MISSOURI AND THE SOUTHWEST

By Floyd C. Shoemaker

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Floyd C. Shoemaker for many years Secretary of the State Historical Society of Missouri made the principal address during the organization meeting of the Missouri Club of the State of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, October 1, 1945. This address was so replete with historical facts relating to Oklahoma and many states of this part of the United States that I requested the privilege of using it in The Chronicles of Oklahoma.

With sincere tribute and thanks to Mr. Shoemaker, it is presented.

—Charles Evans, Secretary

MISSOURI "MOTHER OF THE WEST"

Missouri has been known as the "Mother of the West" and as the "Founder of States," and an analysis of the settlement and early history of the Pacific coast states, the southwestern states, and the mountain states produces evidence that these titles may be justly applied to her. Missourians were not only prominent among the trailmakers and explorers of the western country but were also foremost among the settlers of the western states, and many Missourians made worthy contributions to the social and political development of their adopted states.

Since the United States bureau of census began to record interstate migration in 1850, Missourians have been conspicuously numerous among the settlers emigrating to the West from the other states. The term "Missourian" includes the native born and those residents of Missouri who came from other states and became identified with Missouri before they moved on to the western areas. The figures of the census reports, however, refer only to native Missourians. An examination of the census reports of the three Pacific coast states, four southwestern states and six mountain states reveals Missourians first or second among the settlers from other states in eight of the western states between 1850 and 1930. Missourians ranked first in Oregon for six decades from 1850 to 1900; first in Montana in 1890 and in 1900; first in Colorado in 1920 and in 1930; and first in Idaho in 1880. Missouri has held second place in the states of California, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Idaho, Colorado, and Arizona; and third place in ten states, New Mexico, Idaho, Washington, Colorado, California, Arizona, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming, and Utah. In seven states, Missouri has held fourth place in interstate migration, fifth place
in seven states, and sixth place in four. In none of these western states has Missouri ranked lower than seventh place and then only in the states of Texas, Washington, and Nevada. Perhaps Missourians made their best record when they ranked second in six states, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Idaho, and Montana, in 1920 and first in Colorado.

The part which Missourians have played in the political development of the western states is indicated by the figures relating to the office of governor. Reference has been found to thirty-one (and possibly more) Missouri governors’ connection in the thirteen states of the Pacific coast, Southwest and the mountain area. In three of the states, Oregon, New Mexico, and Colorado, the first civil territorial governor was a Missourian. In Oklahoma, the second territorial governor and a recent state governor were from Missouri, and one of Utah’s territorial governors was a Missourian. In Arizona, California, and Montana, the first state governors were Missourians as also was the second state governor of Nevada. Stephen F. Austin was a colonial governor of Texas while it was a part of Mexico. The first woman governor of Wyoming was a native Missourian. In Idaho, there have been two Missouri governors and in Washington one.

THE SOUTHWESTERN STATES, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, OKLAHOMA, TEXAS

Contacts between the area which was to become Missouri and that from which Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas were to be created began more than two hundred years ago and have continued through the years. From the time the French made their first attempts to establish commercial relations with Spanish New Mexico and Texas, there has been travel over the trails, rivers, and roads of Missouri to the southwestern country now composing New Mexico and Arizona. Outstanding are the explorations of De Bourgmond, Du Tisne, the Mallet brothers, Pedro Vial, Zebulon M. Pike, Auguste P. Chouteau, Jules De Mun and others. The inauguration of the Santa Fe trade by William Becknell and the subsequent progress of the trade also linked Missouri’s interest with the Southwest. It is enough to say that Missourians initiated the Santa Fe trade, engaged in the trade in considerable numbers, established the outfitting points in Missouri, and that Missourians profited largely from the trade.

The Chouteau family, beginning with Pierre Chouteau, Sr., developed the first trading relations between Missouri and the Oklahoma area as early as 1802 or shortly thereafter, when the Chouteaus induced a group of the Osage Indians to move into Oklahoma. From 1802 until at least 1833 some of the Chouteau family were active in the region of Oklahoma. The Indian trade was developed and friendly relations with the Indians created.
Moses Austin and his son, Stephen, were responsible for the first movement of Missourians into Texas.

