



BOUND FOR SANTA FE

THE ROAD TO NEW MEXICO AND THE AMERICAN CONQUEST, 1806–1848

By Stephen G. Hyslop

“The author’s transitions are so skilled they take your breath away, and his language is always rewarding and occasionally even poetic, without being pretentious. I believe this to be the best-written book on the subject of the trail that I have ever seen. Hyslop has gotten inside the Santa Fe Trail story as no one else has.”

MARC SIMMONS

author of *New Mexico: An Interpretative History*

The Santa Fe Trail: trade and war. For almost half a century, the Santa Fe Trail served as an avenue of exchange, where transactions ranged from friendly give-and-take to guarded trade to lethal attempts to settle scores. In 1846, the trail became the means for American seizure of Mexican territory—yet the economic and cultural exchanges continued even in the midst of war.

In *Bound for Santa Fe*, Stephen G. Hyslop uses eyewitness accounts to retrace the journey from Missouri to New Mexico, weaving together excerpts from nearly one

hundred accounts by scores of people who traveled the trail, including Josiah Gregg, Albert Pike, Matt Field, Susan Shelby Magoffin, and Lewis Garrard. With insightful commentary, he unites their stories and sets their testimony within a historical perspective.

Along the way, Hyslop explores the tense dealings between armed companies of travelers and tribal groups on the Plains, life in the busy prairie ports, the rigors of camp life and the pursuit of buffalo and other game, the journey out along the Cimarron Branch to New Mexico, and the alternate route on

the Mountain Branch past Bent’s Fort and over Raton Pass. Throughout the nineteenth century, both in commerce and in conflict, the trail remained a place of complex interaction among Americans, Plains Indians, and Mexicans. Hyslop concludes with the fateful episode that made the Santa Fe Trail an avenue for American’s largest historical ambitions—the occupation of New Mexico.

Stephen G. Hyslop, an independent scholar, served as editor of a 23-volume series on American Indians for Time-Life Books.

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