times a warehouse, tavern, and residence of the ferry operator. The town of (Old) Greenville, Wayne County, developed in large part due to the ferry that operated across the St. Francois River and offered a post office, "four or five wooden cabins . . . and a dirty-looking store."<sup>205</sup> As developed communities, ferry sites would have offered opportunities for contact, trade and possibly a place to leave messages or send mail to those behind on the trail or friends in the southeast. Extant archeological resources associated with these sites might also yield better context and understanding of travel conditions and availability of goods and services during the period of the Cherokee removal.

Fords, by their nature, were more common and required little or no infrastructure or development. Natural fords, however, often became settlement and trading points. James Harrison in Phelps County, for example, settled on the Little Piney and his home became the unofficial trade and communication center of the region. (See Historic Context II) His property is mentioned by at least one chronicler of the Trail of Tears, and by earlier travelers along the St. Louis to Springfield Road. Similar sites near the Peter Brickey farmstead in Crawford County, Stark's farmstead in Pulaski County and Bean's on the Gasconade and Osage Fork in Laclede County may offer similar archeological evidence as that found at small ferry sites.

The roads that were part of the Northern, Hildebrand and Bengé Routes of the Trail of Tears may also have significance beyond their association with this one event. Fords and ferry sites were key links on roadways, many of which were also significant postal and emigration routes. The same roads used by the Cherokee were taken by explorers, traders and settlers. Ferry sites and fords can be nominated solely for their significant association with the Trail of Tears; however, preparers of nominations are encouraged to explore the wider significance of these resources for areas such as Commerce, Transportation and Exploration/Settlement.

### *Registration Requirements:*

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this cover document, a ford or ferry crossing/landing must have clear and demonstrable association with the Cherokee Trail of Tears routes through Missouri. Nominated examples of the property type must also retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance. Assessing integrity of historic fords and ferry sites to a narrow time period (c. 1837 to 1839) is difficult. Most ferry crossings, even on major rivers such as the Mississippi, have long been abandoned and roadways moved or improved by the construction of bridges or improved low water crossings. By definition, all Trail of Tears-related fords and ferry sites must retain integrity of location. However, many of the identified or identifiable segments will not retain integrity of design, materials or workmanship. Assessments, therefore, will rely heavily on aspects of feeling, setting and association, using the following guidelines. For registration requirements for ferry and ford-associated buildings see the "Buildings, structures and building sites" property type.

1. Route: It must be possible to demonstrate that the ferry site or ford closely conforms to the road route at the time of the Trail of Tears.

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<sup>205</sup> Featherstonhaugh, 335.

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2. Physical appearance: The physical characteristics consistent with that of an early 19th century landing/ferry crossing such as at the end of a roadbed, and cleared area adjacent to the river, must be visible. Retention of naturally occurring rock or gravel or earthen banks is essential and evidence of worn cuts in the bank (notably at fords) is also important.
3. Setting: The property should be in a setting characteristic of the original road, ford and ferry site. In general, sites should be in a secluded, rural area with no modern intrusions such as recent roads or buildings. Extant period (1830s) resources, however, will enhance the setting and historic association.<sup>206</sup>

### **Property Type II. Buildings, Structures, and Building Sites**

#### *Description:*

This property type incorporates man-made resources that were extant on or near the road during the Trail of Tears period of significance. These resources may have supported travel or trade along the road, such as stores or trading posts. Most were not constructed because of trade or travel but became associated with Trail of Tears due to proximity. They were the homes or institutional buildings of local residents that allowed the Cherokee to camp on their lands, or opened their doors to the missionaries, physicians or others that accompanied the Cherokee. Cannon wrote of camping at a school for several days as his detachment battled illness.<sup>207</sup> Dr. W.I.I. Morrow rarely camped with his detachment, instead seeking room and board with nearby residents<sup>208</sup>. As settlement density, material availability and other factors varied along the trail through Missouri, no one architectural style or structural type is associated with the trail. Near the Mississippi River, notably in Cape Girardeau County, brick, stone and milled wood were common. In the interior of Missouri, log buildings such as the Snelson-Brinker House (a Trail of Tears certified site in Crawford County, listed in the National Register) would have been the norm.

Just as type and material varied, so too did frequency. The plat of the State Road from Jackson to Old Greenville indicated homes approximately every mile (see figure 8). In other parts of the state, such as Wright County along the Hildebrand Route, white settlement preceded the Cherokee removal only by a couple of years so settled sites might have been miles apart or clustered in isolated nodes. Despite statehood, much of Missouri was still in its settlement period and the buildings and structures associated with this period were generally not meant to be permanent. Replacement of original homes and farm buildings, construction of new schoolhouses and churches, changes in development patterns and abandonment of old roads have significantly impacted the Missouri landscape in the last 175 year. Because of this most of the Trail of Tears-period buildings and structures are no longer extant. Archeological evidence of building sites, such as that found at the Dyes/Bell Tavern Site in Christian County and the Widow Harris farm in Ripley County, may shed light on the period.

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<sup>206</sup> These assessment guidelines were borrowed from Demian Hess, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Minnesota Military Roads." Listed in the National Register February 7, 1991.

However, their definitions were modified based on known conditions of Trail of Tears-related roadways in Missouri.

<sup>207</sup> Cannon Journal, November 23, 1837.

<sup>208</sup> Rozema, 152.

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*Significance:*

Buildings, structures, and building sites may be eligible under Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage/Native American for their historic association with the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. These sites became contact points between local residents and traders and the Cherokee. They offered opportunities, even if briefly, for cultural interaction and trade. Like ferry sites, they may have also been points to leave messages for those coming behind or trade for food and supplies.

As few extant buildings remain, archeological survey and documentation of building sites may find resources significant under Criterion D for their potential to yield information about Removal period travel, material culture, food and lifeways. The ephemeral nature of Cherokee contact with known building sites in Missouri would make it difficult to find culturally-related material, but existence of 1820s to early 1840s materials could shed light on the period, the historic context and on the people known to have hosted the Cherokee and associated missionaries and physicians.

As with the other property types, buildings, structures and building sites may have significance beyond their association with this one event. Dye's/Bell's Tavern was originally associated with the Delaware settlement in southwest Missouri and archeological investigations have found significant evidence of 1820 Delaware occupation of the site. The Widow Harris property in Ripley County played host to several significant explorers and scientists before and after the Cherokee removal, and tells a significant story of southeast Missouri settlement and lifeways. Sites may be nominated solely for their association with the Trail of Tears, but preparers of nominations are encouraged to explore additional areas of significance such as Commerce, and Exploration/Settlement.

*Registration Requirements:*

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this cover document, a building, structure or building site must have clear and demonstrable association with the Cherokee Trail of Tears routes through Missouri. These associations will be found primarily through the historic record, via journals and letters from the Cherokee or those traveling with them, local removal period diaries and accounts of the removal, or credible oral history accounts. Nominated examples of the property type must also retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance. Assessing integrity of these resources to a narrow time period (c. 1837 to 1839) is difficult. Most extant buildings from the 1830s have been modified over time and through extended periods of occupation. However, some sense of the size, massing and materials from the 1830s period must be intact. Later additions should not overwhelm the original building massing, and exterior material if not original should be of similar type. Integrity of location is essential for extant sites as is the sense of feeling. Extant resources from the 1830s may be more likely to be found in or near communities that were well established by the 1830s such as Jackson (Cape Girardeau County) or Springfield (Greene County) or in the mining areas around Farmington (St. Francois County), Fredericktown (Madison County) and Massey's Iron Works (Crawford County). Settings around these resources would likely not reflect the Trail of Tears period. Retention of trail-era setting is important but will not render a resource ineligible if disrupted.

To be eligible under Criterion D, a site must demonstrate it has information-yielding potential in architecture or historical archeology. This will be most commonly displayed in the existence of intact ruins that, while deteriorated beyond classification as a building or structure, are still recognizable as identifiable archeological features. The location of the site must be verified in accordance with the

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probable location of the site documented in the historic record. Sites displaying artifacts that can be dated to the period of historic significance and showing a potential for well-preserved archeological components are eligible for registration. Sites lacking surface artifacts and showing a high potential for intact subsurface components in conjunction with ruins should also be considered eligible if integrity of the site's geomorphological contexts appear intact. A resource with evidence of a subsequent function or occupation overlaying materials or features related to the site's Trail of Tears era function also can be considered eligible under Criterion D if the potential for yielding information appears intact as a buried component and evidence is provided establishing a clear link to the operation during the period of significance.<sup>209</sup>

### **Property Type III: Campsites**

#### *Description:*

Campsites were an important component of the Trail of Tears experience, though one difficult to describe or classify. Theodore Russell described the Hildebrand camp at the base of Shepherds Mountain in Iron County as being strung out for over a mile along the road. Cannon mentions leaving families of the ill along the road to catch up later, while moving the main body of the detachment onward. The sheer size of the detachments, ranging from 300 to over 1500 would have made it difficult to find a single campsite. More likely, family groups or clusters would have camped in various open fields or glades near the roadway or a nearby natural amenity.

