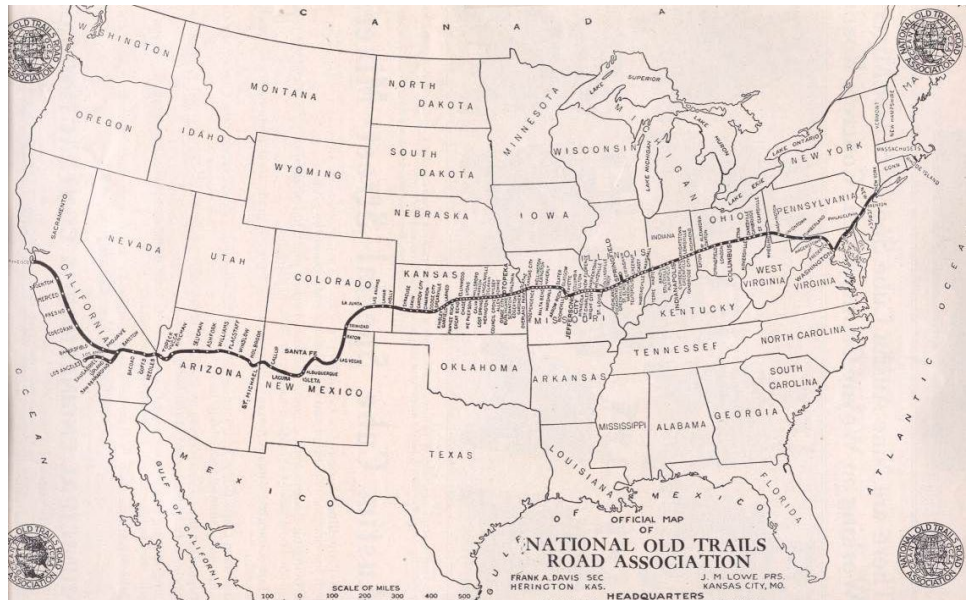


Harry S. Truman (1884 – 1972)

Harry Truman served as president of the National Old Trails Road Association from 1926 until 1948. In 1926-27, he traveled the Santa Fe Trail many times as he was tasked with determining the official route of the Old Trails Road coast to coast. His inclusion of the Santa Fe Trail within that framework was based on his studies of westward expansion, on economic impact, and on viewing original ruts and swales. Eventually the road ran coast to coast and was developed for automobile usage.



Harry Truman also traveled this route several times to determine where the 12 DAR Madonna of the Trail Statues were to be placed. *Madonna of the Trail* is a series of 12 identical monuments dedicated to the spirit of pioneer women in the United States. The monuments were commissioned by the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR). They were installed in each of the 12 states along the National Old Trails Road, which extended from Cumberland, Maryland, to Upland, California.

Harry was a lifelong enthusiast of historic routes and of American History. In his speeches, he often reminded listeners that the story of the trails is the story of our nation. His inclusion of the Santa Fe Trail in most of the National Old Trails Road route promoted its development as a continued route of transport and contributed to the development of towns along the route. References come from letters Harry Truman wrote home to his wife, letters to Frank A. Davis who was Secretary of National Old Trails Road Association, official White House papers, newspaper articles available at the Harry S Truman Library Institute, DAR archives, and from film footage and copies of his speeches. Harry Truman's love of history provided a foundation for Marc Simmons' statement—"*The Santa Fe Trail lives on!*"



Picture of Harry Truman with mules courtesy of Truman Library and Institute