The United States census figures bear proof of the extent to which Missourians have emigrated to the Southwest, following the examples set by the early explorers, traders, mountain men, pathfinders, and empire builders. In New Mexico, Missourians have ranked second among the other states in five out of nine decades and only dropped to fifth place in 1870. In the census of 1850, Missourians ranked third in the new Southwest territory which the United States had acquired just previous to 1850. Arizona did not become a separate territory until 1863 and did not appear in the census reports until 1870. At that time, Missourians ranked fifth but their numbers steadily increased until they became second only to Texans in Arizona. In Oklahoma, Missourians have ranked second among the states from the time the territory was created until 1930. In comparison with the southern states, Missouri has sent fewer numbers into Texas, yet Missouri has held as high as fifth place among the states in Texas in three decades and has never dropped lower than seventh place, which she held for three decades. Missourians have increased more rapidly in Oklahoma than in any of the four southwestern states, although increase has been more consistent in Arizona.

Indian traders and travelers were the first to discover possibilities in Oklahoma, and a Missouri business man conceived the idea of the colonization of Texas. Traders, explorers, and Santa Fe traders were responsible for attracting settlers to the region of New Mexico and Arizona, although the majority of the early American trappers and traders in the Spanish Southwest did not contribute particularly to the internal development of those states. Nevertheless, they included such well-known Missouri explorers, trappers, and traders as Antoine Robidoux, Ceran St. Vrain, Sylvester and James Ohio Pattie, Charles Bent, "Kit" Carson, William Becknell, Joseph Reddeford Walker, David Waldo, Josiah Gregg, "Old Bill" Williams, and Dr. Henry Connelly. Some of these men were among the pathfinders to California. Antoine Robidoux was definitely identified with New Mexico as well as with Colorado, and contributed to western exploration and trade. Ceran de Hault de Lassus St. Vrain, a native of Missouri, a Santa Fe trader, pioneer merchant and soldier, entered the New Mexico trade possibly as early as 1823, and at least by 1825. By 1840 the fur trading firm of Bent and St. Vrain ranked next to the American Fur Company in the amount of business transacted. The Patties, father and son, who were among the first to enter California from the south, are said to have been the first leaders of an American trapping expedition to set foot on Arizona soil. Jedediah S. Smith, also of California fame, has been credited with being the second leader of an American trapping expedition on Arizona soil.
Charles Bent, the first American civil governor in New Mexico, was a Missourian by adoption as his father moved to Missouri when he was a small boy. Charles Bent began his career in New Mexico as a fur trader and a leader of Santa Fe caravans. After 1832 he made his permanent home in New Mexico where he was beloved as a statesman, scholar, soldier, frontiersman and trader. Christopher ("Kit") Carson, trapper, guide, Indian agent, and soldier, lived in Missouri some fifteen years before he joined a Santa Fe expedition and began his western career. The exploits of Carson belong to the West generally, yet he established a home in New Mexico and New Mexico can rightfully claim him as an adopted son who contributed to her development.

William Becknell, who founded the Santa Fe trade, was a Missourian by adoption. Joseph Reddeford Walker, also identified with California, is said to have discovered the rich placers on the future site of Prescott, Arizona, in 1861. David Waldo, a physician of Gasconade County, Missouri, who practiced also in Osceola and in Independence, Missouri (our President Truman's home town) became active in the Santa Fe trade for a number of years before the Mexican War and lived in Taos, New Mexico. Josiah Gregg, the first historian of the Santa Fe Trail, lived in Missouri thirteen years at least before he began to visit Santa Fe. William Sherley Williams, trapper and guide known as "Old Bill" Williams, is said to have been an itinerant Methodist preacher in Missouri. In Arizona, Williams Mountain, Williams Fork of the Colorado River, and the town of Williams were named for him.

