

Bollinger County Trail of Tears Archive

COLLECTION, BCL-TOT

Collection Contents

Bollinger County Trail of Tears Archive (90 records)

The Trail of Tears, that was a tragic part of our nation's history, came through our region. All 13 detachments came through our county before it was Bollinger County. The short version is that the northern route was the Jackson to Farmington road passing through Sedgewickville, the Hildebrand route was the Jackson to Fredericktown road passing through Patton and the Bengé detachment followed the Jackson to Greenville route passing through modern day Marble Hill. The documents and narrative that follow will paint the picture that the Cherokee in 1838 and 1839 saw as they travelled our roads.

Our premise as we approached this project was that the trails which comprised the Trail of Tears through our county would follow the paths that the first pioneers established. Often the pioneers used tribal trails of the Osage, Cherokee and Shawnee and expanded them to accommodate wagons. The first pioneers settled this area over 30 years before the Trail of Tears passed their way. They expanded native trails, created familial connecting roads and started the first roads of commerce. The first postal roads in the area also follow our projected paths. These postal roads gave way to Military trails that were used during the Civil War and after the War became foundations for the State and Federal Highway systems.; "Trail of Tears: Routes through Bollinger County, Missouri." TOT Committee. Marble Hill, MO: Bollinger County Library, 2021.; This is an archive of the Trail of Tears, featuring collections pertaining to the Hildebrand, Bengé, and Northern Routes that went through Bollinger County. This archive features documentation pertaining to these three routes and the related witness sites and structures in the area.;

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Hildebrand Route (15 records)

;;The Hildebrand route was one of the two divergences from the Northern route. They stayed close enough to the Northern route to have scouts report on their location several times in the Rev. Daniel S. Buttrick's Journal. They also would sometimes use the Northern route and left fires burning for the Richard Taylor detachment with whom they were travelling. Some believe they diverged from the Northern trail due to fires along that route. Others say that it was because all the detachments had taken all the wildlife for food. We believe in our area, they used what we called the Jackson to Fredericktown route. This route followed a trail that would be used by Jesse James and also by confederate soldiers a little over 20 years later. There were pioneer families along the Bollinger County portion of the trail but they were few and far between. Few communities had names yet but this was the route farmers and pioneers used to go to Fredericktown.

Coming from Cape County, County Rd. 352, you would cross the county line onto BCR 368 which ran right through US land surveys #2226, 675 and 809. Proceed due north onto State Hwy. B that took over the vacated portion of 368, then west onto BCR 366, BCR 366

passes through USPS #3143 & 774. These two land grants were to pioneer Christian Seabaugh. Christian had two sons who became doctors and his neighbor George Washington Mayfield, son of a Revolutionary War veteran, had five sons and seven grandsons who became doctors. Locals call this area "Doctor's Row."

Continue northwest on BCR. 364 which crosses pioneer Philip Bollinger's land grant #227. Philip was a brother to Matthias who built Bollinger/Dolle Mill and to George Frederick for whom the county was named. A short way further on BCR 364 is the location of a long gone log house that was the favorite stop of Jesse James where he would request his favorite of fried chicken from the lady of the house.

Continue on BCR 375 to the Patton intersection of HWY 51. Cross State HWY 51 onto BCR 878. BCR 878 has been vacated from the time it reaches present HWY 72 to where it went in a northwesterly direction and crossed into Madison County just south of Cape Creek. Hwy 72 is the only continuous present road available after 878 now.

The Hildebrand route came through Jackson to Fredericktown. It followed the Northern route closely, which ran through Sedgewickville.; "Trail of Tears: Routes through Bollinger County, Missouri." TOT Committee. Marble Hill, MO: Bollinger County Library, 2021.

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Benge Route (41 records)

The Benge route through Bollinger County follows the Jackson to Greenville road. The earliest settlers were in this area since the 1790's and had established market and familial roads. The Jackson to Greenville road was surveyed in 1837 for State Hwy. 34 and also closely followed the Burr Postal Road map of 1839 that shows the post stop in "Greene" which is the predecessor of Marble Hill. The Military trail that also closely followed the earlier postal and family roads was used for the Civil War and helped to establish future state and federal roads in the area.

Coming from Jackson, the trail would have gone through Burfordville where George F. Bollinger had a large mill and settlement.