Other multiple property documentation forms for long distance trails, such as the Santa Fe Trail, focus more on the natural or man-made amenities that attracted the campers rather than the campsites themselves. Water resources were certainly essential to a good campsite, and the journals of Cannon and Butrick make reference to camping on or near rivers. Missouri's waterways at times presented a problem for travelers. Cannon's party camped for several days along the Huzzah Creek on or near the Peter Brickey farmstead in Crawford County, stalled due to prevailing illness. After a few days, however, he moved the party two miles away from the creek to a schoolhouse, "a much better situation for an encampment than on the creek."<sup>210</sup> Cannon's new encampment had the benefit of both a building to house some of the sick and likely a well, spring, or nearby stream to provide water. Dr. Townsend, the physician who accompanied the Cannon party, blamed much of the party's illness on the "miasmatic exhalations"<sup>211</sup> of the swampy lands near Missouri's rivers.

Isolated farms or settlements also made attractive campsites for the Cherokee detachments, and the names of settlers are often included in reference encampments. Farms offered some cleared land for camping, nearby water sources, and the possibility of shelter for the detachments' accompanying missionaries, physicians or the severely ill. They also may have offered trading opportunities to supplement rations. The Brickey family living near the Huzzah in Crawford County played host both to a missionary and, reportedly, a very ill traveler. Dr. W.I.I. Morrow rarely camped with the Taylor detachment, preferring to stay with a settler's family at the campsite or a nearby farm. The Butricks also occasionally stayed with a host family, though often made camp with the detachment with whom they traveled. Because of the

<sup>209</sup> Registration requirement for Criterion D borrowed from Kansas State Historical Society, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail (amended submission)." Accepted by the National Register of Historic Places, 2013.

<sup>210</sup> Cannon's Journal, November 28, 1837 entry.

<sup>211</sup> Rozema, 95-97.

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attraction of the natural (usually water) or man-made (farm, ford or ferry site) amenity, campsites may need to be considered and evaluated as part of a large complex of related sites—natural features and amenities, building sites, ferry landings or fords, and trail graves.

### *Significance:*

Campsites may be eligible under Criterion A and/or D: Ethnic Heritage/Native American for their historic association with the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. Campsites along the trail of tears became places of rest, play, worship, repair, recovery from illness and grief. Russell described children playing and women cooking at the Shepherds Mountain camp. Butrick wrote of holding religious services in camps and tents and stopping at creeks to wash and dry cloths. Cannon reported of wagon repair and shoeing, care for the ill and disturbed nights due to excessive drink.

Camp sites were rarely used by any one detachment of Cherokee for more than one or two nights, though some were used for successive days because of illness or severe weather. Many campsites were likely used by successive detachments along the Northern Route. Daniel Butrick reported that some detachments in Illinois left camp fires burning for those that succeeded them.<sup>212</sup> He also remarked that on at least one occasion a detachment, “left one of their number behind to be buried by her friends, who stopped for the purpose.”<sup>213</sup> It is also likely that the Cherokee stopped at camping sites commonly used by preceding and succeeding travelers. Locations such as Stark’s homestead (Pulaski County), Bean’s river crossing (Laclede County), Harrison’s crossing (Phelps County), and the Widow Harris farm (Ripley County) are mentioned in journals of travelers totally unrelated to the Cherokee removal. With the exception of religious camp meetings, though, the Cherokee detachments were likely the largest groups to stay at any one site.

### *Registration Requirements:*

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this cover document, a campsite must have clear and demonstrable association with the Cherokee Trail of Tears routes through Missouri. These associations will be found primarily through the historic record, via journals and letters from the Cherokee or those traveling with them, local removal period diaries and accounts of the removal, or credible oral history accounts. Nominated examples of the property type must also retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance. Assessing integrity of these resources to a narrow time period (c. 1837 to 1839) is difficult as is defining the exact location and boundaries of such sites. Retention of a sufficient amount of visual integrity recalling the historic setting is critical, as is the verified integrity of location. Feeling and association are present if integrity of location and setting are respectively verified and retained. Primary documentary evidence (e.g., journals, diaries, and itineraries) must be referenced to establish the historical basis for the resource. In the case of ephemeral sites where no buildings or structures were established, documentary and archeological information must be available to validate the property’s significance. In cases where no known primary documentary evidence exists, verified archeological evidence from the historic period of significance can be used to establish the resource’s historical basis.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>212</sup> Butrick Journal, January 22, 1839 entry, 56.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Registration requirements are modified from Kansas State Historical Society, “National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail (amended submission).” Accepted by the National Register of Historic Places, 2013.

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Like the boundaries of the roadbed property type that include consideration of possible adjacent campsites, boundaries of campsites should consider a variety of factors. The size of the detachments likely required multiple clusters for family groups scattered on all sides of the farm or natural amenity that attracted the detachment. Brickey family oral history suggests campsites on both sides of the Huzzah Creek for the multiple detachments that passed by and camped on their farm. Detachments at ferry crossings are known to have been divided for hours, days, or at the Mississippi River ferries for nearly a month. Associated sites, such as homestead sites of host families, natural features (springs, creeks, etc.), and possible burial sites should also be considered when establishing boundaries for campsites, so large boundaries or discontinuous boundaries may be warranted.

### **Property Type IV: Trail Graves**

#### *Description:*

Trail graves are those sites containing individual burial locations of Trail of Tears travelers. Death from illness, accident, or misadventure was all too common along the Trail of Tears in Missouri. Cannon's journal makes note of the burial of nine individuals in Missouri, eight Cherokee and one African American wagoner. The other detachments experienced similar losses, and journals, letters and other references describe extensive loss of life along the trail—especially the deaths of the elderly and children. In Missouri, burials were simply earthen plots unmarked or simply marked using temporary materials. Based on journal accounts, most burials were at or near campsites, and oral traditions in Missouri suggest that some burials occurred in existing family plots on farms near campsites. The Brickey family's oral tradition suggests a Cherokee burial at the family graveyard above the old farmstead. Also, ground penetrating radar investigations near Bell's Tavern indicate that the Cherokee who died while Cannon camped at "Dyes" are buried near James Wilson.

Oral traditions have also grown around the possible burial site of Nancy Bushyhead Walker Hildebrand, thought to be interred at the Trail of Tears State Park in Cape Girardeau County. Called "Princess Otahki" by those who memorialized her, the supposed gravesite is topped by a memorial installed in the 1960s. Though connected to important Cherokee leaders, Nancy was not a "princess." Though she died and was buried in Missouri, the reports of her death, burial and the long-term care of her gravesite are greatly romanticized. The memorialization of the person and supposed gravesite is interesting in the context of the Trail of Tears and the myths and stories that grew around it, but is also a cautionary tale. The Cherokee had neither the time nor desire to linger on the trail, pauses for burial were brief and the graves random and utilitarian. Locating and verifying a gravesite is difficult and invasive means of doing so discouraged.

#### *Significance:*

Gravesites may be eligible under Criterion A and/or D: Ethnic Heritage/Native American for their historic association with the Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. Criterion Consideration D requirements must also be considered when nominating gravesites, even if for Criterion A significance. The story of the Trail of Tears is in large part a story of loss: loss of homeland, loss of possessions, and loss of life. Gravesites are a physical reminder and symbol of the loss of over 4000 Cherokee on the Trail of Tears. That so many died, yet so few gravesites can be accurately located and identified is also, in a sense, a loss of identity. While romantic myths arise around the deaths of a few Cherokee such as "Princess Otahki,"

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and journals briefly note the names of the dead, the names and stories of thousands who died remain unknown.

### *Registration Requirements:*

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this cover document, a gravesite must have clear and demonstrable connection with a Cherokee or member of the removal party (wagoner, missionary, physician, etc.) that died on the Trail of Tears in Missouri. These associations will be found primarily through the historic record, via journals and letters from the Cherokee or those traveling with them, local removal period diaries and accounts of the removal, or credible oral history accounts. Nominated examples of the property type must also retain sufficient integrity to convey that significance. Assessing integrity of these resources is difficult as is defining the exact location and boundaries of such sites. Retention of a sufficient amount of visual integrity recalling the historic setting is critical, as is the verified integrity of location. Verifying the location of a gravesite should never be done with invasive means (shovel testing or excavation). Ground penetrating radar and similar methods are acceptable. Feeling and association are present if integrity of location and setting are respectively verified and retained. Primary documentary evidence (e.g., journals, diaries, and itineraries) must be referenced to establish the historical basis for the resource.