Dr. Henry Connelly, who was appointed governor of New Mexico in 1861, lived in Liberty, Missouri, a short time before going to Santa Fe and engaging in the trade. Dr. Connelly was a native of Kentucky and lived in Missouri only a short time, so it would seem that his career as a pioneer trader and business man should belong chiefly to New Mexico. The Magoffin brothers, James Wiley and Samuel, were natives of Kentucky who established their Missouri residence after they had entered in the Santa Fe trade. The exploits of James Wiley Magoffin, a United States consul in Mexico by 1825 and later a Santa Fe trader, belong in the annals of both New Mexico and Texas. From 1844 until the outbreak of the Mexican War, James Wiley Magoffin lived near Independence, Missouri. Senator Thomas H. Benton introduced him to President Polk as a man capable of carrying on a secret mission for the United States, and it was due to the adroit and subtle diplomacy of James Magoffin that the United States troops entered Santa Fe without bloodshed on August 18, 1846. Samuel Magoffin established his home in St. Louis County in 1852 and lived in Missouri for some thirty years. The "Duke of Cimarron," in reality, Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell, has been credited with Mis-
souri connections, but the Dictionary of American Biography gives his birth as Kaskaskia, Illinois, and makes no reference to Missouri. The “Duke” accompanied a trapping party to New Mexico about 1830 and is said to have possessed at one time the largest single holding of land in the United States.

The earliest Missourians to enter the region of Oklahoma seem to have been Pierre Chouteau, Sr.; his son, Auguste P. Chouteau; Josiah Gregg; and Nathan Boone, son of Daniel Boone. The Chouteaus began trading with the Osage Indians in Oklahoma at least by 1802, though possibly earlier. Their trading post is said to have been located near a large salt spring which is included within the limits of the present town of Salina. Pierre Chouteau, Sr., has been credited with founding the town of Salina, the first white settlement in Oklahoma (the Salina historical marker bears the date of 1796), and the Chouteau family has been considered the oldest in Oklahoma. Auguste P. Chouteau operated trading posts on the Saline and at the mouth of the Verdigris River, and in 1835 established a trading post at Camp Holmes about five miles northeast of the present Purcell, Oklahoma. Another post was established in 1837 near the present Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Auguste P. Chouteau not only traded with the Indians but was active in the negotiation of Indian treaties and did much to establish peaceful relations with the Indians. Nathan Boone traveled in the Oklahoma area when he was captain of the first regiment of the United States Dragoons and was the first commander at Fort Wayne which was established in eastern Oklahoma in 1838.

The story of Moses Austin and the realization of Austin's dream of colonizing Texas is well known. Moses Austin had done much to develop the mining resources of Missouri and had been an integral part of the political and economic affairs of his community and of St. Louis between 1797 and 1820. His son, Stephen Fuller Austin, who had been born in Virginia, was very young when the Austins moved to Missouri and had grown up in the Missouri environment except while he attended school in the East and in Kentucky. He became associated in business with his father, served as a member of the territorial legislature of Missouri, as an officer of the militia, and was appointed judge of the first judicial district in Arkansas in 1820 before he went to Texas. Moses Austin went to the Mexican province of Texas in the fall of 1820 to seek a land grant from the Mexican government. This grant was made in 1821, but Moses Austin died upon his return from Texas in that year and it was Stephen who carried out the great colonization scheme and who became the founder of Texas. Professor Barker, in his biography of Stephen Fuller Austin, expresses the contribution which Austin made to Texas thus:
No other of the forty-eight commonwealths composing the United States—with the possible exception of Utah—owes so completely to one man as Texas does to Austin... But without Austin there is no reason to believe that Texas would differ today from the Mexican states south of the Rio Grande... Undoubtedly Mexico would have adopted an immigration policy sooner or later; but it seems pretty evident that nothing but Austin's unceasing pressure caused the passage of the imperial colonization law. Without that law... there would have been no settlement of Texas, no revolution, no annexation, no Mexican war; and the Louisiana Purchase, in all probability, would still define the western boundary of the United States.

Stephen F. Austin served for four or five years as governor of the colony he founded. San Felipe de Austin was the capital of the Austin colony, the first county seat of Austin County, and the first American settlement in Texas. Austin used all his energy to cooperate with Mexico until he felt that independence should be sought, and later he worked for annexation. He was president of the convention of 1832, a leader in preparing for the constitutional convention of 1835, served as commander in chief of the army of Texas, headed a commission to Washington, and became the first secretary of state of the Republic of Texas.

