

861.

# **Four Forts of the South Platte**

**GUY L. PETERSON**

1982

FT. MYER, VA.



# Four Forts of the South Platte

This monograph originally appeared in an issue of *Periodical-Journal of the Council on America's Military Past*, Volume XI, Number 4, whole Number 45.

The Council on America's Military Past, P. O. Box 1151, Fort Myer, Virginia 22211 was founded in 1966 as the Council on Abandoned Military Posts; name changed in 1981. CAMP is a non-profit, tax exempt corporation whose members are interested in the identification, location, restoration, preservation and memorialization of old military installations and their history and traditions. All persons sharing this interest are invited to join. CAMP has no official connection with the Departments of Defense or Army.

© Copyrighted 1982, Council on America's Military Past.

*Fur trading posts along the South Platte River in eastern Colorado were the literal outposts of European civilization in the 1830's. The military had not yet arrived on the scene, and many of the functions it would ordinarily perform had to be taken over by the early traders and trappers who manned these posts.*

*The four posts described in the following pages, Fort Vasquez, Fort St. Vrain, Fort Jackson and Fort Lupton, have a somewhat unique history which will become evident as their individual stories unfold. Unfortunately for the researcher, many of the original documents connected with these posts have disappeared. Consequently, recourse has to be made to some of the legends which still persist and have become accepted as authentic in western history. Travelers' accounts also have to be relied upon even though many are inaccurate as is pointed out in the appropriate place.*

*Archeology is also a valuable part of the analysis, particularly of Fort Vasquez. The author was actively involved in this excavation as noted under this section.*

*The most valuable portion of the text, however, may prove to be the inventories and sales records of Fort Jackson which have managed to survive; these have never been available to a general reading public before. These records were transcribed by the author from Xerox copies, and contain English, German and French intermixed. Help in this transcription was received from various professors at Colorado State University due to the illegibility of these short documents because of their age and the wear and tear they have undergone. Names may be of interest to individual researchers, but of more importance are the actual items listed and the count in the inventories of what was being traded during this time period on the western edge of the Great Plains.*

*As alluded to, there is some repetition due to the various travelers' accounts which contain mistakes as regards locations of the posts, and so on. These repetitions have not been edited out since they seem to be a vital part of the story and give the reader a more complete view of what was happening at the various trading posts — and following their demise.*

