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HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

Part I

HISTORIC RECONSTRUCTION

BENT'S OLD FORT

La Junta, Colorado

1964

Recorded 1/23/67 jpl

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Part I

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT

HISTORIC RECONSTRUCTION

BENT'S OLD FORT

La Junta, Colorado

1964

Prepared by: Dwight E. Stinson, Jr., Historian, Bent's Old Fort
Jackson W. Moore, Jr., Archeologist, Bent's Old Fort
Charles S. Pope, Supervising Architect, Western Office of Design and Construction

Approval Sheet

Recommended by Jackson W. Moore, Jr. 11-16-64
(Acting) Superintendent

Recommended by Charles E. Krueger 12-15-64
Acting Chief, Western Office of Design and Construction

Recommended by Samuel A. Jamison 12-10-64
Regional Director, Midwest Region

Approved, by John B. Cabot 2/11/65
Actg Asst, Director, Design and Construction

Recorded 1/67 ipw

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Historic Structures Report

Part I

3. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

a. Name and number of structure - Bent's Old Fort, Building #1. Classified AAA in the Historic Structures Inventory.

b. Proposed Use of structure - The interpretive program will be focused at the reconstructed Fort, as the optimum interpretive facility. The building will also house the Park's administrative offices and serve in lieu of a visitor center.

c. Justification for such use as shown in Master Plan - The Park was established because of the Fort's nationally significant role in the history of American westward expansion into the southwestern quarter of the continental United States from 1833 - 1885. Reconstruction of the Fort is considered necessary to present the significance to the visitor in the best and most practical way.

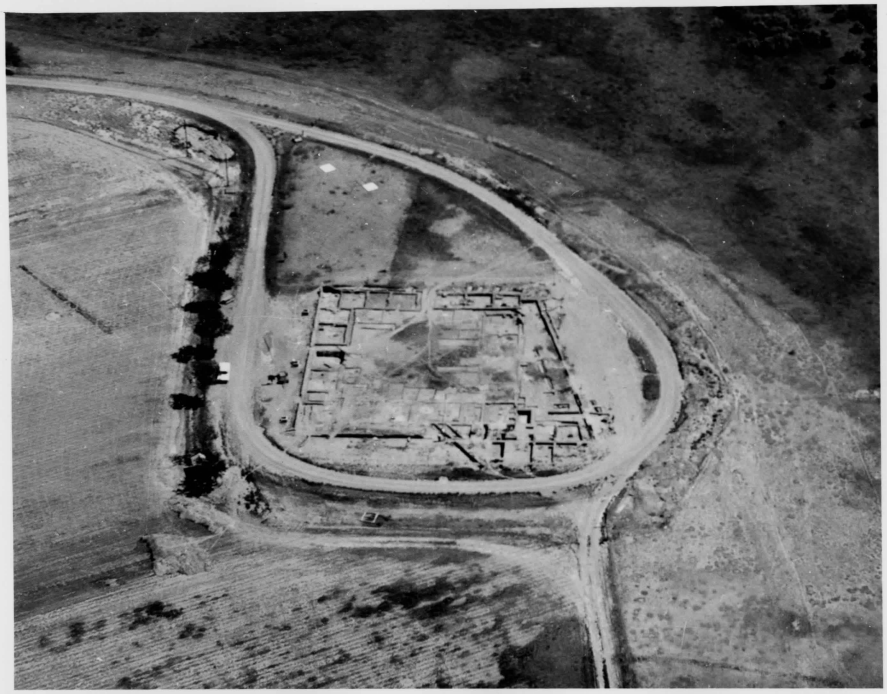
d. Provisions for operating the structure - The reconstructed Fort will contain the primary visitor reception and interpretive facilities. Orientation and interpretation will be provided by uniformed Park personnel at the Fort, through guided tours, talks and publications.

e. Cooperative agreement, if any, executed or proposed for furnishing and/or operating the structure - None.

f. Brief description of proposed construction activity - The Master Plan calls for a complete reconstruction of the building following extensive historical and archeological research. This will include administrative offices, interpretive exhibits and furnishings, and a parking lot.

g. Well considered preliminary estimate of cost of proposed construction activity - It is estimated that $454,000 will be required to reconstruct Bent's Old Fort, including necessary facilities and furnishings.

h. One photo of the existing condition of the structure, for identification purposes only -



i. Copy of PCP B-8 - attached

4. HISTORICAL DATA

a. Brief statement of local tradition and hearsay regarding structure - Local stories concerning the structure generally parallel the information contained in Paragraph (b.). The most important exception is the idea that William Bent demolished the Fort with explosives upon abandoning it in 1849.

b. Brief resume of knowledge of structure from readily available documentary evidence - Bent's Old Fort was constructed in 1832 - 33 on the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail. It was built of adobe or sun-dried brick. The main part of the structure was in the form of a rectangle approximately 140' X 180'. The ground floor contained some 25 rooms of varying size, all opening upon a central courtyard. Single upper rooms were located on the east and south portions, and the entire west side was two-story. At the northeast and southwest corners were round towers or bastions which rose above the main wall. A wagon-house and corral of undetermined size abutted the Fort proper on the south side.

From 1833 to 1849 the structure was the main trading establishment of Bent, St. Vrain, and Co. No structural changes are believed to have taken place during this period although when Bent abandoned the post in 1849 he set fire to materials in several of the northeast rooms. During the Bent occupancy uses of the various rooms included blacksmith and carpenters shops, dining room, large kitchen, trade rooms, store rooms, and quarters.

In 1859 - 60 the Fort was reoccupied by the Barlow-Sanderson Overland Stage Mail Company. The stage company made a 22' opening in the east wall to accommodate the passing of vehicles. The company abandoned the post in the late 1870's. By this time, the walls had begun to deteriorate badly. In 1881 - 85 the Fort was used as a cattle corral. Local ranchers began appropriating adobes from the structure for use in their own buildings. By 1900 little was left except the ruins of the walls. A flood in 1921 completed the destruction.

c. Name of architect or designer - Charles Bent.

d. Name of builder - Bent, St. Vrain, and Co. William Bent supervising.

e. Name of owner in historic Period - Bent, St. Vrain, and Co.

5. ARCHITECTURAL DATA

a. Brief description of structural and architectural design including comparison with other known similar structures.

1. The remains of Bent's Old Fort consist in plan of about 4200 square feet of adobe walls, generally less than two feet high,

as excavated by an Archeology crew of the Midwest Region. (See HABS sheet 2, COLO-22, small corrections will be incorporated in the Part II Report) Drawings of the original Fort, measured by Lt. Aberts in 1845, have been added to the archeology findings of 1964 to give the size and appearance of the original Fort. (See HABS sheets 3 and 4, COLO-22)

2. Fort Vasquez on US 85, 30 miles north of Denver, is a rebuilt structure of the same period as Bent's Old Fort. The Fort, a restaurant near Morrison, Colorado, was built several years ago to resemble Bent's Old Fort. Both Forts show the problems of adobe construction. Typical trim details of the period of Bent's Old Fort are available from many drawings in the HABS collection of New Mexico, books, and from further research.

b. Number of stories - two.

c. Principal construction materials - adobe.

d. Brief description of special features.

1. The first floor roof was used for promenading and gun fire action. It was a flat earth roof on roof beams. The interpretation of the Fort calls for public use; so that a roof deck supporting live loads of 100 lbs per square foot is called for.

e. Brief description of existing conditions of basic structure and of exterior and interior finish.

1. From the HABS sheets the following approximate figures are gathered:

Footings	16,800 cubic feet
Adobe walls	61,800 cubic feet
Area of roofs	15,500 square feet
Area of vertical adobe walls (not under cover)	26,700 square feet

Cost of construction of 94,100 CFT of walls @ $2 = $188,200
Cost of construction of 94,100 CFT of walls @ $4 = $376,400
(Final figure depends on construction materials and methods)

2. The reconstruction of the Old Fort has 3 distinct approaches that are interrelated. These elements must be considered in the studies under a Part II Report before the final direction of reconstruction is decided upon.

(a) Maintenance of the archeological remains.

(1) A system of reinforced concrete footings and posts can be devised that will support the new work on reinforced concrete or steel lintels that will occupy no more than 10 percent of the existing walls. These footins would be placed below the existing footings to provide better frost protection and incidently preserve 90% of the existing remains. A removable veneer would allow the image of the building to be maintained from the exterior yet provide access to the historical remains.

(2) Complete removal of the existing archeological remains, walls and footing. Replacement by well designed reinforced concrete footings to a lower depth.

