

Brief History of the Santa Fe Trail

Use the word bank below to fill in the blanks.

In 1821 _____ (a country which today is to the south of the United States) received its _____ (freedom) from Spain. In the same year, William Becknell who lived in _____ (the state to the east of Kansas) was deeply in debt. He and some other men heard that _____ (European country) no longer controlled Mexico. They took a few trade items and headed to Mexico. The largest village in northern Mexico was _____ (the capital of New Mexico). _____ (Father of the Santa Fe Trail) had much success trading his items for silver.

Trade had begun with Mexico. The road to this Mexican town became known as the _____ Trail (not the Oregon Trail). The trail continued as a/an _____ (between two countries) trading route until the American war with _____ (country to the south) in 1846. Thanks to Col. Stephen Kearny and the _____ (not the Navy) of the West, northern Mexico became part of the United States. The trail soon became important as a military freighting route. Millions of pounds of supplies were shipped along the trail to new _____ (Army posts).

The Santa Fe Trail continued to serve as a vital commercial and military highway until the _____ (a transportation system that includes trains and tracks) reached Santa Fe in 1880.

Word bank (some will be used more than once)

Independence

Becknell

forts

Spain

Mexico

railroad

Santa Fe

international

Missouri

Army