Missouri troops were among the first American forces to enter New Mexico upon the outbreak of the war with Mexico. The Army of the West, commanded by Stephen Watts Kearny, was predominantly Missourian. Kearny governed the territory of New Mexico from August 22, 1846, to September 22, 1846. Charles Bent then became civil governor of New Mexico and, according to Kearny's report to the adjutant general of the army, Sterling Price was left in command of the United States troops in the territory. Alexander William Doniphan, colonel of the Missouri Mounted Volunteers in the Army of the West, was a native of Kentucky but attained a place of prominence in the political and legal activities of Missouri, where he remained the greater portion of his life. Doniphan and Willard P. Hall drafted the first code of laws for New Mexico, said to have been printed by David Waldo on an old press. The first American newspaper published in Santa Fe is reported to have been edited by a Missourian and printed on a press which was purchased in St. Louis and operated by two Missouri printers.

Missourians early realized the advantages of settlement in Oklahoma, and four Missouri congressmen advocated the organization of the Territory of Oklahoma. Representatives Robert T. Van Horn, Erastus Wells, Charles H. Mansur, and James Burns introduced bills in Congress and urged Congress to organize the territory.

The role of Missourians in the political, legal, and economic life of the four southwestern states is sufficient to estimate the influence of Missouri in these states. Thirteen Missourians, at
least, have been governors in the territories and states of New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma, and one of them served seven terms. The number could be increased to fourteen if David Merriwether really established his residence in Missouri when he entered the fur trade out of St. Louis. Nine of these governors, plus David Merriwether, held the office of governor in the territory or state of New Mexico. They were Charles Bent, Stephen Watts Kearny, William Carr Lane, Henry Connelly, William T. Thornton, Miguel Antonio Otero, James F. Hinkle, Richard C. Dillon, and A. W. Hockenhull. William Carr Lane, the first mayor of St. Louis, held the office of territorial governor of New Mexico from 1852 to 1853. Dr. Henry Connelly was appointed governor in 1861 and served until 1866. William T. Thornton was the first native Missourian to become a governor of New Mexico, being appointed to that position in the territory in 1893 and serving until 1897. Thornton was born in Henry County, Missouri, educated in Missouri and served as a member of the legislature in Missouri before going to New Mexico in 1877. In New Mexico, Thornton was elected to the territorial legislative assembly in 1880 and was chosen mayor of Santa Fe in 1891, before being appointed territorial governor. Miguel Antonio Otero was born in St. Louis, although his father was a citizen of New Mexico, and his parents remained in St. Louis until he was two years of age. Otero served as governor from 1897 to 1906, and in 1906 was appointed treasurer of the territory. Ten years after New Mexico became a state James F. Hinkle, another native Missourian, became the governor of New Mexico. Hinkle had served in the legislature of New Mexico, was elected mayor of Roswell, and has been a large cattle owner in New Mexico. Following Hinkle was Richard Charles Dillon, 1927-1931, a native born Missourian from St. Louis. In New Mexico, he has been engaged in the mercantile and stock business and served in the state senate. The fourth native Missourian to become governor of New Mexico was A. W. Hockenhull, who was born in Polk County, Missouri, and who practiced law in Bolivar before going to New Mexico. Hockenhull served as lieutenant-governor of New Mexico from 1930 to 1932 and as governor from 1933 to 1935.

Since Arizona became a separate territory in 1863, there have been two governors of Arizona who were Missourians. Benjamin J. Franklin, twelfth territorial governor, had been a lawyer in Kansas City, prosecuting attorney of Jackson County, congressman from Missouri, and a United States consul to China before he was appointed territorial governor of Arizona in 1896. The first state governor of Arizona was George W. P. Hunt, a native of Randolph County, Missouri. Hunt held the office of governor for seven terms and before that had been county treasurer, a member of the territorial legislature, and president of the constitutional convention of 1910. John C. Frémont served as territorial governor of Arizona
from 1878 to 1883. The second territorial governor of Oklahoma was Abraham J. Seay, a native Virginian who had grown up in Missouri and had been active in political and judicial affairs in Missouri for twelve years before he went to Oklahoma. Former governor Leon C. Phillips of Oklahoma is also a native of Missouri, having been born in Worth County, Missouri.

