



# The Santa Fe Trail: Its History, Legends, and Lore

*David Dary*

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## **The Santa Fe Trail: Its History, Legends, and Lore** David Dary

From 1610, when the Spanish founded the city of Santa Fe, to the 1860s, when the railroad brought unprecedented changes: here is the full, fascinating story of the great Santa Fe Trail which ran between Missouri and Kansas and New Mexico--a lifeline to and from the Southwest for more than two centuries. Drawing from letters, journals, expedition reports, business records, and newspaper stories, David Dary--one of our foremost historians of the Old West--brings to life the people who laid down the trail and opened commerce with Spanish America: Native Americans and mountain men, traders, trappers, and freighters, surveyors and soldiers, men and women of many different nationalities. Their firsthand accounts let us experience up close the spectacular scenery; the details of camping out in both friendly and hostile Indian territory; the constant danger from natural disasters or sudden attack; the hardworking, often maverick men who were employed on the wagon trains; the pleasures and entertainments at the southern end of the journey. The book makes clear how in the early years trade started and stopped at the whim of the Spanish, and how the trail finally grew and prospered, bringing the settlement of new towns and the creation of new wealth along the route. We also learn how the rapid spread of the railroads across the country inexorably replaced the long caravans of mule- and ox-drawn wagons, and the way of life they represented. With his comprehensive knowledge and his exceptional storytelling skills, David Dary has given us a vivid re-creation of an important time and place in American history.

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