Because of the difficulty in locating and verifying Trail of Tears-related gravesites, these resources may most often be included as suggested if unverified sites in the boundaries of nominations for other related property types. Cannon mentioned burying members of his detachment prior to breaking camp, so burial sites were likely on or very near known campsites. A similar practice was likely followed by other detachments. Oral histories from families living along the trail also report of burials in family burial plots. Burial at existing burial sites is likely as it would have saved families who allowed Cherokee to camp on their land unfortunate discoveries as land was later developed or cultivated. Boundaries for campsites at which there were known deaths should consider the location of possible burials and include information about them in the nomination. If a verified gravesite occurs singularly, the boundary of the resource will include the grave itself plus at least a 50 meter contributing land area around the burial site.

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### Geographical Data

The thirteen detachments of Cherokee that traversed Missouri during the Trail of Tears (1837-39) traveled, altogether, more than six hundred miles of Southern Missouri from the Mississippi River valley through southeast and central Missouri to the far southwest corner. At the time, many areas were still forming county governments and the political boundaries of the state as they are today were still decades in the making. For convenience, current county names and boundaries are used. The exact routes of some of the detachments, notably Hildebrand's variation on the Northern Route, have also not been fully researched or identified. With this in mind, the exact geographical area covered by this and future amendments of this MPDF cannot be exactly defined. Based on current knowledge, however, the geographical boundaries of this document include portions of the following counties.

Northern Route: Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Perry, Madison, St. Francois, Washington, Crawford, Phelps, Pulaski, Laclede, Webster, Greene, Christian, Stone and Barry counties.

Hildebrand's variation on the Northern Route, in addition to the above: Iron, Reynolds, Dent, Texas and Wright counties.

Benge Route: Mississippi, Scott, Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Wayne, Butler and Ripley counties.

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### Identification and Evaluation Methods

The compilation of this MPDF was funded through a grant from the National Park Service, Long Distance Trails Program in Santa Fe, NM. The MPDF was prepared by staff of the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office. The bulk of the research, field survey, and measuring of road segments was completed by state and federal agencies, students of the St. Louis Community College, members of the Missouri Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association, and volunteers on Passport in Time (PIT) projects sponsored by the Mark Twain National Forest unit of the U.S. Forest Service. Volunteers were supervised and assisted by professionals in the fields of history, archeology, and cultural resource management.

While it has long been known that the Trail of Tears extended through Missouri, there was little effort to identify trail-related resources until the late 1950s. Through cooperation with Cape Girardeau County and Missouri State Parks, the Trail of Tears State Park (Cape Girardeau County) opened in 1958. The park, nearly 4000 acres in size, includes several Trail of Tears-related resources. In 1962 the Cape Girardeau Rotary funded a Trail of Tears Memorial in the park on the purported burial site of Nancy Bushyhead Walker Hildebrand. Nancy was sister to Rev. Jesse Bushyhead and wife to Lewis Hildebrand, both of whom led detachments along the Trail of Tears. Nancy died after crossing the Mississippi River into Missouri and was buried in Cape Girardeau County. Her purported burial place and the ferry landing where nine of the eleven detachments that traveled the Northern Route of the Trails landed in Missouri are within the boundaries of the Trail of Tears State Park.

Efforts to recognize the trail and identify associated sites paralleled and supported the movement to designate the Trail of Tears as a National Historic Trail. Studies of the route, evaluations of its significance and identification of sites that supported the interpretive and recreational mission of the National Historic Trails Program were identified in preparation of designation and, later, as part of the comprehensive management and use plan published in 1992. Research by historians such as Duane King supplemented National Park Service efforts to manage and interpret the trail.

In 2000 the NPS Long Distance Trails Program funded a nationwide study of the Cherokee Trail of Tears that resulted in a MPDF for the "Historic and Archeological Resources of the Cherokee Trail of Tears." As part of this project, several trail related properties in Missouri were identified, documented, and nominated for listing in the National Register.

Despite these early efforts, little research or field survey of trail-related resources in Missouri had been conducted—notably on the Bengé Route. Planned improvements to U.S. Highway 67, a road that roughly follows the historic path of the Natchitoches/Southwest Trace through Missouri, spurred further research into the historic roadway and subsequently into the Trail of Tears. Archival research and context development by Russell Weisman, Senior Preservation Specialist with the Missouri Department of Transportation, forms the foundation of the historic context on the Bengé Route through Missouri. Weisman's research identified the state roads in use at the time of the Cherokee removal and plotted the most likely path based on GLO and state road survey. Weisman also gathered early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century accounts of travel through Missouri along these routes as a means of supporting their likely use by the Bengé Detachment.

Weisman's research has also been used as the basis for field survey to "ground proof" the location of the Bengé Route of the Trail of Tears, segments of which have been abandoned by subsequent road

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improvement projects. U.S. Forest Service staff at the Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF) have led efforts to identify abandoned road segments on their Forest units in Missouri. The Forest Service has sponsored two Passport in Time projects, volunteer archeological and historic preservation efforts, to map and measure extant Trail of Tears road segments in the MTNF. Staff of the MTNF have also worked with students of the St. Louis Community College to identify trail remnants, and the Forest has funded a project with Missouri State University to compile and analyze data gathered through these volunteer efforts.<sup>215</sup> Data gathered in these field surveys of the route were used to prepare property type descriptions and registration requirements for the "Roadbed and Road Segment" property type. SHPO staff also reviewed National Register of Historic Places nominations and multiple property documentation forms for historic roadways and trails nationwide to develop assessment criteria.

Research into Trail of Tears routes through Missouri continue, as do efforts to field survey roadways and identify and document related cultural resources. As additional context for the Northern Route and Hildebrand's variation of this route are developed, additional contexts for this nomination will be prepared. Field survey and documentation of associated cultural resources will also be used to develop additional property types.

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<sup>215</sup> Heather Seale and John Fox. "Trail of Tears in Southeast Missouri, Poplar Bluff District, Mark Twain National Forest, Survey Data/Results." Missouri State University, Fall 2012.

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Cherokee Trail of Tears in Missouri, 1837-1839  
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26. Dent County General Highway Map, Missouri Department of Transportation (base map), approximate route of White River Trace and possible Hildebrand Routes through Dent County.

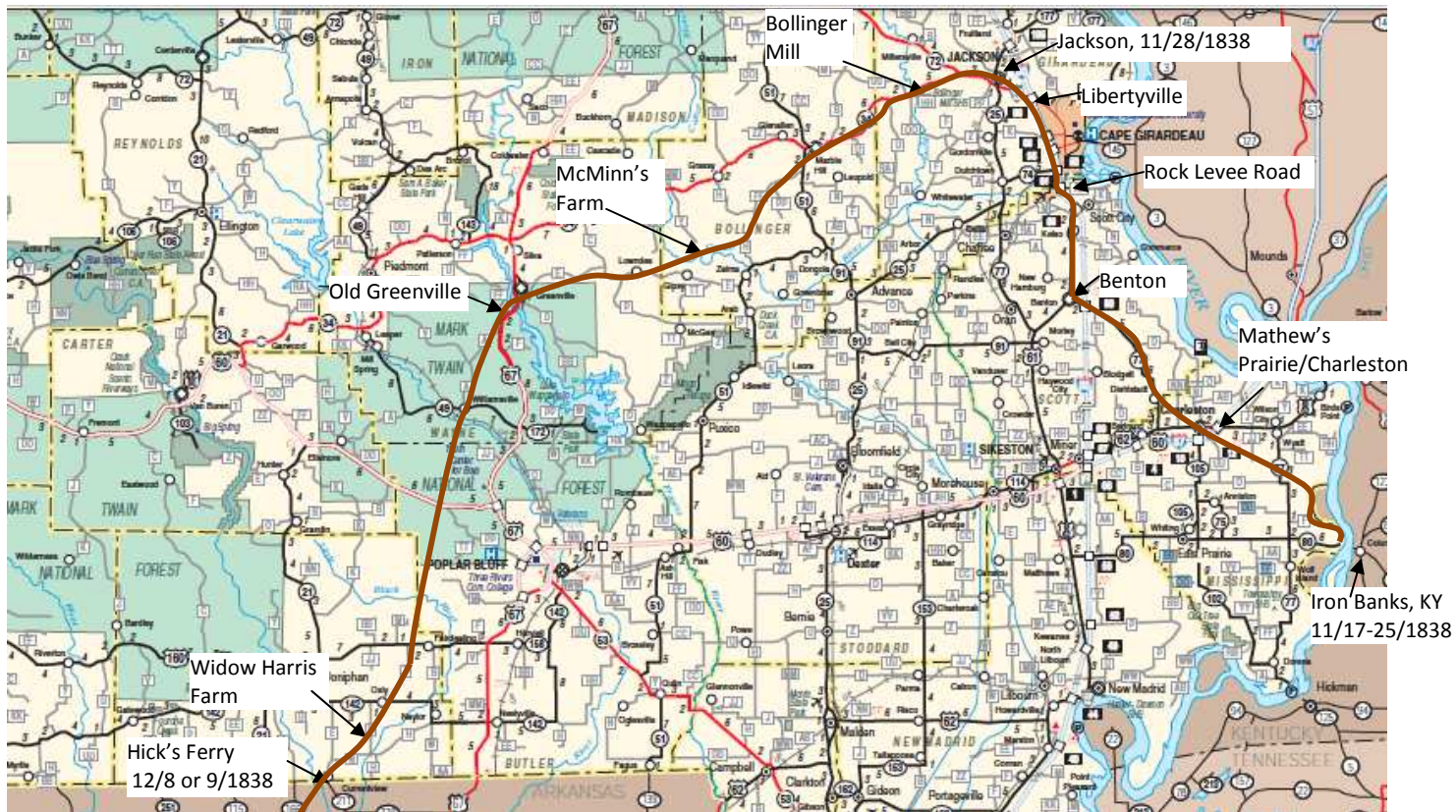
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**Figure 1:** Inset of Trail of Tears National Historic Trail Map showing general path of the three Trail of Tears routes through Missouri. Published online by the National Park Service:  
<http://www.nps.gov/trte/index.htm>.