(3) A combination of (1) and (2) above.

(b) (b) Reconstruction of the historic image.

(1) Authentic reconstruction in adobe blocks with mud joints will give the truest picture but will be costly from a maintenance point of view as described below.

(2) Construction in cement stabilized adobe never will be quite satisfactory because the aging process will never be the same as real adobe.

(3) The reconstruction of the roof (decks) in concrete can simulate the original construction.

(c) Future Maintenance. Our real problem of maintenance is the future eroding of the 26,700 square feet of vertical wall surface not under the protection of roofing.

(1) Replastering exposed walls. At the Fort Restaurant and on most of the adobes in New Mexico, the exposed surfaces are replastered with adobe or white washed at frequencies approaching yearly. Historic evidence of plastering or white washing at Bent's Old Fort should be further investigated.

(2) Allowing normal deterioration. Fort Vasquez has deteriorated rapidly in 30 years and surface deterioration has penetrated to the structural parts. The State Historical Society of Colorado is in a quandry as to whether or not to completely rebuild the Fort. The use of silicone or the new epoxies is costly and has not proven completely satisfactory, as the adobe spalls off, generally in larger chunks, though at less frequent intervals.

(3) Treating the adobe surface as a veneer. There is about 41,000 cubic feet of walls in the 26,700 square feet of high maintenance cost exposed surface. It is proposed that a structural wall of reinforced concrete of concrete block be prepared for the attachment of 4 inches of a real adobe surface with the understanding that the adobe veneer be replaced at 20 years intervals. This might cost about $20,000, or a maintenance cost of $1,000 a year.

3. The Interior Surfaces.

Research and investigation must be made on this subject.

f. Estimates of extent and cost of additional work required to complete architectural research and investigation under Part II. It is estimated that $8,500 will be required for the above mentioned work and is now included in PGP, M-7-1.

6. ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA

a. Dick, Herbert, "Excavation of Bent's Fort," The Colorado Magazine, July 1956, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, pp. 181 - 196.

b. It is proposed that excavations be carried out that are sufficient to determine the original and subsequent dimensions and elevations of the floors, rooms, historic grade levels within and without the Fort, plus special features. It is also proposed to recover, record, and analyze artifacts pertinent to all periods, with special treatment provided for those with value as study or exhibit specimens.

c. It is anticipated that all phases of the project shall have been completed between August 25, 1963 and August 25, 1965. The total expenses should approximate $78,500.

7. LANDSCAPE DATA

a. Statement of existing physical evidence of historic condition. The area immediately around the fort site has been plowed many times and the introduction of a road near the excavations has eliminated any physical evidence of historic conditions.

b. Brief statement of purpose and extent of further research proposed, if any. Close examination of the archeological, historical and architectural research may lead to further Landscape research.

c. Estimate of cost and time required. The cost of further Landscape research can be absorbed in the PCP for research by WODC of the Architectural Section, as described in PCP, M-7-1.

8. FURNISHING AND EXHIBITION DATA

a. List and brief evaluation of historic furnishings now in the structure - None.

b. Statement of provision for drafting a furnishing plan - Technical personnel of the Midwest Regional Office will draft a furnishing plan, making use of information contained in the Historical and Architectural Sections of the Part II Report.

c. Outline of proposed method of financing any refurnishing - It is proposed that Construction Funds be used to finance any refurnishing.

d. Estimate of cost of any refurnishing - $48,000

CLASS ___ (A) - Estimate based on working drawings
CLASS ___ (B) - Estimate based on preliminary plans
CLASS XX (C) - Estimate based on similar facilities in other parks

ESTIMATE

Item	Quantity	Cost
Reconstruct Fort structure		
9,600 sq. ft (approx.) @ $30.00	Bldg. #1	288,000
Administrative Offices, Archeological and Historical artifact storage facilities - Public and employee restrooms, lobby and exhibit space, 50 seat AV room and restored rooms as exhibits to be included.		
Museum Exhibits		
19 @ $1,800 ea.	$34,200	
1 Diorama	10,000	
	$44,200	
Audiovisual		
Rear screen projection and audio equipment for 50 seat room (incl program production)	$6,500	
Audio stations in furnished exhibit rooms (6) @ $400	2,400	
	$8,900	
Furnishings		
Assembly room, lobby & offices		
50 seats (AV room) @ $15	750	
4 desks @ $100	400	
4 swivel chairs @ $50	200	
8 side chairs @ $50	400	
File & amp cabinets	750	
Ash trays, setees, etc, for lobby and courtyard	3,500	
	$6,000	
Historic Furnishings		
See attachment	$40,000	

Estimate Totals	
Construction	$ 288,000
Plans, Surveys, and Supervision	$ 41,600
Contingencies	$ 17,400
SUB TOTAL	$ 347,000
Exhibits, Aud.-Vis. Installations, Etc.	$ 107,100
GRAND TOTAL	$ 454,100

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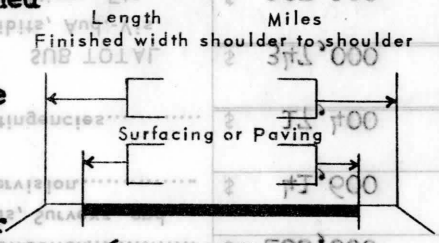
Form 10-411
(Rev. 11/61)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION PROPOSAL

1. Statement of requirements, proposed work and construction data, justification, etc. *(Use additional sheets as necessary.)*

Proposed Work: Bent's Old Fort is an almost completely ruined adobe structure. This proposal provides for restoration with original materials and appearance. Housed within the structure will be a modern visitor center and administrative facilities.



Construction Data: The structure to be restored measures approximately 140' X 170' containing 25 lower rooms, 7 upper rooms and 2 bastions. Of the total enclosed area approximately 9,600 sq. ft. were roofed. A 150' X 170' adobe corral abutted the main building within which a 50 car parking area will be provided. Within the main building modern facilities will provide administrative offices, archeological and historical artifact storage, public and employee restrooms, lobby and exhibit space, 50 seat AV room with necessary utility and storage space. Restored rooms will be equipped with historic furnishings as exhibits in place.

Provide oil fired furnace, electric lights, water heating and air conditioning.

(continued on attached sheet)

2. Land Status (If Govt. owned, what agency), Water Rights, Research, Etc.

Government owned, U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Archeological and historical research is now underway.

PCP Data Prepared by *(Name, Title & Date)*

Foy L. Young 10-26-64
Superintendent

E. C. Alberts 10-26-64
Reg. Chief, Interp & Vist Ser.

4. Cross-reference PCP's to this Project: R-1, U-3, M-7 M-8

PCP numbers of previously completed portions:

5. Construction by:

Day Labor ☐ Contract ☒

Work supervised by:

Park ☐ Reg. ☐ Design Office ☒

6. CLASS ___ ESTIMATE

Construction.....	$ 288,000
Plans, Surveys, & Supervision.....	41,600
Contingencies.....	17,400
SUB TOTAL	347,000
Exhibits, Audio-Visual Installations, etc.....	107,100
GRAND TOTAL	$ 454,100

7. DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES

No.	To
1	WASO
2	WODC
2	MRO
1	Bent's Old Fort

8. Recommended by Park Office *(Signature, title, date)*

Signed FOY L. YOUNG, Superintendent OCT 10 1964

9. Approved by Regional Office *(Signature, title, date)*

(Sgd) Harvey B. Reynolds NOV 16 1964

10. Reviewed by D&C Field Office *(Signature, Title, Date)*

11. Location within Area or Termini
Bent's Old Fort

12. Master Plan No.
NHS-BOF-3000

13. Bldg. or Rt. # and Sec.
Bldg. #1

14. Region
Midwest

15. Park
Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site

Project
Reconstruct Bent's Old Fort (Visitor Center and Administration Office included)

Otero (County)

Colorado (State)

