



## THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI RESEARCH CENTER-KANSAS CITY

K0155

Fort Osage Restoration Records

[Native Sons Archives]

1808-1979

18 folders, 2 volumes and 4 rolls of architectural drawings (Microfilm)

*Correspondence relating to the reconstruction of Fort Osage by the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department in consultation with the Native Sons of Greater Kansas City. Also research on the history of the Fort; reconstruction techniques and materials; and authentic artifacts, furniture, costumes, and artillery.*

### HISTORY:

Fort Osage, located in the northeast corner of Jackson County, near the town of Sibley, Missouri, was the first occupation of the county by the United States and the most westerly and successful of the 28 such posts operated under the United States factory system.

The Fort and its adjacent factory (i.e. trading post) were constructed between September and November, 1808 by the St. Charles Dragoons and the First U.S. Infantry under the direction of William Clark, newly appointed Commander of Militia and Indian Agent for the Louisiana Territories, and the command of Captain Eli B. Clemson. The structures represented an established federal policy to regulate the rapidly growing fur trade, discourage British traders from the North and Spanish merchants from the South, and to provide protection for the new western settlements from the Osage and other tribes of the area.

The trading house continued in operation until 1822, when the United States factory system was abandoned under pressure from the fur companies. The Fort's structure remained, but was eventually dismantled by local residents after the 1825 Osage treaty which granted the remaining Osage lands to the state of Missouri and cleared the way for the establishment of Jackson and the other counties which had been Indian Territory under the 1808 agreement. By the beginning of the 20th century, only a part of the rock foundation remained.

In 1941, the Jackson County Court, with the support and cooperation of the Native Sons of Kansas City and other local organizations, undertook to locate and reconstruct the Fort. Archaeological excavations conducted in 1942 unearthed the east line of the fortification including the substructure of the factory building's double basement. However, the war postponed any reconstruction work at that time.

James Anderson, historian and curator for the Native Sons, and George Fuller Green, architect and consultant for the construction, lead an extensive research into the history of the Fort and the materials used in its construction. They and members of the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department wrote to and visited historic sites and research facilities throughout the country gathering information to aid in an accurate rebuilding of the structure. This effort culminated in the dedication of Blockhouse No. 1 in September of 1948. The Factory Building was dedicated in September of 1954, and the remaining four blockhouses, officer's quarters, soldier's barracks, and surrounding log stockade were completed in the early 1960s.

The Fort Osage restoration has received several awards and the site is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. Maintenance of the Fort as a public museum dedicated to the history of Western expansion has continued under the direction of the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department.

#### PROVENANCE:

These records are comprised of four accessions. Architectural drawings have been loaned by the Native Sons of Greater Kansas City through the Missouri Valley Room of the Kansas City, Missouri, Public Library, (KA0285 on May 15, 1985) [originals given to SHSMO-KC as part of KA0590] and the Kansas City Museum (KA0286 on May 15, 1985). The Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department loaned drawings, correspondence, research notes and scrapbooks (KA0295 on July 1, 1985). The remainder of the drawings and one folder of notes were a gift received from the University of Missouri-Kansas City General Library as accession KA0246 on May 31, 1984. These last items were part of an addition to the William James Anderson, Jr. (1884-1967) Papers (K0058). Other materials concerning Fort Osage and its reconstruction may be found in that collection.

#### COPYRIGHT AND RESTRICTIONS:

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## PREFERRED CITATION:

Specific item; folder number; *Fort Osage Restoration Records (K0155)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

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## DESCRIPTION:

The records contain administrative correspondence relating to the reconstruction of Fort Osage by the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department in consultation with the Native Sons of Greater Kansas City. Also in the records is research correspondence soliciting information on the history of the Fort; reconstruction techniques and materials such as stockade poles and shingles; and, research on authentic artifacts, furniture, costumes and artillery.

Additionally, the collection has research notes pertaining to the history of Fort Osage and its restoration which includes a chronology; copies of various Acts of Congress, Territorial Papers, and personal correspondence of persons prominent in the history of the Fort; maps; pamphlets; clippings; photographs; and formal reports on the restoration project.

Two scrapbooks contain clippings, photographs and other memorabilia recording the history of the Fort site and restoration. These books were apparently compiled by James Anderson of the Native Sons of Kansas City.

Four rolls of architectural drawings document the reconstruction project for the buildings and the stockade. The architect for the project was George Fuller Green.

## INVENTORY

*CORRESPONDENCE AND RESEARCH MATERIALS*

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| Folder 1 | Research materials on the history of Fort Osage<br>Includes chronologies, and reports on the Fort.                    |
| Folder 2 | Research documents, 1808-ca. 1975<br>Copies of documents such a letters and maps pertaining to the Fort site in 1808. |

- Folder 3 Research: History of Fort Osage Correspondence, 1964-1978
- Folder 4 Research: Buildings, Furniture and Costumes, 1961-1981
- Folder 5 Research: Artillery, 1965-1966
- Folder 6 Research: Stockade Poles, 1959-1960
- Folder 7 Research: Shingles, 1968-1976
- Folder 8 Correspondence: Jackson County Parks and Recreation, 1956-1965
- Folder 9 Correspondence: Jackson County Parks and Recreation, 1966-1979
- Folder 10 Correspondence: Native Sons of Greater Kansas City, 1945-1970
- Folder 11 Correspondence: Missouri State and County Governments, 1963-1969
- Folder 12 Correspondence: U.S. Government, 1948-1977
- Folder 13 Awards, 1935-1952
- Folder 14 Pamphlets
- Folder 15 Photographs
- Folder 16 Fort Osage Documents, ca. 1940  
These documents were among the architectural drawings from the James Anderson Papers (K0058).
- Folder 17 Clippings, directly related to the Fort, 1955-1978
- Folder 18 Clippings, indirectly related to the Fort, 1953-1977

### *SCRAPBOOKS*

- Volume 1 ca. 1908-ca. 1955  
This volume includes materials on the Fort prior to the restoration project; the restoration period; historical persons and events; and the Osage, past and present.
- Volume 2 ca. 1922-ca. 1955  
This volume contains materials concerned primarily with the restoration and the dedication of the buildings. Included are photographs of the reconstruction.

### *ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS*

- Roll 1 Comfort Station – Certificate of Survey  
23 sheets
- Roll 2 Sidewalk – Factory Building  
19 sheets

- Roll 3      Factory Building – Elevations and control sketches  
                 36 sheets
- Roll 4      Block Houses  
                 30 sheets