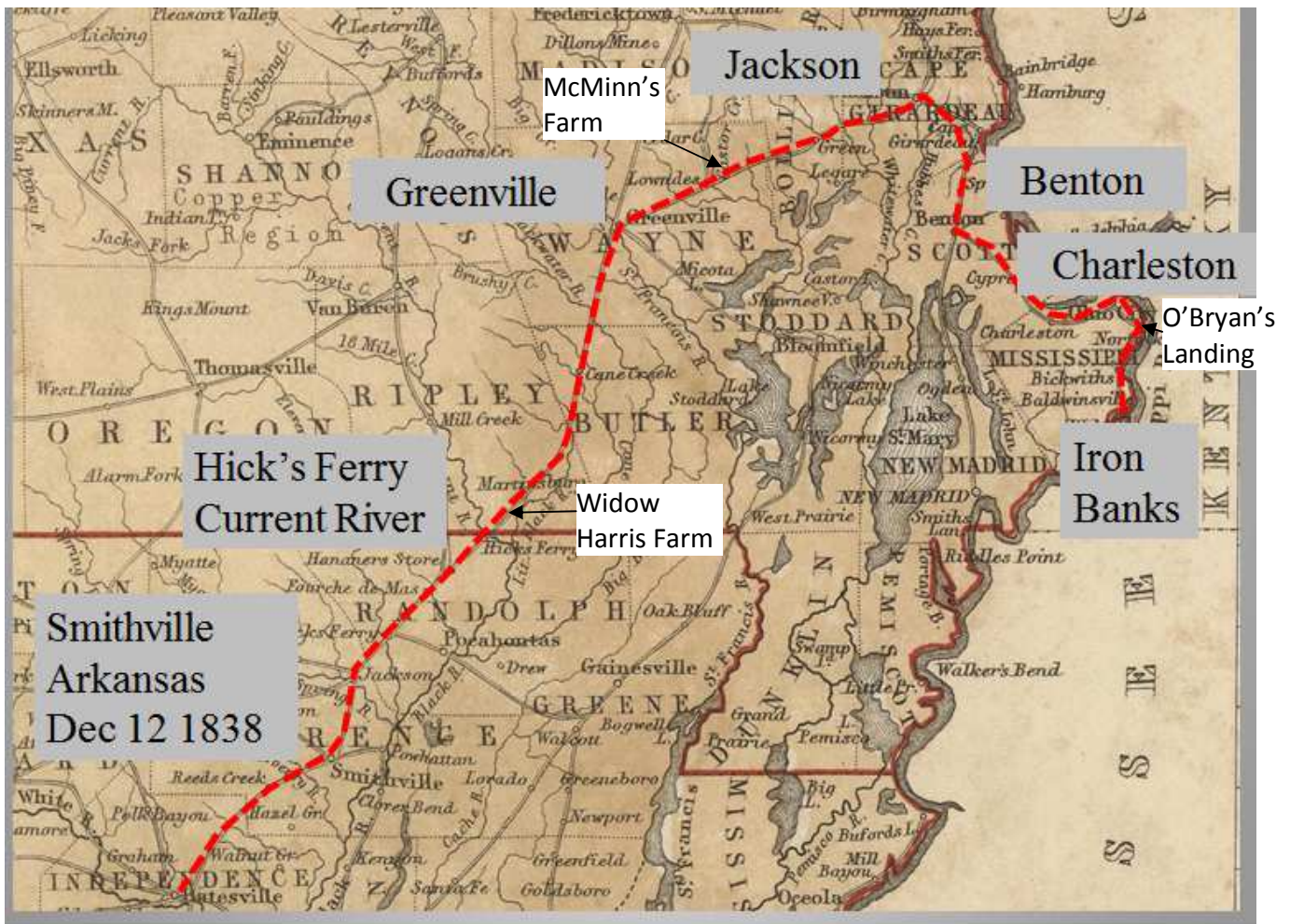
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**Figure 2:** Inset of Missouri Official Highway Map, 2010-2012 the approximate path of the Benge Rouge. [www.modot.org/newsandinfo/publications/documents/Mapfront\\_2010.pdf](http://www.modot.org/newsandinfo/publications/documents/Mapfront_2010.pdf). Labels show approximate location landmarks and places noted in the context.



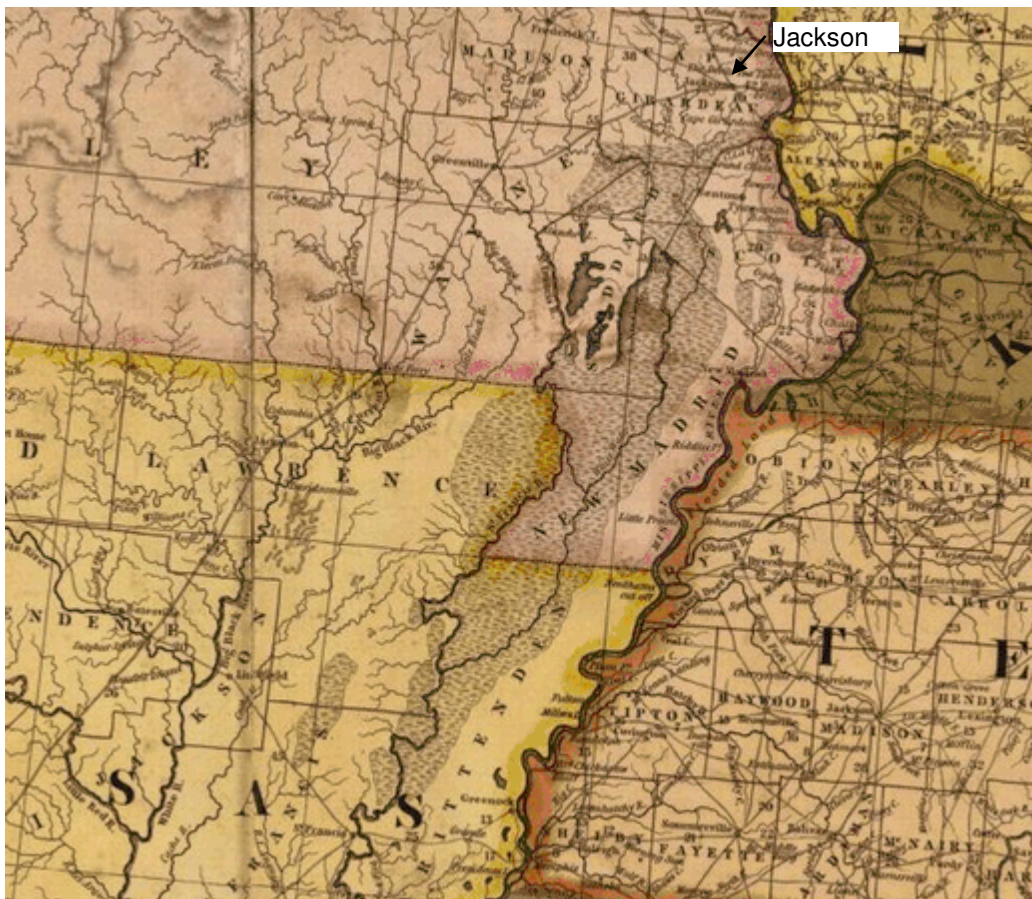
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**Figure 3:** Map showing overview the Bengé Route of the Cherokee Trail of Tears prepared by Russell Weisman. Base map: John Bartholomew, "Missouri and Arkansas," *Black's Atlas of North America*. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1856. See figure 2 for modern map of similar area.