17. PCP Index No.
B-8

18. P. S. & S. by
BPR ☐ NPS ☒

1. Statement of requirements, proposed work and construction data, justification, etc. Continued:

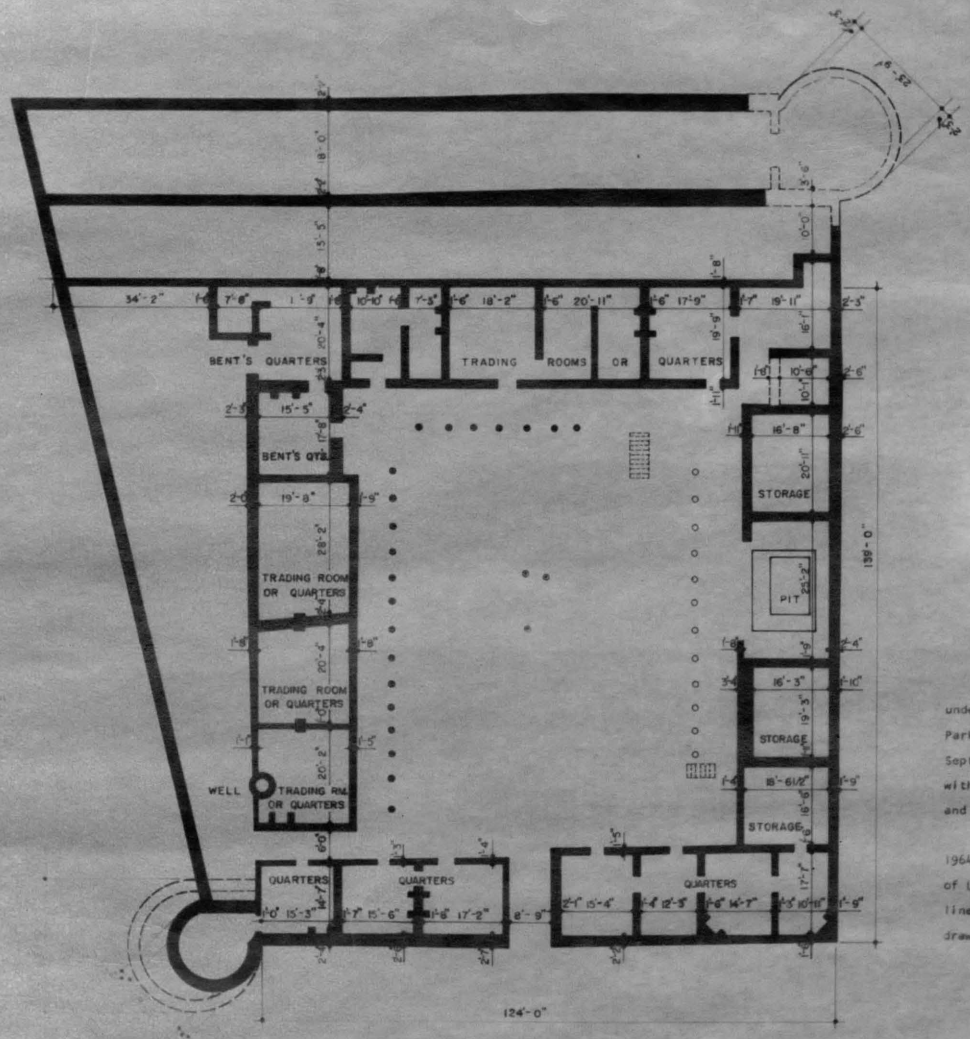
Historic structures report contains restoration data.

Justification: The area was established to interpret Bent's Old Fort and its role in westward exploration and expansion. The restored fort will be the major feature of visitor interest and will enclose virtually the entire interpretive program. In addition to an interpretive program, the AV room will provide facilities for special programs, visiting groups and staff assembly and training.

19. Estimate
Continued:

Historic Furnishings (estimate)

Preparation and duplication of Furnishings Report	7,000
Refurnishings	
Northeast Bastion	5,000
William Bent's Quarters	3,000
Kitchen	3,000
Artifact's Shops (4)	8,000
Trade Room	10,000
Storage Room	4,000
Employee Quarters	2,000
Watch Tower	1,000
Billiard Room and Bar	5,000
Total	$48,000



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

The Archeological excavations in 1964 were under the direction of Jackson W. Moore, National Park Service. The excavations were measured September 3, 1964, by Professor Melvin M. Rotsch with the assistance of Superintendent Foy Young and Archeologist J. W. Moore.

The Main Floor plan, from the September 3, 1964 measurements are in full black. The addition of Lt. Abert's measurements of 1845 are in dashed lines. Porch posts from Lt. Abert's elevation drawings are shown in open circles.

SCALE 0 1 2 4 8 12 16 32 48 FEET

METRIC 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 METERS

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE

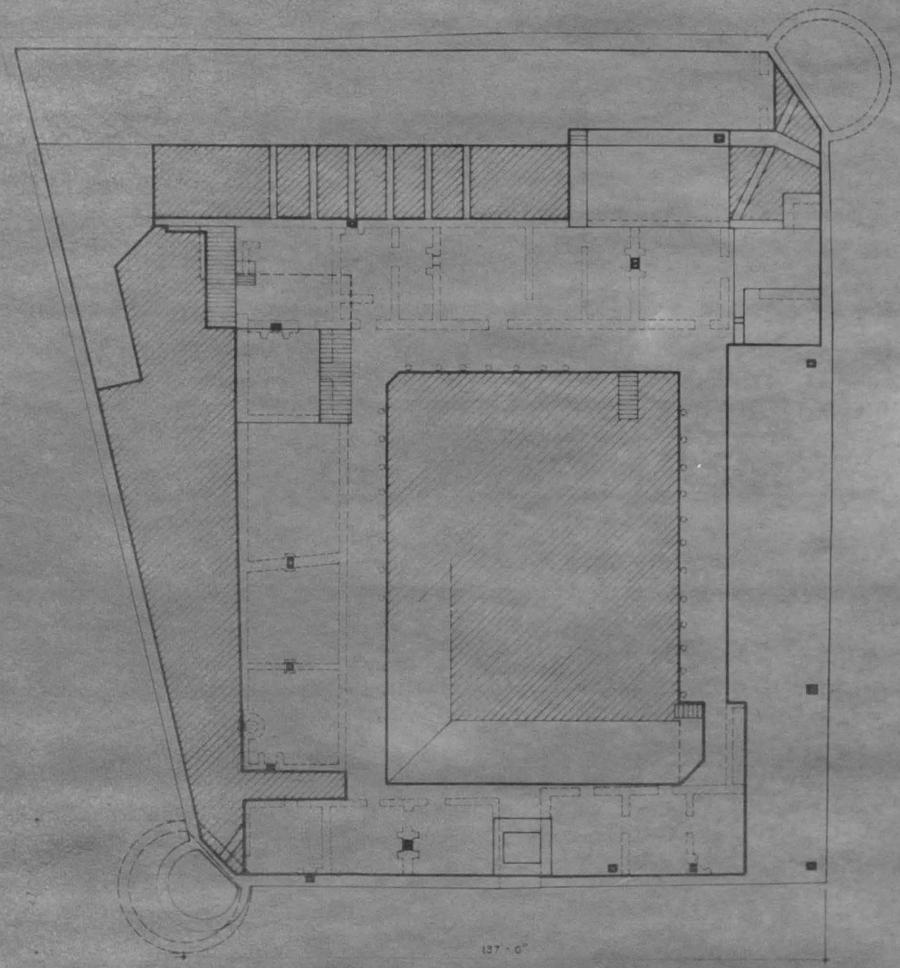
BENTS OLD FORT

BENT COUNTY COLORADO

SURVEY NO. COLO 22

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SHEET 2 OF 4 SHEETS



ROOF PLAN

The roof plan by Lt. Abert of 1845 is superimposed on the 1964 excavation plan.

SCALE 0 2 4 8 12 16 32 48 FEET

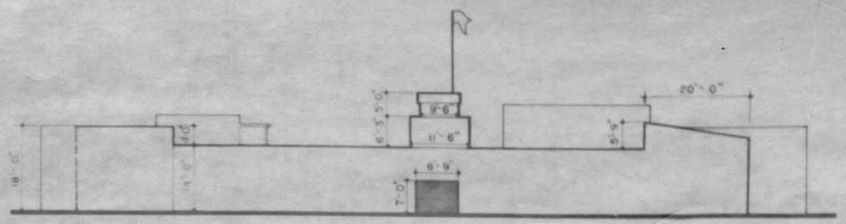
METRIC 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 METERS

HISTORIC STRUCTURES
WESTERN OFFICE

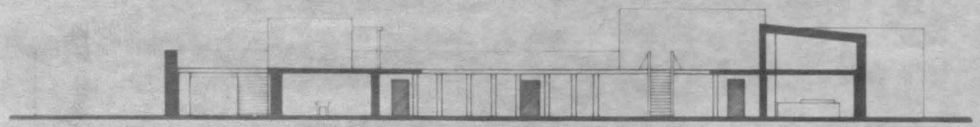
NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
BENTS OLD FORT
LA JUNTA BENT COUNTY COLORADO

