

Santa Fe Trail - Sibley/Brown Survey Record

Map of the route from Ft. Osage on the Missouri River, to San Fernando de Taos, near the Rio del Norte, about 60 miles north of Santa Fe. 1825. Library of Congress.

(Photostat reproduction in the possession of the author.)

This map "was Brown's first map of the Santa Fe Road which was only recently uncovered in the cartographic collections of the Library of Congress where it had remained unidentified as to purpose or author since its purchase in 1937 from Goodspeed's in Boston. It is an uncolored rectangularly-shaped map with two grid strips extending from its eastern border. On the verso is the manuscript notation 'George Sibley's Map'. This map shows the route followed by the Commissioners on their outbound journey from Fort Osage which ended with Sibley's arrival in Taos on October 30, 1825. It was drawn for Sibley in Taos before he and Brown moved to Santa Fe on November 27, 1825. The notation 'Santa Fe about here', appearing below the lower left neat line suggests Brown's uncertainty as to the exact location of Santa Fe or the routes to that city."

[Ref: John R. Hebert in "Mapping the Road to Santa Fe, 1825-1827"; TERRAE INCOGNITAE; 1976]

"It will be perceived this map is drawn by a scale of 20 miles to an inch & the inner marginal references show the westing and southing from (near Fort Osage) the place of beginning -

The outer marginal references show the Latitude and the Longitude West from Greenwich - The Latitudes are carefully taken with a good Sextant & the necessary corrections all made except the very slight correction of refraction that might have been made by the assistance of a barometer which I had not.

The Longitude is derived from the public surveys made in connection from the mouth of the Ohio River, at which place the Longitude was carefully taken by Mr. Elicut, where on his journey to survey the Florida line - the Longitude there he made 88d 50' 42" & Latitude 37d 0' 22" N between that point & the point of beginning, say Fort Osage, are 46 ranges of 6 miles each, 276 miles. No doubt there is some error in measurement but probably not many miles, from the 100th degree of Longitude westward to Touse the distance was not measured but was estimated by times & the travel of waggons & horses frequently corrected by the Latitudes. It will be found mainly correct it is believed as to westing & quite so as to southing.

The water courses are drawn from the points on our rout into their proper Rivers arguably to information is some cases & mobility (sic) in others - We might have marched from A to B - mule rout is from 10 to 13 as dotted.

"J.C.B"