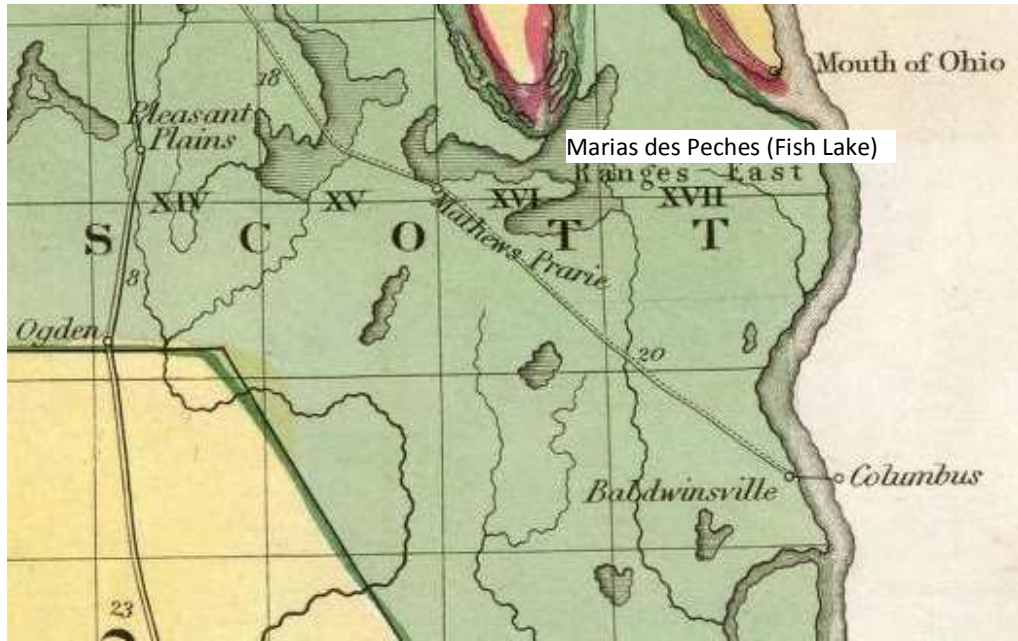
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**Figure 4:** Portion of J. H. Young's *Reference and Distance Map of the United States*, 1834.



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**Figure 7:** Overgrown road swales on banks of Fish Lake, Mississippi County. Photo by Tiffany Patterson, October 2011.

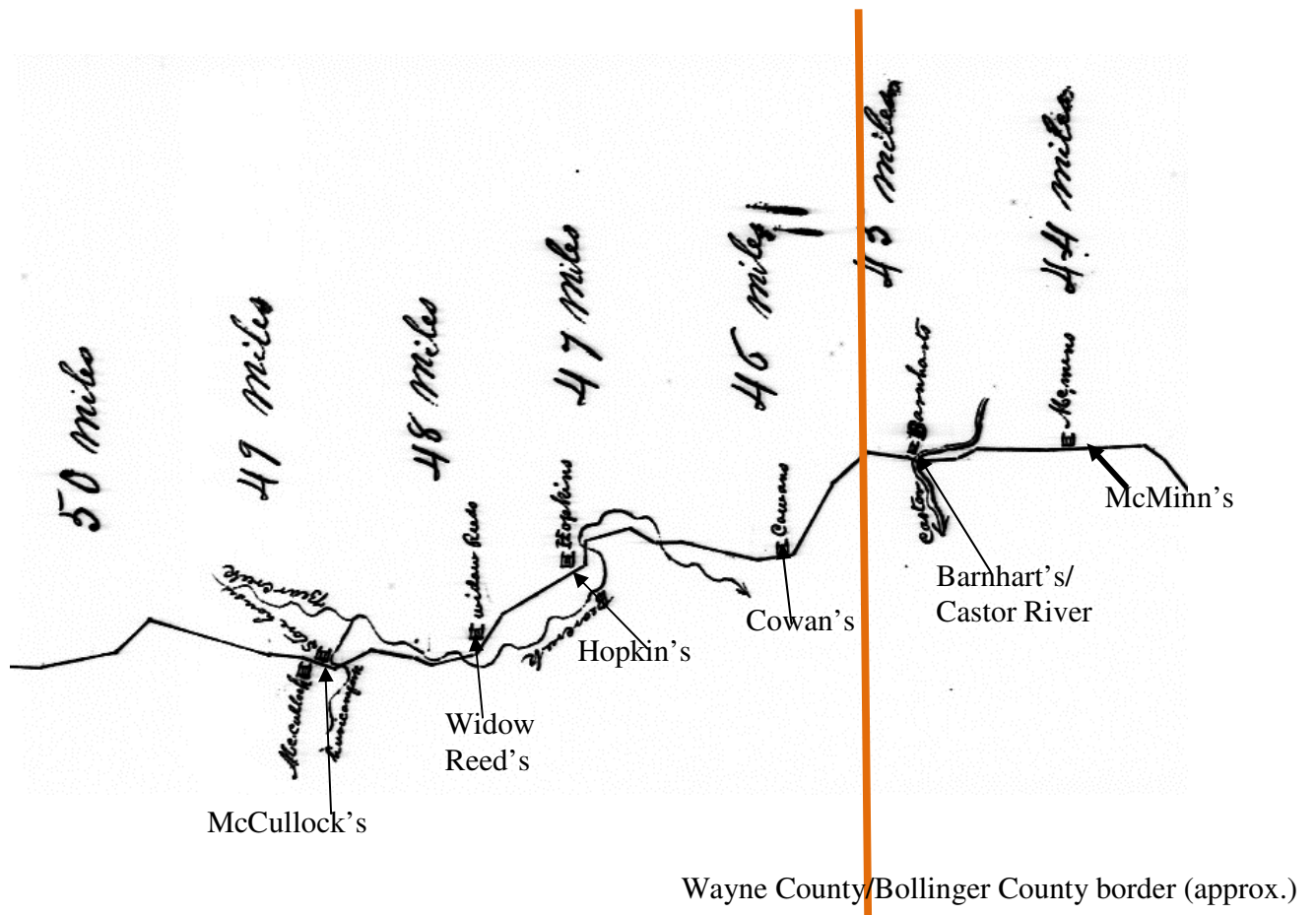


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**Figure 8:** Plat of a segment of the 1837 State Road from Cape Girardeau to Arkansas. "Commissioners Report of the Survey of a State Road from Cape Girardeau to intersect the Military Road in the Arkansas State near Pittmans Ferry," Missouri State Archive, Jefferson City, Missouri. This segment shows the road near the western Bollinger County border and extending into eastern Wayne County northeast of Lowndes.



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**Figure 11:** Section of the Rock Levee Road still in use as access road, Cape Girardeau County, looking northeast. Photo by: Tiffany Patterson, October 2011.



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**Figure 14:** McMinn Farmstead, swales to right of gravel road. Photo by Tiffany Patterson, October 2011.



**Figure 15:** Natchitoches Trace Swales on Corps of Engineer Property, Old Greenville vic., Wayne County. Photo by Russell Weisman, February 2012.