SURVEY NO. COLO 22

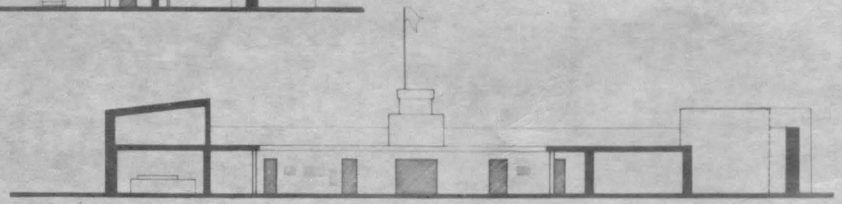
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 3 OF 4 SHEETS



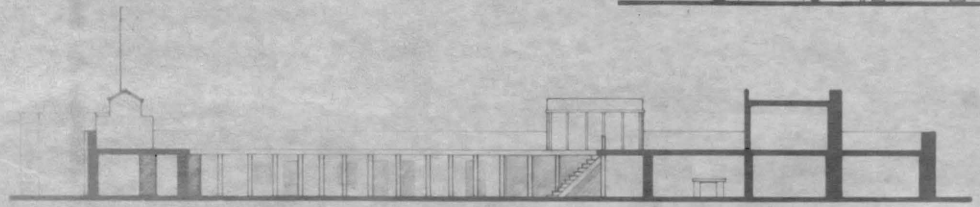
FRONT (NORTHEAST) ELEVATION



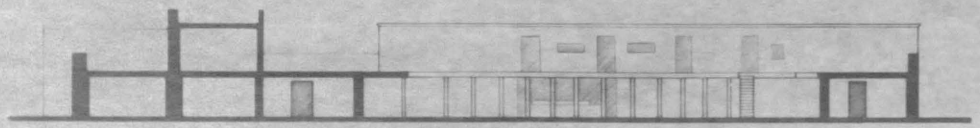
SECTION A-A (SOUTHWEST)



SECTION A-A (NORTHWEST)



SECTION B-B (NORTHWEST)



SECTION B-B (SOUTHEAST)

Elevations and Sections are developed from the measurements of the 1964 excavations and Lt. Abert's drawings of 1845.

SCALE 0 4 8 12 16 32 48 FEET

METRIC 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 METERS

NANCY E. STARK

HISTORIC STRUCTURES
WESTERN OFFICE

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE

BENTS OLD FORT

LA JUNTA BENT COUNTY COLORADO

SURVEY NO. COLO 22

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SHEET 4 OF 4 SHEETS

H30
MWR(OI)

JUL 3 0 1965

Memorandum

To: The Director

From: Acting Assistant Regional Director, Midwest Region

Subject: Furnishings Data Section, Part II Historic Structures Report, Bent's Old Fort

Enclosed are the original and one copy of the subject Report section. These should be bound into the two copies of the Part II Report which were previously submitted for your review.

(Sgd) Duane D Jacobs
Acting Assistant Regional Director

In duplicate

Enclosure

cc:
Chief, WODC w/encl (dup)
Supt., BEOL w/encl (dup)

Wash Dup

FURNISHINGS & EXHIBITION DATA SECTION

by

Nan V. Carson
Historic Restorations Specialist

30 July 1965

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FURNISHINGS DATA

A. STATEMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL EVIDENCE REVEALING HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

The total destruction of Bent's Old Fort precludes the gathering of furnishings evidence from the structure itself.

Careful study of surviving original walls in Plates XIV, XVI, and XVII, Historical Data Section, predictably fails also to shed light on furnishings. The only evidence of possible interest to the historic interior of Bent's Fort in these photographs is the apparent seam in the adobe wall shown in Plate XVI. It is impossible, however, to evaluate this feature from a photograph. Careful first-hand examination and a knowledge of the location of the seam would be needed to determine its structural or decorative relevance.

It is a local tradition that structural members of Bent's Fort were carried off by nearby ranchers for use in their own buildings during the Cattle Period, 1881-1884. Such cannibalizing no doubt included wooden elements of the Fort such as door and window frames, as well as adobes. Theoretically, thus, it should be possible to locate such elements of the original structure for the purpose of study for furnishings evidence.

The fact that Bent's Fort was dismantled after its burning by Bent in 1849, when it is likely that many of its original wooden features were destroyed, and after its period of use as a stage station, when much replacement and repair took place, would make such a search for original

members a doubtful undertaking. If found, it would be difficult, lacking comparative evidence, to determine with certainty the period of origin for the feature. Evidence that might be present relevant to furnishings, such as marks indicating window coverings, would be similarly difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate.

In conclusion, the potential usefulness of such evidence does not promise to be sufficient to merit a strenuous effort to locate such possible surviving features.

B. STATEMENT OF ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE REVEALING HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

The findings of the extensive archeological project at Bent's Fort provide the only unchallengeable documentation for its historic furnishings and those structural elements of the building relevant to its interior detailing.

HEATING DEVICES: From the results of this excavation it may be concluded with certainty that Bent's Fort was heated by fireplaces. Five such features were located in the north row of rooms; three in the east section; six on the south; and, significantly, none on the west. The location of fireplaces is strong evidence in determining the various uses of the rooms.

Evidence of heating devices on the second story is, of course, not obtainable from archeological evidence save for the single instance in W5, where a thick wall at the ground level indicates support for a fireplace on the floor above in Room UW5. This is borne out by the Abert drawing (Plate VII) which shows a chimney at the south end of the upper west row of rooms. Speculating that any additional heating facilities in the upper rooms would have been located to take advantage of the flues and chimneys needed for the ground level fireplaces, it might be concluded that only UE1 also possessed the comfort of heating.

Refurnishing research and planning should not rule out the possible use of braziers or other portable heating devices in some otherwise apparently

unheated rooms, and should also endeavor to account in some way for the apparent chimney shown in the Abert drawing (Plate VII), located at the north end of the west second-story structure, as well as for the two chimney-like elements abutting what appears to be the billiard room in both the Hughes and Inman sketches (Plates V and VI).

LIGHTING DEVICES & WINDOW TREATMENT: The results of the excavation at Bent's Fort have not produced any evidence of lighting devices, or, as has been mentioned previously, decorative window treatment. The discovery of pieces of flat glass at the Bent level, in Rooms N5, SE1A, and S2, may produce the conclusion that windows were glazed rather than having been covered with such frontier expedients as oiled paper or hung skins.

WALLS & FLOORS: Archeological investigations have produced conclusive evidence of wall and floor treatment throughout the ground level structure. Floors were smoothed and tamped earth. In some cases, this floor was further refined by the application of plaster or whitewash. In one instance a floor of adobe brick was laid, although there is doubt that the space involved was a room.

The application of a finish coat of plaster to floors in some of the rooms should receive additional study in the course of refurnishing planning. This treatment would seem logically to have been reserved for rooms where the use, or occupant, merited such extra effort, convenience, and elegance. The presence of such floors

in rooms determined in the Historical Section to have been carpenter and blacksmith workshops seems not only incongruous, but also impractical.

No evidence of carpeting was found in the Bent Period floors, but this alone does not preclude their use.

Walls appear to have been coated with plaster or whitewash almost throughout. Three colors predominated: white, yellow, and red.[1/]

The following table will summarize wall and floor treatment as defined by archeological evidence and coordinated with room use as determined in the Historical Data Section. Colors cited are given in their chronological order, with the earliest stated first.

Room	Historic Use	Floor	Walls	Color
NW1	Quarters		Plaster	White
N2	Quarters		Plaster	White
N3	Quarters			
N4	Quarters			
N5	Trade Room		Plaster	White
N6	Trade Room		Plaster	White
N7	Trade Room			
E2	Cook's Room		Plaster	Yellow/Red
E3	Dining Room			
E5	Parlor, Council Room	Plaster	Plaster	White

1/ The designation of plaster or whitewash used has followed the terms used in the Archeological Section. It seems likely that the substance referred to would be the same throughout the structure: an unbound lime coating, rather thicker than whitewash, but thinner than plaster, resembling most a plaster finish coat.