Continuing southwest, the path diverged in a few spots from present state Hwy. 34 and will be shown on an accompanying map. By the time the detachment had reached Marble Hill, they were being pressed very hard. Initial county historians believed they had crossed at the future swinging bridge location, but Mr. Russell Weisman, MoDot historian has aligned present roads with a digital (GPS) version of the 1837 plat and believed the crossing would have been a little further east. In digging through family plats, we found that the very first Lutes house (1817)(founders of Lutesville/Marble Hill) was a two story log house hiding under additions and modern siding and matched the 1837 plat of family locations. This caused us to research further in Marble Hill and found the landowner right beside the creek was told that the crossing which was the Military trail and early pioneer crossing matched the 1837 plat. So when they reached Marble Hill, they entered just at the edge of town on the Military trail that is now vacated but falls just behind the homes that face Broad Street. This continues south and crosses the Hwy. 34 bypass into Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Mock's field where the creek crossing is located. He has owned the farm for 25 years and the person he bought it from had owned it for 50. He was told the crossing is where the early pioneers went for ice in the winter and then crossed to do business with the Lutes family. The crossing is directly across from what would be the future jail and ice house just south of present Crown St. They faced a large hill and road that is the present Ellen St. and just at the top of that hill is the Log house that presently belongs to Bill and Louis Acup. They continued on this street to where it would meet Possum Creek Road (BCR 502). Continuing southwest on Possum creek road, they would have gone past a family homestead of Thomas Adams. Continuing on BCR 502 another mile, the county changed the road in the early 1900s. The road used to run on the north side of the creek for about a half mile and came out on the present BCR 519. They still call BCR 519 the Military Trail even though a portion of it has been vacated for over 50 years. BCR 519 at the time of the Trail of Tears would have gone all the way through to meet BCR 506. BCR 506 continues southwest toward Buchanan. BCR 506 on the modern day maps runs into State Hwy H. On the 1906 Bollinger County Plat map, the county road ran continuously to where it met 702. There was no Hwy H in 1906. Continue southwest on BCR 702 until it crosses State Hwy Y and becomes BCR 738.

The other witness structure and eyewitness account falls at the edge of our county. The McMinn family lived in this area and built their log cabin in the early 1820s. According to the U. S. Senate Document No. 120, 25 Congress, second session, p. 535, Samuel's son Washington McMinn remembered distinctly the removal of the Cherokee Indians. He mentioned a peculiarity which he observed among

the passing tribes which was not generally known, that the Cherokee tribes had in their possession many African slaves.” Their plantation was where the Bengé detachment would have crossed Castor River into what is now Wayne County. In 1837, BCR 738 went all the way to the edge of Bollinger County and met Wayne CR. 224 and on to Greenville. Now the last short portion has been vacated by the county. The Bengé route in Bollinger County is shown on the modern county map.

We are so fortunate to have not one but two witness structures on this route that are both in excellent shape for their age.

;“Trail of Tears: Routes through Bollinger County, Missouri.” TOT Committee. Marble Hill, MO: Bollinger County Library, 2021.;Part of the Bollinger County Trail of Tears Archive, this collection features documents, maps, photographs, and books relating to the research of the Bengé Route as it passed through the historical Bollinger County region.;

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Northern Route (33 records)

The northern route follows the 1800s Jackson to Farmington Road. The Jackson to Farmington Road in Bollinger county can be shown on the 1843 State Road maps from the west side of the Mississippi River across from Chester, IL to Greenville. They show a portion of the Jackson to Farmington road and the Jackson to Fredericktown road.

The portion that moves into Bollinger County from Cape County is referenced in BB Cannon's diary: "... halted and encamped at Widow Roberts on the road via Farmington (just before the Bollinger County line)." His diary of Nov. 17th, 1837 continues: "Marched at 8 o'clock. A.M. halted at White Water Creek 4 o'clock. P.M. Issued corn & fodder, corn meal and beef, 18 miles today."

Coming from the Widow Roberts farm on the Cape County side to the road that comes into Sedgewickville you are following BCR 228 to State Rd. WW that follows the main street through Sedgewickville and continues onto State Rd. EE west. About 100 yards off of EE

on BCR 238, a witness structure called the Bollinger/Dolle Mill(1828) stood watch as the wagons, horses and thousands of Cherokee passed this way. Because the Mill was also the post office in this area for a while, we believe BCR 238 was actually part of the main road based on the 1906 Bollinger Plat map.

The trail continued west on BCR 246 and then onto BCR 214. The Conrad Johnson Cemetery on BCR 214 established in 1830s was also a silent witness to the tragedies that passed.

A portion of CR 214, west of State Hwy. 51 is now vacated so the closest current road is MO 51 until you reach BCR 930. Proceeding northwest on BCR 930, you would have passed the former mill that became the German Reformed Church for the first settlers.

About a half mile past the church/mill would have been the resting place for the Cannon party at the Hahn mill site in 1837.

According to Cyrus McCormick, Missouri engineer and surveyor, and author of "The Missouri Indian Trails," Hahn's spring and mill was the camping spot at the end of the day on Nov. 17, 1837. "Mr. Hahn's mother was a girl born in 1816 and she remembers well when the Indians camped there. Mr. Hahn, who was 88 years old in 1938, related the story his mother told him. The Cherokee camped there on the 17th day of Nov. 1837 and then proceeded to Yount just across the county line."

The Hahn mill and spring are in the right location on Whitewater and for the 18 miles that were cited in the Cannon journal.

BCR 920 completes the trail in Bollinger County before you cross into Perry County on PCR 722 at Yount.; "Trail of Tears: Routes through Bollinger County, Missouri." TOT Committee. Marble Hill, MO: Bollinger County Library, 2021.; Part of the Bollinger County Trail of Tears Archive, this collection features documents, maps, photographs, and books relating to the research of the Northern Route as it passed through the historical Bollinger County region.;

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