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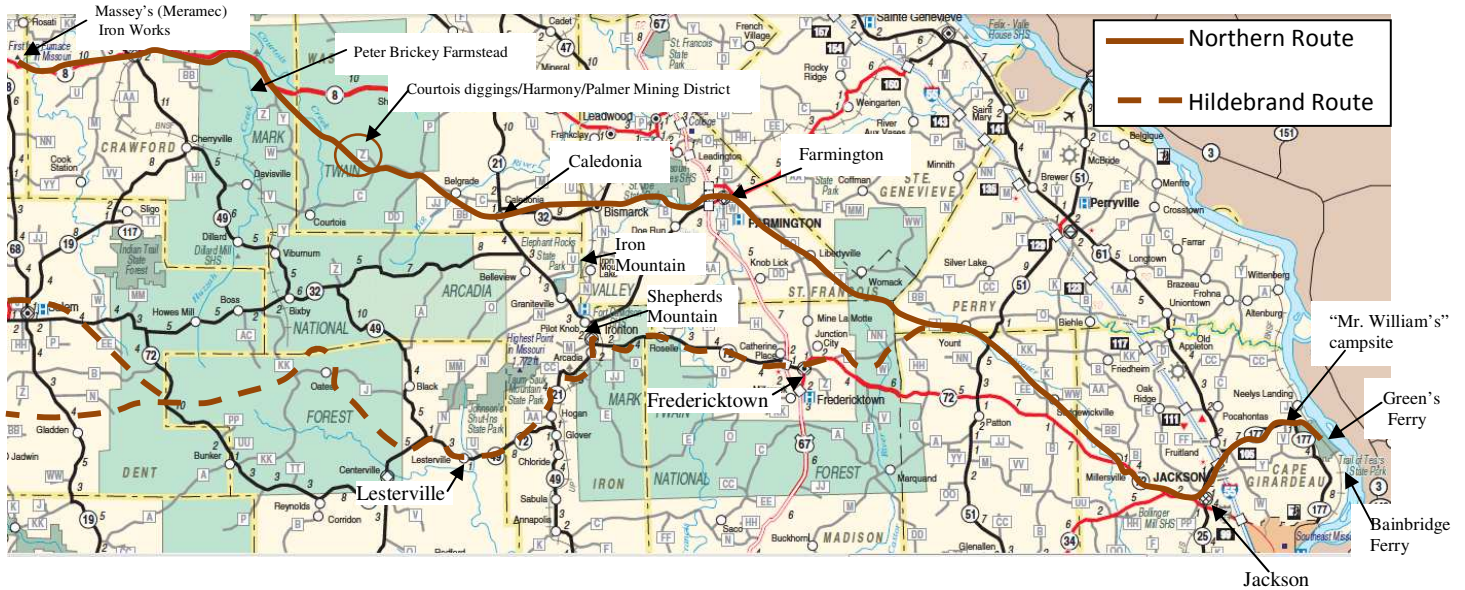
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**Figure 16:** Natchitoches Trace Swales on Corps of Engineer Property, Old Greenville vic., Wayne County. Photo by Russell Weisman, February 2012.

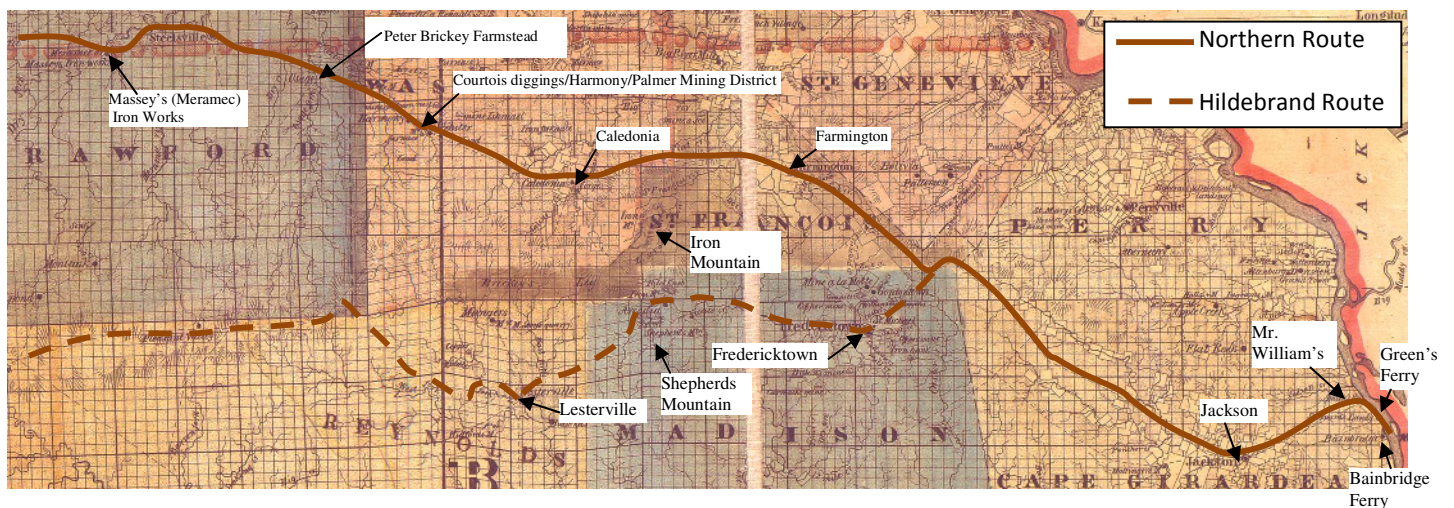


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**Figure 17:** Inset of Missouri Official Highway Map, 2010-2012 showing eastern most section of the Northern Route (Mississippi River Crossing to Meramec Iron Works). Labels show approximate location of known Trail of Tears route landmarks and places mentioned in the Cannon, Buttrick and Morrow journals.

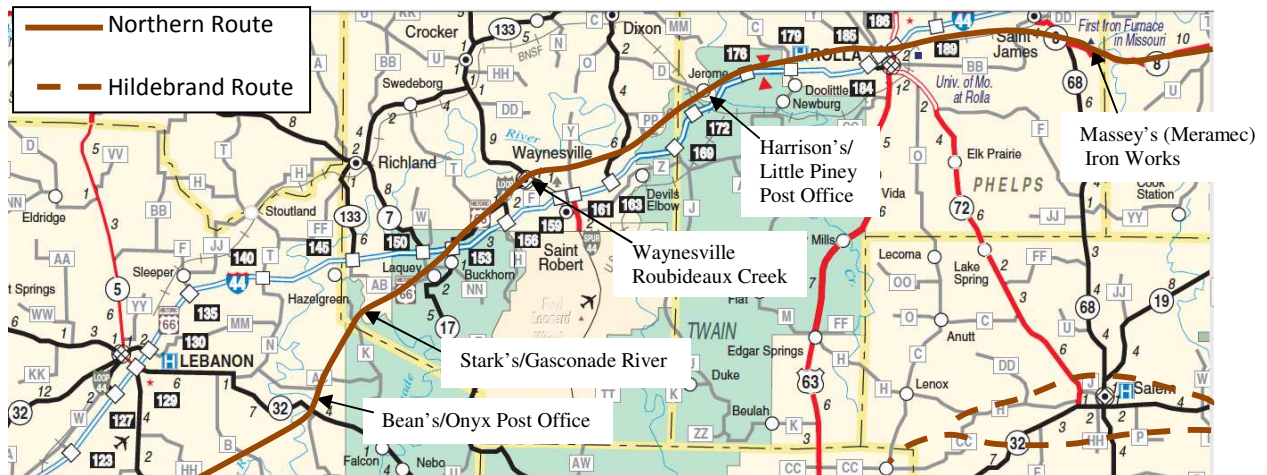


**Figure 18:** “Sectional Map of the State of Missouri Compiled from the United States Surveys and Other Sources,” (St. Louis, MO: Edward Hutawa, pub., 1844) depicting approximately the same area as above

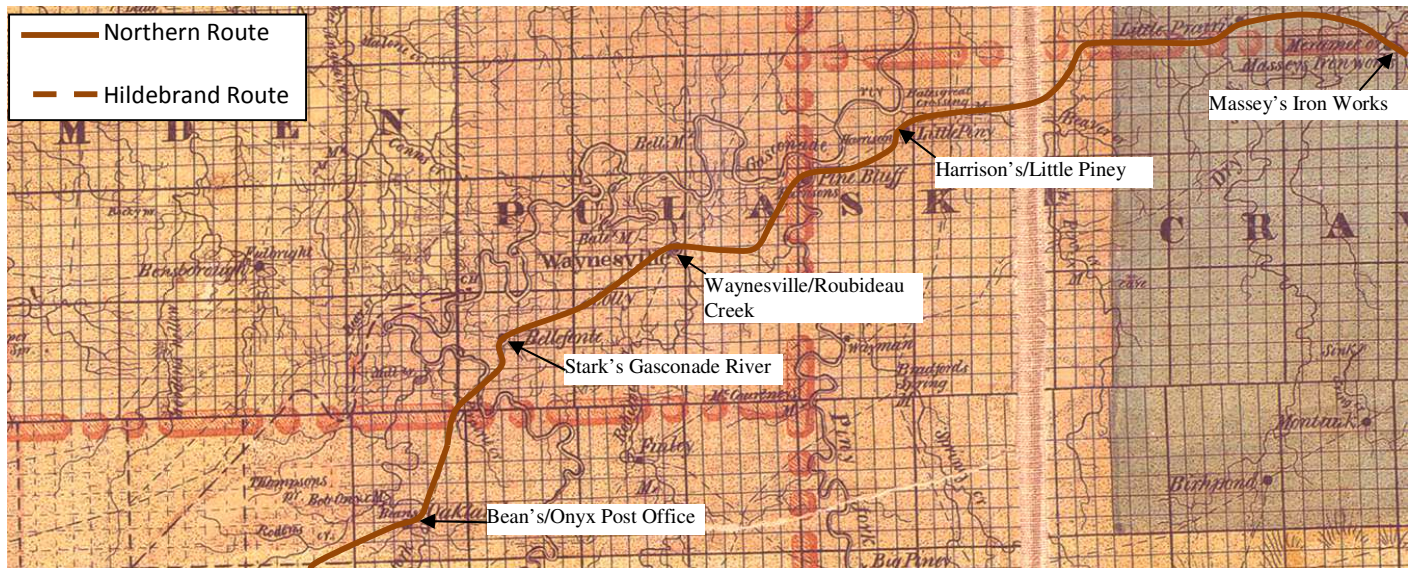


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**Figure 19:** Inset of Missouri Official Highway Map, 2010-2012 showing east-central portion of the trail. Labels show approximate locations of several campsites and river crossings mentioned in the Cannon, Buttrick and Morrow journals.