Room	Historic Use	Floor	Walls	Color
SE1A	Kitchen-Pantry		Whitewash	
SE1	Kitchen		Plaster	Red
S2	Bent's Quarters	Plaster--same as wall colors	Plaster	Adobe/Red/Yellow/White
S3	Bent's Quarters		Plaster	White
S4	Blacksmith Shop	Plaster--same as wall colors	Plaster	White/Red
S5	Blacksmith Shop		Plaster	White
S6	Carpenter Shop		Plaster	White
S7	Carpenter Shop	Whitewash		
W2	Storage		Plaster	White
W3	Storage			
W4	Storage (Pit/Basement)		Plaster	Gray adobe/White
W5	Storage			
W6	?	Adobe brick		

Rooms W5 and W7 both yielded fragments of "burlap or burlap impressions in a white matrix." This evidence should be studied further in the course of refurnishing planning, as it may indicate walls to which burlap was applied, having a plaster finish washed over. This was a common practice in the 19th Century (and well into the 20th) to cover cracks and otherwise conceal wall blemishes, although the fabric most often used was muslin, canvas, or even gauze. Burlap may only

have been the "best available" at Bent's Fort. It should be noted that, in elegant homes where impeccable wall finishes were wanted, canvas was also often applied over the plaster at the time of construction. The evidence is considered worth pursuing. The use of burlap in this manner would have imparted a distinctive and decorative texture to the walls involved.

No evidence has been recovered to point out the treatment of floors and walls on the second story. Using comparative testimony obtained from the relationship of floor and wall finishes with room use on the ground level, it might be concluded that the bastions and watch towers would have been unfinished in any way; and that Room UE1, a private quarters, might have had red or yellow plaster on its walls. The billiard room might also have sported brightly colored plaster walls, but the walls in the clerk's office and remaining quarters on the west side would doubtless have had no more than the standard white plastering.

Whether or not the grandest room on this level, UE1, had floor plastering is difficult to say. Probably used by partner St. Vrain (see Boggs, Plate II) during his visits, it may well have had the same floor refinement as the quarters of partner Bent on the ground floor. It is unlikely that any of the other second story floors would have been so treated. Traffic in the billiard room would have rendered

fragile plastered floors impractical. Magoffin's statement that she sprinkled her dirt floor in UW1 "several times during the day" probably speaks for the floors in the entire west section.

OTHER ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF INTERIOR TREATMENT & FEATURES: Furnishing research will need to investigate further the "pie slice" burned section in Room 95 to determine its relationship to furnishings, as well as the pre-1829 glazed fireplace tile found in the basement section of W4. The presence of this latter specimen at Bent's Fort is indeed puzzling. It is not a likely item for the Santa Fe trade, since tiles were readily available at this period in both the United States and New Mexico. It hardly fits the "local" market, made up of Indians and mountain men. This leaves the solitary alternative that the tile was part of a shipment to embellish the proprietor's quarters, perhaps in Santa Fe, but more probably, since one was found in storage there, at Bent's Fort.

Other archeological evidence remains that provokes considerable furnishing interest. These features need not, however, be relentlessly tracked down because they occur in areas not being considered for refurnishing. They are: (1) the counter-like foundation in E4, (2) the wells in E5 and W2, and (3) the slot-like floor depressions made by halved logs laid flatside up in W3 and W5.

CULTURAL OBJECTS: The evidence of cultural materials here has been obtained from notes in the Archeological Section of this report, and

from the weekly reports submitted by the Archeologist to the Regional Office during the course of excavation. Additional information about such objects will no doubt be contained in the final report of the archeological project. The recovered specimens should also be studied carefully during research for the refurnishing report.

Archeological finds indicating cultural objects in use at Bent's Fort during its primary period, are charted below to provide reference to the refurnishing themes (see Interpretive Prospectus, p. 25) to which they would be relevant; the possible rooms which could interpret that theme; and the location of their discovery.

It should be noted that many specimens recovered during the course of archeological investigation would have been present in such quantity and so universally used in historic times that their presence today in any given location constitutes but little evidence of the use or furnishing of the room in which they were found. A heavy concentration of some items, however, in any one space, can logically be construed to bear upon historic room use and content. Trade beads are the most typical instance of this situation, as are iron fragments and bottles.

Substances which have been found, for example the rattan or willow found in N7, have not been tabulated. They could represent a wide variety of objects and study of the specimen will be necessary to reach a conclusion.

Refurnishing Theme: DEFENSE
Possible Installation: NE Bastion, Watchtower

Object	Recovery Location
Whetstones	NE Bastion
Brass telescope	E4

Refurnishing Theme: RECREATION
Possible Installation: Billiard Room

Object	Recovery Location
Trade beads (on specimen trophies	E4, E3, trash dump
Wine, whiskey bottles	E3
Clay pipes	E3, trash dump
Paper (charred found)	E2
Book	E2
Slate	E2
Red slate scribe	E2

Refurnishing Theme: TRADE
Possible Installation: Trade Rooms (N5, N6, N7); Clerk's Office (UN6)

Object	Recovery Location
Square pieces of iron	N5, N3
Goose shot	N5
Spherical lead	N5
Hunting knife (blade found)	N5
Shoulder arm (stock and hardware found)	E4, trash dump
Heart-shaped iron padlocks	E4
Brass telescope	E4
Cloth (charred piece found)	E4, E3
Trade beads	E4, E3, E2, W4, trash dump

Pots and pans	E3
Barrels with wine bottles/whiskey	E3
4-gallon stoneware olla	E3
Clay pipes	E3, trash dump
Paper (charred found)	E2
Book	E2
Slate	E2
Red slate scribe	E2
Iron adze-head	SE1A
Iron hardware	S5
Iron wheel hub parts	S7
Horseshoes	S7
Brass bibcocks	W4
Spade	W4
Cartouche case	W4
Flintlocks (Deringer trade rifles)	W4
Barrels, wooden	W4
Black powder can (plug found)	Trash dump

Refurnishing Theme: ACCOMMODATIONS
Possible Installation: Dent Quarters (S2, S3); Employee Quarters (NW1, N2, N3, N4, UW1, UW2, UW3, UW4, UW5, UE1)

Object	Recovery Location
Spherical lead bullets	N5
Copper lustre ware	N7
Black transfer printed earthenware	N7
Powder flask (nozzle found)	NE Bastion
Shoulder arm (stock and hardware found)	E4, trash dump
Brass telescope	E4
Cloth (charred piece found)	E4, E3
Trade beads (on apparel)	E4, E3, E2, W4, trash dump
Wine, whiskey bottles	E3
Clay pipes	E3, trash dump
Ceramics of 1825-50	E3, SE1

Paper (charred found)	E2
Book	E2
Copper lustre white earthenware	SE1A
Flintlocks (Deringer trade rifles)	W4
Black powder can (plug found)	Trash dump

Refurnishing Theme: SUBSISTENCE
Possible Installation: Kitchen (SE1, SE1A); Dining Room (E3)

Object	Recovery Location
Copper lustre ware	N7
Black transfer printed earthenware	N7
Cloth (charred piece found)	E4, E3
Pots and pans	E3
Wine, whiskey bottles	E3
Wooden churn, wooden dasher	E3
4-gallon stoneware olla	E3
Clay pipes	E3, trash dump
Ceramics of 1825-50	E3, SE1
Copper lustre white earthenware	SE1A

Refurnishing Theme: MAINTENANCE
Possible Installation: Blacksmith (S4, S5); Carpenter Shops, (S6, S7)

Object	Recovery Location
Iron adze-head	SE1A
Square pieces of iron/ iron	N5, N3
Iron hardware	S5
Iron wheel hub parts	S7
Horseshoes	S7
Spade	W4
Barrels	W4

Refurnishing Theme: GENERAL
Possible Installation: The Plaza

Object	Recovery Location
Iron adze-head	SE1A
Spade	W4
Fur press	Plaza

C. DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES TO HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

All documentary sources listed as primary in the Historical Data Section that were available to this office have been consulted. Nine have thus been searched, with research remaining to be executed in fourteen. Two secondary sources have also been searched. Arrangements should be made as soon as possible to begin furnishings research in those primary materials not yet consulted, and in specimens, with particular reference to fur trade objects and the cultural materials of Santa Fe in the period of historic concern.

Documentary references have been arranged, in narrative form, under the refurnishing theme headings planned for interpretation at Bent's Fort.

DEFENSE: The bastions and watchtower at Bent's Fort were noted by many of its visitors, and several commented feelingly on the flag of the United States flying above the entrance gate. Ruxton mentioned the flag,[2] as did Cooke,[3] and Johnston.[4] Emory provided details of its size and pole. He wrote that he saw "... a huge United

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2/ George Frederick Ruxton, Life in the Far West, ed. LeRoy Hafen (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), p. 180, (hereafter cited as Ruxton).

3/ Philip St. George Cooke, Scenes and Adventures in the Army (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakeston, 1859), p. 417, (hereafter cited as Cooke).

4/ Abraham Robinson Johnston, Journal, in Ralph P. Bieber, ed., Marching with the Army of the West (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1936), p. 92, (hereafter cited as Johnston).