In Congress there have been nineteen Missourians who have represented the states or territories of Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as territorial delegates, representatives, or United States senators. From New Mexico, there have been three delegates in Congress and one of the first two United States senators from New Mexico. These men were Major R. H. Weightman, Stephen Benton Elkins, and Thomas Benton Catron. Each of them served as delegate to Congress, and Thomas Benton Catron, a native Missourian, became one of the first United States senators from New Mexico. Two Missourians have represented Arizona in Congress, Granville H. Oury as territorial delegate in the Forty-seventh Congress and John Robert Murdock a representative of that state in the Seventy-fifth Congress. Eight Missourians have represented Oklahoma in Congress as territorial delegates or as members of the House of Representatives. They are James Yancy Callahan, Bird Sege McGuire, Scott Ferris, Charles O'Connor, Joseph C. Pringey, John C. Nichols, Gomer Smith, and George Schwabe. While one Missourian, Edward H. Moore, born in Nodaway County, sits in the United States Senate from Oklahoma. The five native Missourians who have represented Texas in the Congress of the United States are Guy Morrison Bryan, a nephew of Stephen F. Austin; Jeremiah Vardaman Cockrell, brother of Senator Francis M. Cockrell of Missouri; Sterling Price Strong; Dudley Goodal Wooten; and Politte Elvins.

Missourians also have been prominent in the internal political affairs of the southwestern states. Reference has been found to at least fifteen Missourians who have held positions in the territorial and state supreme courts of New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma, four each in New Mexico and Arizona, and eight in Oklahoma. Five Missourians have served as attorney-general for New Mexico. There have been Missourians in the state and territorial legislatures, at least six in New Mexico, sixteen in Arizona, five in Oklahoma, and three in Texas (insufficient data). A native Missourian, Charles A. Spiess, presided over the first state constitutional convention of New Mexico, and another, George W. P. Hunt, was president of the Arizona Constitutional convention. There were twelve former Missourians who sat in the constitutional convention of Oklahoma. John Graves Leeper, secretary of state of Oklahoma, was a native of Missouri. So also was Captain James Carson Jamison who has held the position of adjutant-general in Missouri and Oklahoma. Guy Fountain Nelson, also a native of
Missouri, served as assistant attorney-general of Oklahoma. William P. Campbell, the first custodian of the collection of the Oklahoma Historical Society and one of the principal founders of the Society, was a native of St. Joseph, Missouri.

The descendants of the Austin family have been prominent in Texas. The friends and neighbors of the Austins who followed them from Missouri helped to people Texas and many of their descendants have remained in Texas. John Rice Jones II, the first postmaster-general of the Republic of Texas, and his brothers all achieved distinction in Texas. John Rufus Alexander and John Price Alexander were also among the Austin group. Martin Parmer (Palmer), unique frontiersman, a signer of the declaration of independence and of the constitution of the Republic of Texas, had served in both houses of the Missouri General Assembly.

Among the biographies compiled in the *Dictionary of American Biography* are those of twenty-eight persons who seem to have been most closely identified with Missouri and with the four southwestern states. Fifteen Missourians, thirteen of them being adopted Missourians, influenced the history of Arizona and New Mexico. These were William Becknell, Charles Bent, Christopher ("Kit") Carson, Henry Connelly, Alexander W. Doniphan, Stephen Benton Elkins, Josiah Gregg, Stephen Watts Kearny, William Carr Lane, David Waldo, Joseph Reddeford Walker, Willard P. Hall, and William Sherley Williams, and two native Missourians, Ceran St. Vrain and Antoine Robidoux. In Oklahoma Pierre Chouteau, Sr., Robertus Donnell Love, Simpson Everett Stilwell, Erastus Wells, and James Milton Turner should be mentioned. Eight Missourians are particularly associated with both Texas and Missouri. They are Moses Austin, Stephen F. Austin, Alferd W. Arrington, Joseph Baldwin, who was founder of the private normal school in Kirksville, Missouri, the nucleus of the first district state normal school in Missouri, Anthony Bewley, Edward Burleson, Michel Branamour Menard, and John Timon.

A contemporary review of notable Missourians, both native and adopted, in Volume 22 of *Who's Who in America* discloses sixty-seven persons who are residents of the southwestern states. There are four Missourians listed in Arizona, ten in New Mexico, twenty-four in Oklahoma, and twenty-nine in Texas.