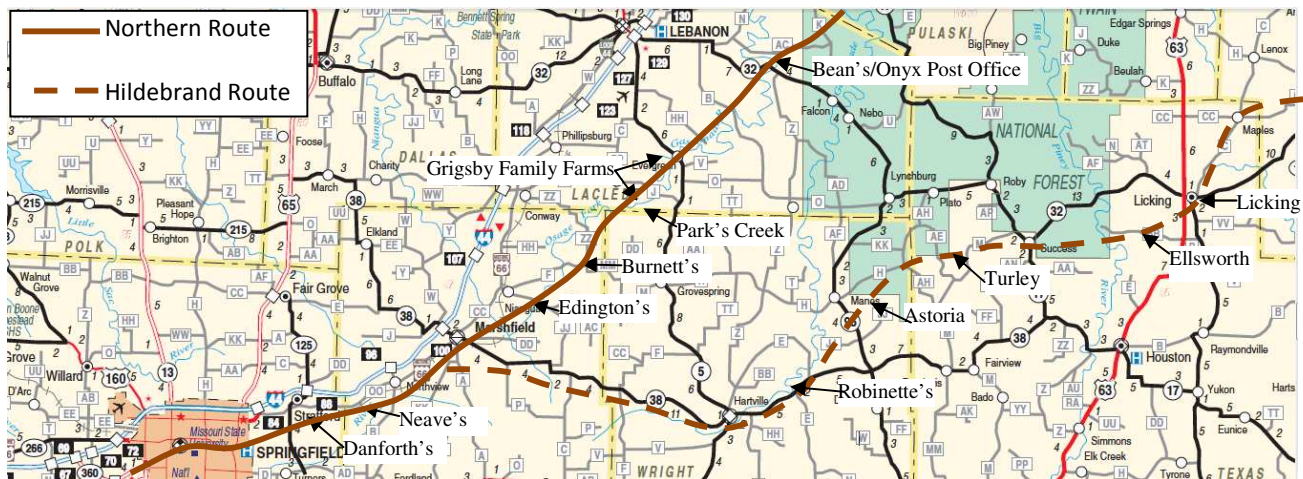


**Figure 20:** "Sectional Map of the State of Missouri Compiled from the United States Surveys and Other Sources," (St. Louis, MO: Edward Hutawa, pub., 1844) depicting approximately the same area.

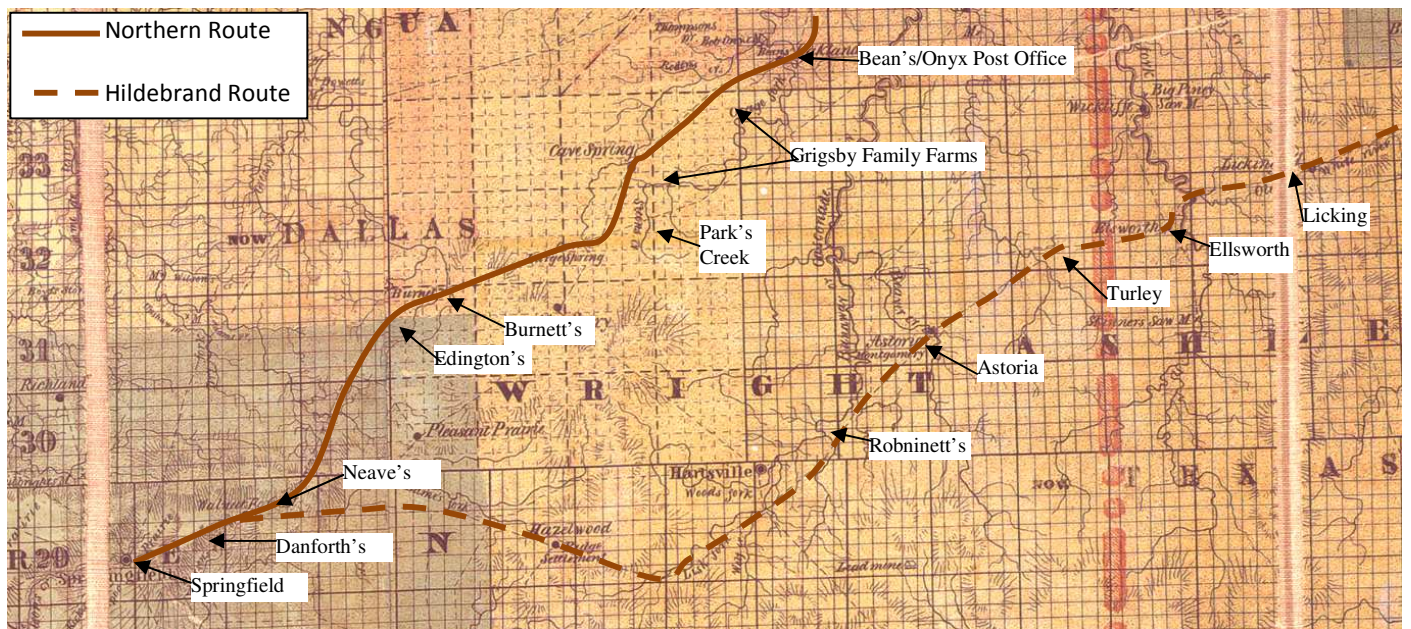


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**Figure 21:** Inset of Missouri Official Highway Map, 2010-2012 showing west-central portion of the trail. Labels show approximate locations of several campsites and river crossings mentioned in the Cannon, Buttrick and Morrow journals and other Trail of Tears landmarks.

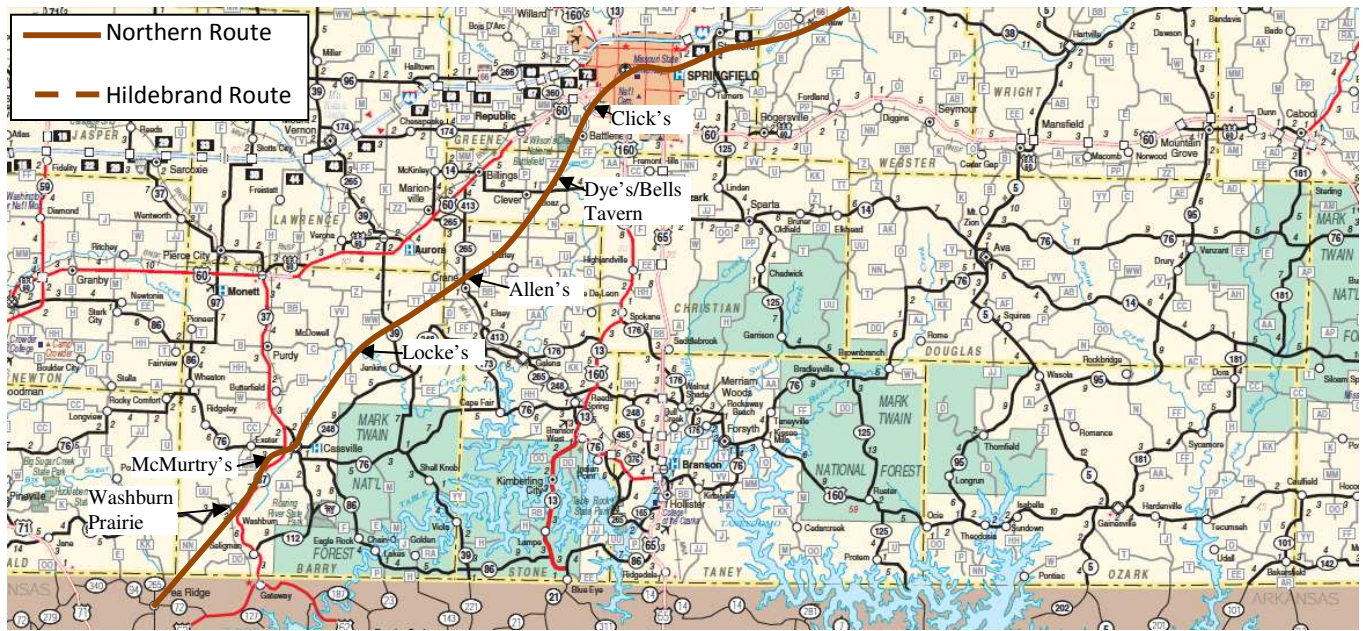


**Figure 22:** "Sectional Map of the State of Missouri Compiled from the United States Surveys and Other Sources," (St. Louis, MO: Edward Hutawa, pub., 1844) depicting approximately the same area.