States flag flowing to the breeze, and straining every fibre of an ash pole planted over the center of the gate."[5]

The Fort was armed, it is certain, with small artillery. Cooke noted that his approach to the post was "... saluted by three discharges from a swivel gun ....,"[6] while Garrard located "... a few cannon ...." in the bastions.[7] Garrard observed, also, a small brass cannon laying on the ground in the Plaza, which had been burst "... in saluting General Kearney."[8] This gun would have been in use prior to 1846.

Garrard is also the source of two interesting bits of information about the watchtower. He noted its "belfry," implying a bell located there, and the imprisonment in it of two bald eagles, two years old. One of these was killed during the period of his visit (1847).[9]

RECREATION: If we may judge by contemporary references, recreation at Bent's Fort during the period of its zenith revolved chiefly around two rather hardy pastimes: drinking and gambling. Gambling was so much in evidence that Susan Magoffin was moved to philosophy.

5/ W. H. Emory, Notes of a Military Reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth, in Missouri, to San Diego, in California, Senate Executive Document 41, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington: Wendell and Van Benthuysen, 1848), p. 15 (hereafter cited as Emory).
6/ Cooke, loc.cit.
7/ Lewis H. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah and the Taos Trail (Norman: University of Okla. Press, 1955), p. 42, (hereafter cited as Garrard).
8/ Ibid., p. 43
9/ Ibid.

Wrote she, "There is no place on Earth I believe where man lives and gambling in some form or other is not carried on."[10] She then recounted its prevalence at the Fort, citing the billiard room, and race track, and concluding that she would not be at all surprised to learn of the existence of a cock pit.[11] Later she had cause to complain of her servants "... gambling off their clothing..." in some unnamed Plaza sport.[12]

Numerous references occur defining equipment for such games of chance. Garrard testified that the Billiard Room did indeed contain a billiard table.[13] That same gentleman customarily carried with him a backgammon board for amusement and/or risk.[14] Ruxton observed men in the corral (Plaza?) playing with "decks" of "euker" and "seven-up."[15] Horse racing must have been relatively impromptu, with individuals wagering on the prowess of their own mounts. However organized, it was no doubt an expensive and somewhat hazardous amusement, for horses were the primary means of individual transport. A man racing his own mount, risked not only the money he might wager, but also his means of getting from place to place. Replacements were expensive, at least in 1846, when Marcellus Ball Edwards observed that they sold at Bent's Fort for "... thribble their home (Missouri) value."[16]

10/ Stella M. Drumm, ed., Down the Santa Fe Trail and Into Mexico, The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), p. 61 (hereafter cited as Magoffin).
11/ Ibid.
12/ Ibid., p. 66.
13/ Garrard, p. 43.
14/ Ibid., p. 60
15/ Ruxton, loc. cit.
16/ Marcellus Ball Edwards, Journal, in Ralph P. Bieber, ed., Marching With the Army of the West (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1936), p. 141, (hereafter cited as Edwards).

The consumption of spiritous liquids in splendid quantities is, of course, classical in the history of the American fur trade. Buxton observed that the trappers and mountain men at Bent's Fort indulged in furious orgies "... as long as the liquor lasted, and there was a good supply of alcohol as well as of Taos whiskey."[17] More ceremonious occasions for drinking were found, as well, as Susan Magoffin rather crisply observed in her diary when she noted that her numerous gentlemen callers all drank her health, although it was not good.[18] Entertainment or custom, drinking at Bent's Fort was expensive. Marcellus Ball Edwards, who owned a banker's mind, noted that it sold there for twenty-four dollars a gallon.[19]

Although most often mentioned, drinking and gambling were not the only forms of recreation available on the banks of the Arkansas. Cooke recorded with pleasure the presence of newspapers at the Fort,[20] and Garrard wrote of carrying several books with him, one of them on "heavenly bodies" from Harper's Series of the Family Library.[21] Garrard also documented the presence of at least one apparently respectable personal library at the Fort, which proved more enticing to its owner than an informal dance.[22]

The dance in question was undoubtedly but one of many which ornamented leisure time at the Fort. For this one, the Fort's personnel provided

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17/ Buxton, p. 179.
18/ Magoffin, p. 65.
19/ Edwards, p. 140
20/ Cooke, loc. cit.
21/ Garrard, p. 60.
22/ Ibid., p. 74.

but two partners, an Indian woman, and Charlotte, the Fort cook. These good ladies must have danced their shoes thin (if they had such) that night, to tunes "... from a screaking violin."[23]

Tobacco also provided relaxation at Bent's Fort, and was present in a wide variety of uses and forms. Clay pipes were much in evidence, being pulled out at every possible opportunity.[24] Kinnik-kinnik filled them, as well as regular tobacco.[25] Also on hand were Mexican shuck cigarillos and other cigars.[26]

TRADE: The business of Bent's Fort was selling goods and keeping records of such sales. Evidence of the trade would therefore appear in the refurnished Fort in the form of items of the trade itself, and in its supportive paperwork.

Surprisingly few documentary references to the goods of the trade have been encountered. Lewis Garrard has left the best list in his itemization of goods carried by a peddler-type expedition to the Indian villages. In his party's packs on that occasion were "... tobacco, blue blankets, black (deep blue) blankets, white blankets, knives, and beads."[27]

This list can only represent a portion of the goods of the trade that were available within the walls of Bent's Fort. Edwards'

23/ Ibid.
24/ Garrard, p. 75.
25/ Burton, p. 180.
26/ Garrard, p. 73, p. 75.
27/ Ibid., p. 90

reference to the price of liquor confirms its availability there.[28] Further evidence can be derived from the assumption that every manufactured article mentioned in connection with the Indians or mountain men had been obtained from trade goods. This approach adds to Garrard's list small bells,[29] shirting,[30] butcher knives,[31] cigars, clay pipes,[32] woolen hats, leather belts, brass-headed tacks, rifles, and Green River knives.[33] Additional research should extend this list considerably.

For such goods, Indians and trappers exchanged buffalo robes and beaver pelts.[34] These two commodities must have been present in great quantities at the Fort much of the time, for, according to Matt Field, they were shipped to St. Louis but twice a year.[35] Ruxton's observation of Fort employees busy pressing packs of buffalo skins and beating robes in the Plaza sheds considerable light on the form of their packing as well, perhaps, as on the stage of their processing.[36]

That business records were kept is attested by their documentary survival, as well as by the presence of a "clerk's office" at the

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28/ Edwards, loc. cit.
29/ Ruxton, loc. cit.
30/ Garrard, p. 60.
31/ Ibid., p. 76.
32/ Ibid., p. 75.
33/ Ibid., p. 121.
34/ John E. Sunder, ed., Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail (Norman: University of Okla. Press, 1960), p. 144, (hereafter cited as Field).
35/ Ibid.
36/ Ruxton, loc. cit.

Fort. No source has been discovered yet, however, which mentions the keeping of account books, pens, pencils, or other logically associated materials. The sole reference to the content of the clerk's office at Bent's Fort is Garrard's mention of the "first rate spieglass" kept there.[37] This object may have been as relevant to the defense of the Fort as to the trading operations.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Two classes of accommodations, public and private, were maintained at Bent's Fort. The two classes undoubtedly differed substantially in their equipments.

Susan Magoffin, who might reasonably have been expected to merit luxurious accommodations at the Fort, and who certainly had private ones, might have left an account of them. She appears, however, to have been forced to accept a second class room due to a full house, or to have found the "best available" not good enough. In any event her husband saw fit to have her temporary room there divested of its usual furnishings, and fitted with their own. As a result, we know that the Magoffins took a bed, chairs, wash basin, and table furniture to Santa Fe with them, but have not even an indirect reference to the usual contents of her room, were they plain or grand.[38]

Shreds of information relative to the content of some of the private rooms can be gleaned from chance references. Matt Field recounted a story, told him by William Bent, of the death of a Spanish horse

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37/ Garrard, p. 43.
38/ Magoffin, p. 61.

guard at the Fort. The horse guard had been killed by three Comanche arrows during a raid of the Fort's herd. Mr. Bent showed Field the three iron pointed arrows, still bearing bloodstains, and we may assume that such trophies were kept in the Bent quarters.39/

Francis Parkman has left a fine description of a private quarters--but at Fort Laramie. Nevertheless, the year of his visit there was 1846, prime Bent time, and the Fort Laramie he visited was Fort John--a walled adobe fur trade post, housing the operations of a private enterprise. His description is therefore extremely valuable comparative evidence.

