

PRELIMINARY INVENTORY
K0147 (KA0279)
FORT OSAGE RECORDS

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City](http://www.shsmo.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at kansascity@shsmo.org.

Introduction

The collection consists of four reels of microfilm containing correspondence, reports, other documents related to the construction and operation of Fort Osage in Sibley, Missouri. Original records of this collection are held by the National Archives and Records Administration of the United States.

Fort Osage, located near Sibley, Missouri, was constructed in the fall of 1808, by the St. Charles Dragoons and the First United States Infantry under the direction of William Clark, newly appointed Commander of Militia and Indian Agent for the Louisiana Territories, and under the command of Captain Eli B. Clemson.

The fort represented an established federal policy to regulate the rapidly growing fur trade, discourage British traders from the North, Spanish merchants from the South, and to provide protection for the new western settlements from the Osage and other Native American tribes of the area. While supervising the construction of the fort, Clark signed a treaty with the Great and Little Osage ceding to the Osage all territories west of the Kaw River and running south from the Missouri River to the Arkansas state line. The ceded lands included all of present-day Jackson, Cass, Bates, Vernon, Barton, Jasper, Newton, and McDonald Counties, excepting a six-mile square area near the fort which provided for its support. In return, the Great and Little Osage removed their villages located near the vicinity of the fort and relinquished their claim to all lands east of established line.

During its short history, Fort Osage hosted many important events and individuals. In 1811, the Astorians left Fort Osage on the first expedition, after Lewis and Clark, to reach the Pacific. Daniel Boone spent nearly two weeks visiting the fort in 1816. In 1819, the Army's Yellowstone expedition under the command of Stephen Long brought the first steamboats up the Missouri and removed the fort garrison to establish Fort Atkinson, near present day Omaha, Nebraska. The first successful trading party to Santa Fe, New Mexico, under Captain William Becknell stopped at the fort in 1821. An 1825 federal survey of the Santa Fe Trail began at the gates of the fort with George C. Sibley appointed as one of its commissioners.

The trading house located on the grounds of the fort continued its operations until 1822, when the United States factory system was abandoned under pressure from the fur companies. The fort's structures were later dismantled by local residents after the 1825 Osage treaty and by the beginning of the 20th century, only a part of the rock foundation of the fort remained.

During the early 1940s, the Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City, as well as other local organizations, undertook locating and reconstructing the fort, which culminated in the dedication of Blockhouse No. 1 in September of 1948. Reconstruction

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and maintenance of the fort as a museum has continued under the direction of the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department.

Donor Information

The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Gary Toms on behalf of the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department on April 1, 1985 (Accession No. KA0279).

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Related Collections

Fort Osage Restoration Records (K0155)

Location Note

The collection is stored onsite.

Inventory

Reel 1

Letters received by the Secretary of War, C, 1808 (National Archives and Records Administration C90-C269, Microcopy, No. 221, Roll 19)

Reel 2

Letter received by the Secretary of War, C, 1808-1809 (National Archives and Records Administration C270-C691, Microcopy No. 221, Roll 20)

Reel 3

Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, re: Fort Osage and Factory, 1908-1815 (RG 75)

Reel 4

Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General and the Adjutant General, re: Fort Osage, 1808-1812 (RG 92)