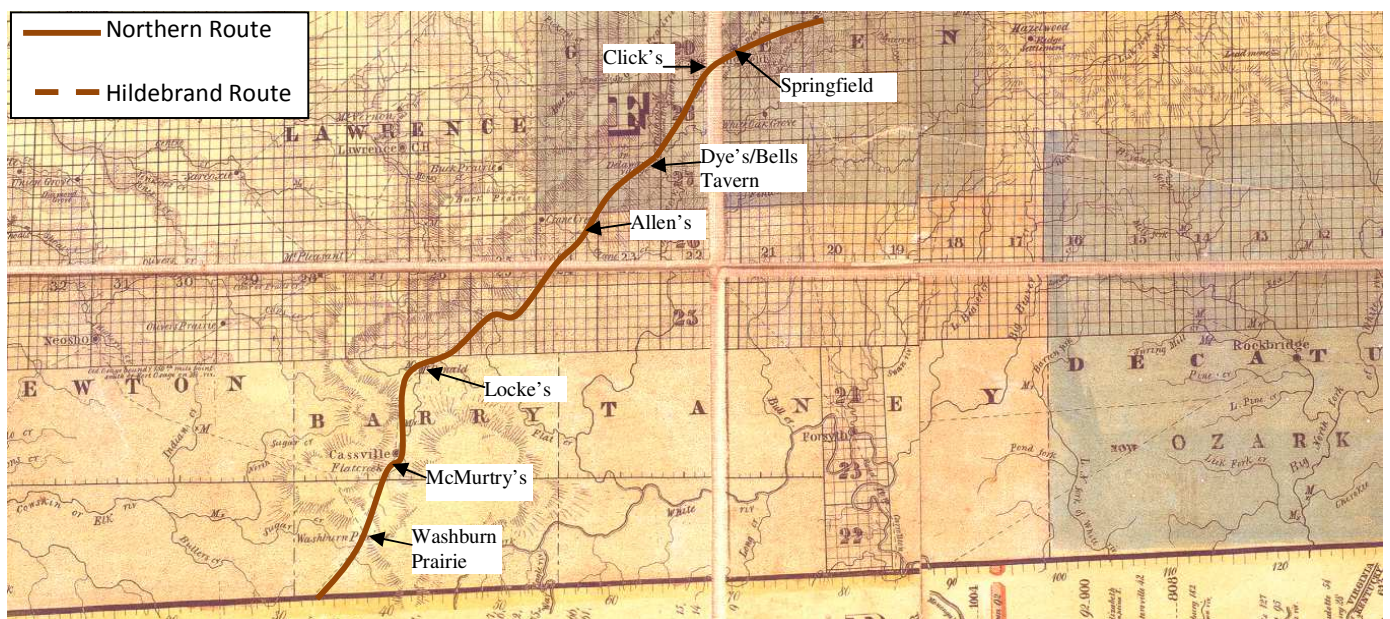


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**Figure 23:** Inset of Missouri Official Highway Map, 2010-2012 showing southwestern portion of the trail. Labels show approximate locations of several campsites and river crossings mentioned in the Cannon, Butrick and Morrow journals and other Trail of Tears landmarks.

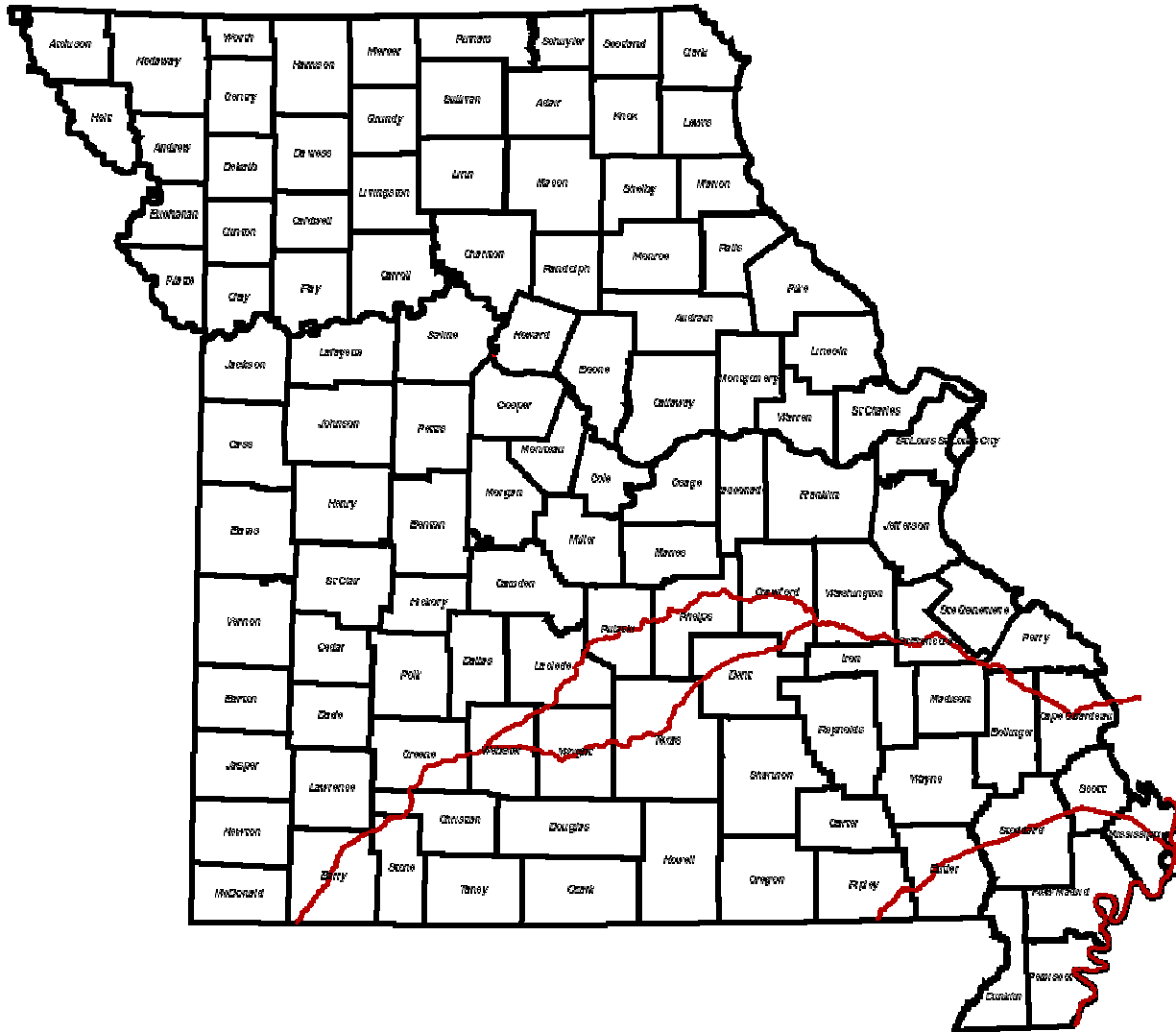


**Figure 24:** "Sectional Map of the State of Missouri Compiled from the United States Surveys and Other Sources," (St. Louis, MO: Edward Hutawa, pub., 1844) depicting approximately the same area.



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**Figure 25:** Trail of Tears Routes through Missouri, based on Duane King's "Report on the Cherokee Trail of Tears: Correcting and Updating the 1992 Map Supplement," unpublished manuscript, 1999



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**Figure 26:** Dent County General Highway Map, Missouri Department of Transportation (base map), approximate route of White River Trace and possible Hildebrand Routes through Dent County