The room in question was, Parkman said, the "... best in Fort Laramie ..." usually occupied by "... the ligitimate bourgeois Papin, ..." absent at the time. It was "... a large room, rather more elaborately furnished than a barn. For furniture it had a rough bedstead, but no bed; two chairs, a chest of drawers, a tin pail to hold water, and a board to cut tobacco upon. A brass crucifix hung on the wall, and close at hand a recent scalp, with hair a full yard long, was suspended from a nail."40/

Parkman stayed in this room sleeping on buffalo robes spread on the floor.

39/ Field, p. 146.
40/ Francis Parkman, The Oregon Trail (New York: The Modern Library, 1949), p. 94 (hereafter cited as Parkman).

Only one other documentary source contains information which would have bearing on the furnishings of the partner's private quarters. Marcellus Edwards remarked in his Journal on the practice of polygamy at the Fort, stating that its owners were also the "... owners of several mistresses each."[41] If true, this circumstance would have produced certain adjustments in their living arrangements.

Women were undoubtedly resident in many of the quarters at Bent's Fort. We may assume that William Bent's Indian wife lived there, and Susan Magoffin wrote of an Indian woman resident in the room below hers, as well as of the Mexican wife of "Mr. Lightendoffer."[42] It would seem likely that in any instance in which a man's wife (and children?) lived at the Fort with him, a private quarters of some kind would have been provided, no matter what his status. Francis Parkman attests this practice at Fort John, and indicates the character of the accommodations as well. He wrote, "Beneath us was the square area surrounded by little rooms, or rather cells, which opened upon it. These were devoted to various purposes, but served chiefly for the accommodation of the men employed at the Fort, or of the equally numerous squaws whom they were allowed to maintain in it."[43]

Such apartments must have been very small, and the rooms in them would have served multiple uses, as did Susan Magoffin's. When she left her temporary home high atop the Fort, she recorded that her

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41/ Edwards, p. 139.
42/ Magoffin, P. 62, p. 68.
43/ Parkman, loc. cit.

"... chamber, dining-room, parlour, reception room, etc., etc., ..." was quite desolate.[44]

Any room, grand or mean, which housed a woman would have contained evidence of her presence therein. The only reference secured thus far to the equipment of a fur trade wife is derived from an experience of Susan Magoffin. While waiting for her quarters to be prepared on the evening of her arrival at the Fort, Mrs. Magoffin sat in the "parlor" in company with "other ladies," one of whom spent the time combing her hair, after which she liberally coated it with "... oil or grease of some kind...." contained in a crock. Two objects emerge from this account--equipment for a lady's toilette at Bent's Fort.[45]

The accommodations offered by the Fort to unaccompanied men, itinerants, employees, government teamsters, sick soldiers, miscellaneous trappers and mountain men, etc. consisted mostly of simple shelter. Garrard experienced such quarters. On his arrival at Bent's he was given "... a room, in company with several government teamsters, in which to sleep."[46] Francis Parkman's ludicrous friend, Tete Rouge, had been left at the Fort by the Army of the West because of illness. His sickroom was, according to Parkman, "... a little mud room, where he and a companion, attacked by the same disease, were laid together, with nothing but a buffalo-robe between them and the ground."[47]

44/ Magoffin, p. 70.
45/ Ibid., p. 62.
46/ Garrard, p. 42.
47/ Parkman, p. 292.

Tete Rouge was not the object of discrimination in being required to sleep on a buffalo robe spread on the floor in a Bent's Fort dormitory. Matt Field wrote a delightful verse in praise of Bent's Fort which confirms such sleeping arrangements for sick and well alike.

> "And a Buffalo skin neatly spread,
> Is bolster, and blanket, and bedstead and bed.
> In summer time, or in the snow,
> Wrapped in a skin of Buffalo,
> In fair moonlight, or in the storm,
> The Desert Dwellers slumber warm."[48]

References to miscellaneous materials that would have appeared in quarters, public or private, are not numerous. Matt Field's poem contained one line of enormous aid,

> "Boats, coats, ropes, candles, all things flow
> Out of the useful Buffalo."[49]

Coats and ropes made from buffalo robes and skins might be expected to be found in the quarters at Bent's Fort, but the information that the post was lit by candles, made from buffalo tallow, is pure gold.

Garrard throws additional light on the clothing situation in a passage describing his return to the Fort on a winter day. He kept warm on that occasion wearing a "...blue blanket overcoat having a collar ...."[50] In the same sequence he mentioned his personal rifle, and we may be certain that both items reposed for a time in the quarters assigned him at the Fort.

48/ Field, p. 45.
49/ Ibid.
50/ Garrard, p. 71.

SUBSISTENCE: Dining facilities at Bent's Fort seem to have been provided in a single large room for all comers, were they august or humble. Nevertheless, we should not rule out the possibility that meals were occasionally served, in certain circumstances, in private quarters. Susan Magoffin appears never to have participated in the Fort mess, but always to have taken her meals in her room.[51] Doubtless there were other times, particularly when the dining company involved an American woman, a visitor intent on conducting important or private business during dinner with a partner, or a man who found either the companionship or cooking of his wife preferable to the comparable offerings provided by the Fort, when tables were laid in private quarters.

In general, however, we should assume that most everybody at Bent's Fort ate in the common dining room. Cooke recounted that a number of officers from his command "... partook of a good dinner at the Fort," and the reference implies that an invitation was not necessary.[52] Actually, the Fort's dining facilities seem to have been open at all times, in the manner of a public restaurant, for Garrard wrote of repairing to "... the long, low dining room ...." to warm and feed himself directly on his arrival at the post after a long cold ride.[53] The fact that Charlotte, the Fort cook, was his company during this repast, indicates that she was at leisure to gossip with him, and not as busy as she surely must have been at regular mealtimes.[54]

51/ Magoffin, p. 70.
52/ Cooke, loc. cit.
53/ Garrard, p. 73.
54/ Ibid.

Equipment for this room may have varied in elegance with the status of the diners currently being seated, but it does not appear to have been primitive from any reference. Parkman ate there at "... a table laid with a white cloth, with castors in the middle and chairs placed around it."[55] He might have been considered a sufficiently special guest to merit a white tablecloth, but the reference to castors in the plural makes it certain he dined in the common hall at a table of considerable size which was equipped for such elegancies. Garrard, whose position was rather toward the lower end of the Bent Fort scale, also experienced refinements at this table. He ate there "... with knives, forks and plates."[56]

No documentation has appeared which describes the equipment of the kitchen, but we know much about the food that came out of it. Charlotte was famous for her "slap-jacks and pumpkin pies,"[57] and Garrard's morning meal after his ride consisted of hot coffee, bread, and "buffler."[58] Field's poetic praise of the Fort and its buffalo described the limitless variety in which it was prepared:

> "Buffalo fresh, Buffalo dried,
> Roasted, boiled, or stewed or fried,
> Buffalo serves in every stead
> For poultry and pastry, for meat & for bread"[59]

Equipment to cook all of these edibles in all of the manners suggested must have been present in the kitchen.

55/ Parkman, p. 268.
56/ Garrard, p. 42.
57/ Buxton, p. 180.
58/ Garrard, p. 73.
59/ Field, p. 45.

Game undoubtedly provided the mainstay of the Fort diet. Ruxton identified the source of supply when he wrote that "Hunters drop in with deer or buffalo meat to supply the Fort."[60] Field's poem tells how it was presented at the kitchen, and describes a rather esoteric piece of equipment that might have been in evidence there as well:

> ". . . , all things flow
> Out of the useful Buffalo.
> They pack his flesh in his own hide
> When back to camp the hunters ride.
> They make a hammer of his hoof
> To knock his fatted hump-ribs off."[61]

Other subsistence supplies were obtained from trade in the field with New Mexicans. On Carrard's peddler expedition to the Indian villages, he remarked that his party traded robes and meat (obtained from the Indians?) with the New Mexicans for dried corn, pumpkins, and beans.[62] This must have been a source of supply for the Fort's bread and Charlotte's famous pumpkin pies.

MAINTENANCE: Oddly enough, the only woman who has provided primary material about historic Bent's Fort, is the only source also for the activity and equipment of its artificer's shops. Her observations about them, based upon their sounds, rather than upon her visits to them, are attributable to her sensitivity to their incessant commotion during her illness while at the post.

60/ Ruxton, p. 180.
61/ Field, pp. 45-46.
62/ Carrad, p. 64.

In an upper room, undergoing a severe physical ordeal, Mrs. Magoffin was moved to write in her diary of the noise in the Plaza, and that attendant to the shoeing of horses, remarking that the "... clang of the blacksmith's hammer was constant."[63]

From this we know that a blacksmith's shop was located at Bent's Fort, and that horses were shoed there. A hammer and horseshoes. We should be permitted the conclusion that the shop was fully equipped for its work in the manner of its time.

GENERAL: The Plaza. Most of the visitors or residents at Bent's Fort commented about its Plaza. Their comments, however, were more often descriptive of the quality of life to be found there than of the objects associated with life. As a result, most of the information is useful for furnishing only by inference.

Susan Magoffin did not see it often, and her impressions of it were confined to its noise: "There is the greatest possible noise in the patio. The ..., neighing and braying of mules, the crying of children, the scolding and fighting of men...."[64]

Francis Parkman saw it, that same year, in another mood. Arriving just after the Army of the West had departed, it seemed to him that "... the life and bustle (had) passed away, and the fort was a scene

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63/ Magoffin, p. 66, p. 69.
64/ Magoffin, p. 66.

of dull and lazy tranquillity. A few invalid officers and soldiers sauntered about the area, which was oppressively hot; for the glaring sun was reflected down upon it from the high white walls around."[65]

Ruxton observed it in yet another guise. Although calling it "the corral," there can be no doubt but that he was describing the Plaza when he wrote of mountaineers gambling there, of "... employees pressing packs of buffalo skins, beating robes ...," and of "... Indian squaws, wives of mountain men, strut(ing) about in all the pride of beads and fanfaron, jingling with bells and bugles, and happy as paint can make them." It was into this scene that Ruxton saw the hunters coming in "... with deer and buffalo meat to supply the Fort, ..."[66]

Garrard alone saw fit to mention objects. "In the center of the court is the 'robe press;' and lying on the ground was a small brass cannon, burst in saluting General Kearney."[67]

65/ Parkman, p. 288.
66/ Ruxton, p. 180.
67/ Garrard, p. 43.

D. APPRAISAL OF STRUCTURAL TASTE AND STYLE RELEVANT TO FURNISHING

The architectural style of Bent's Fort reflected a wedding of the Medieval fortified castle with the native Pueblo architecture and Spanish influence of the Southwest. This mingling of the styles and tastes of Western Culture with those of New Spain and the American Indian was no doubt reflected strongly in its furnishings, but not for the sake of taste or aesthetic symmetry. Rather, a black walnut chair from St. Louis would have been found there, standing upon a buffalo robe, with a chest made by craftsmen in Santa Fe behind it, for reasons attributable to geography, economics, and simple pragmatism.

The location and business of Bent's Fort made it inevitable that its equipments should come from both the United States and Santa Fe. Its partners were chiefly St. Louisians, and would have thought of desirable design styles in terms of those fashionable in the States. Whenever they wanted something truly nice or specially elegant, or something of sophisticated manufacture, their great wagons no doubt brought it out from Missouri. On the other hand, the freight hauled from Missouri was the paying load, and as hard-headed business men they would have been loath to relinquish space for income producing goods to any but the most intensely wanted or needed things, or objects intended for some specially cherished person. An example of this is to be found in the Victorian couch

William Bent had brought from St. Louis for a daughter, and which is now owned by the State Historical Society of Colorado.

Wagons from Santa Fe, however, frequently rolled empty into Bent's Fort, where they picked up loads of robes and furs. Trade in Santa Fe returned mostly silver to the partners. It would therefore seem likely that a great quantity of the Fort's more utilitarian, or bulky equipment came from New Mexico, if it was available there, hauled back in wagons otherwise carrying very little.

Purely mundane objects, equipment and dress for the average man at the post were probably made at the site by craftsmen using materials readily available from trade goods or the natural environment of the region. Doubtless, too, many needed objects or garments were obtained from the Indians or patterned after Indian forms.

Cooke observed that Spanish was the prevailing language at Bent's Fort, "... but with English, French, and Indian additions and combinations, there is no slight confusion of tongues."[68] There was, without question, no slight confusion of taste and style as well.

68/ Cooke, loc. cit.

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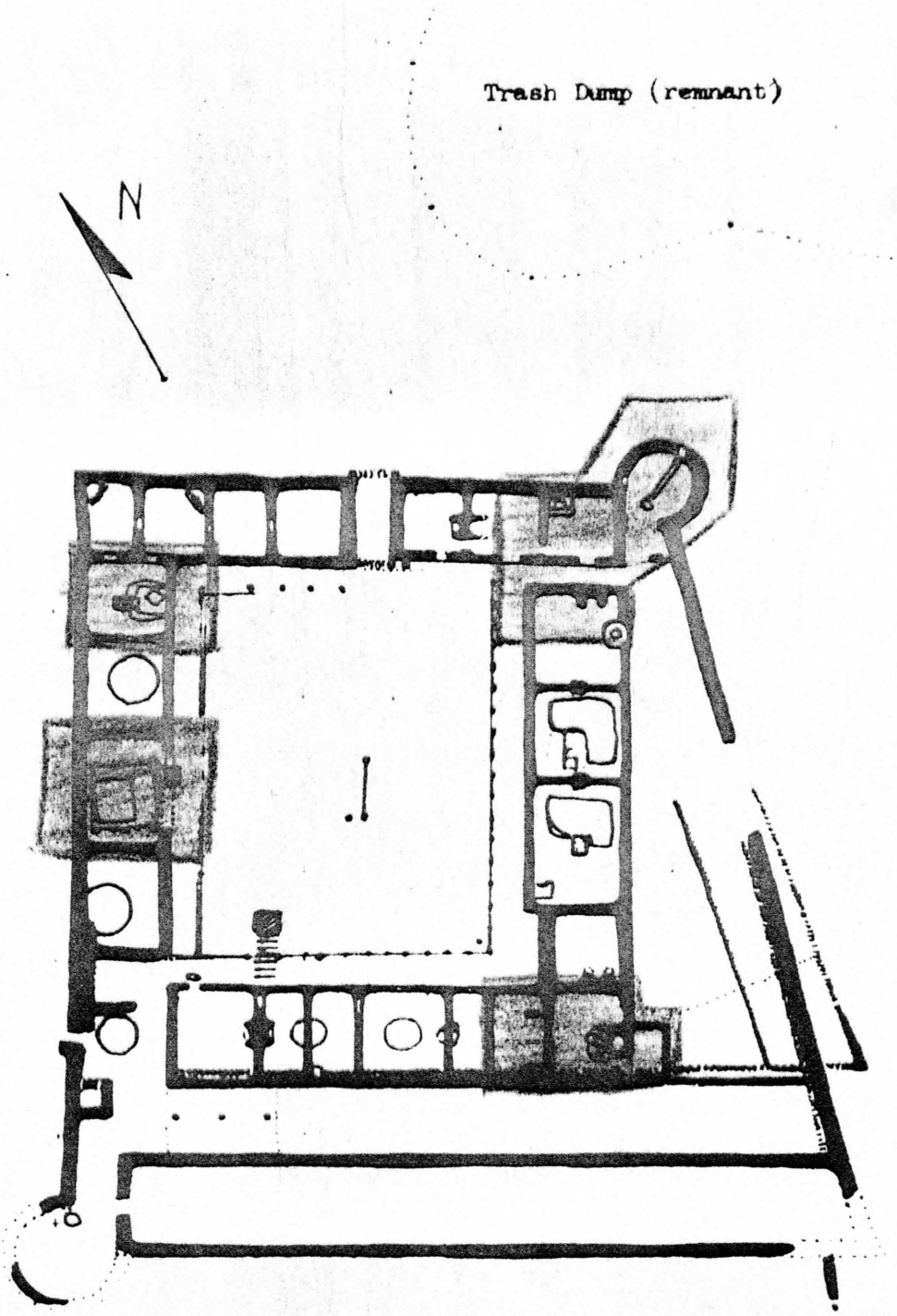
EXHIBITION DATA

F. EXHIBITION DATA

In reconstructing Bent's Old Fort, it has been planned to preserve for exhibition and interpretation, certain portions of the original Fort foundations, now excavated. This plan is discussed in the Interpretive Prospectus (pp. 24-25).

The preservation and exhibition of foundation remains will, of course, preclude the use of the room in which they are located for refurnishing.

The plan on the following page indicates areas of the excavated foundation which are well preserved, and of sufficient interest, to merit consideration for exhibition and interpretation. These areas are currently protected by shelters.



Plan of Fort, Trash Dump, & Corral Areas

Scale: 1 inch equals 40 feet

PLATE I.

Locations of Foundation Ruins Being Considered for Exhibition and Interpretation Bent's Old Fort