GUY L. PETERSON

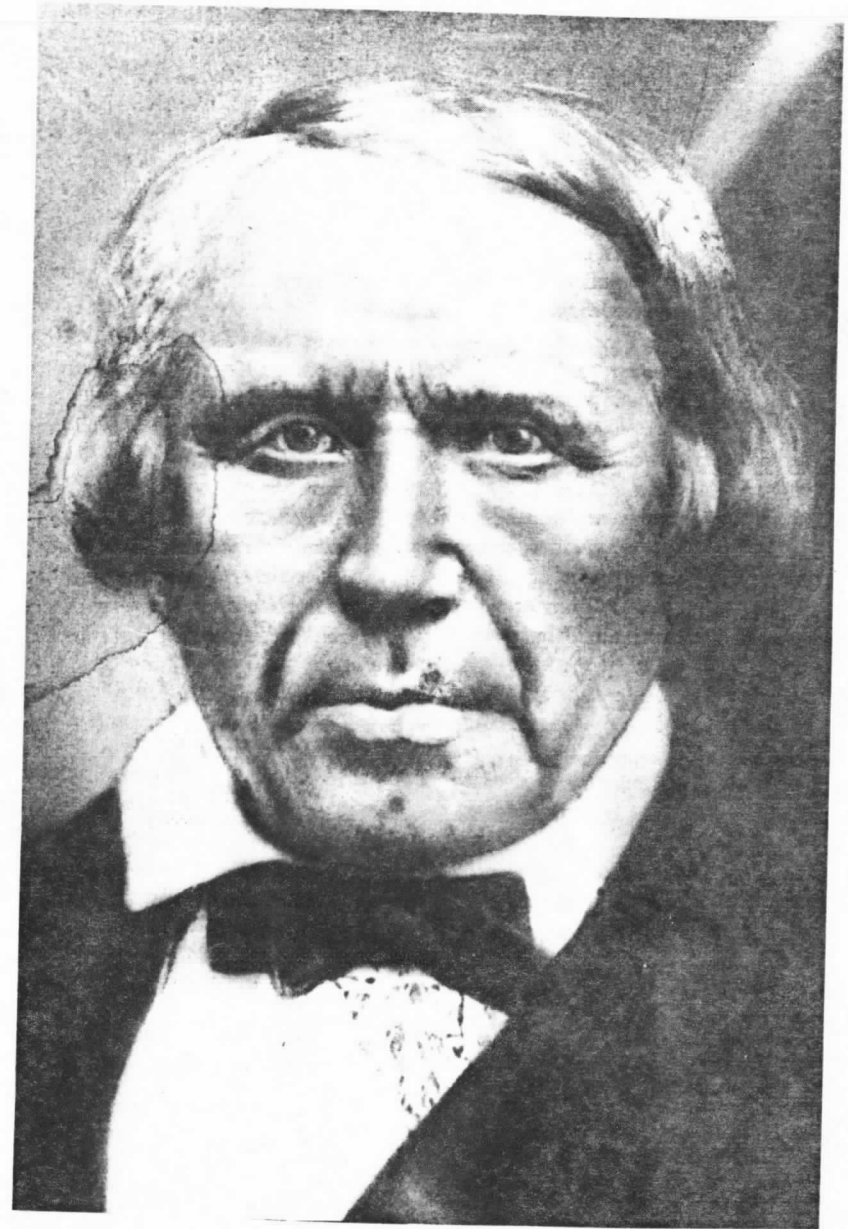
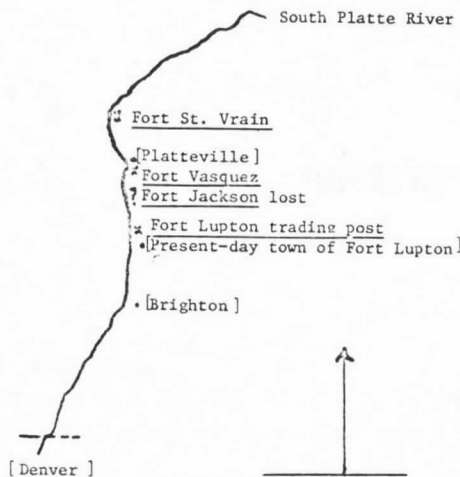
LIBRARIES  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY  
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO 80521

# I — Fort Vasquez

Fort Vasquez is a former fur trading post, built circa 1835 by Louis Vasquez and Andrew Sublette. Its remains are located one mile south of present-day Platteville, Weld County, Colorado, in Township 3 North, Range 66 West, Section 30, on the east side of the South Platte River. It was the first permanent European structure in the South Platte River valley. While located on the western edge of the Great Plains, beyond the wide valley and foothills west of the fort, the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains dominate the skyline. On clear days, the first rays of the sun illuminate the most prominent feature in this jagged horizon, Long's Peak, once known as Vasquez' Peak, these same rays striking it long before they reach down to the Fort proper. Long's Peak is a regional landmark which towers to a height of 14,256 feet and although many miles away, it served as nature's guide for many who had Fort Vasquez as a destination. While sometimes obliterated by smog today, Pike's Peak can often be seen south of the Fort site.

Of the post proper, only a misrepresentative reconstruction of the outer walls stands today. A small museum is adjacent and a number of tourists have been attracted to the site merely because of its somewhat odd location; it sits in between the east and west lanes of U.S. highway 85. The shock of coming up against an adobe wall splitting a four-lane highway is too much for some

*Location of the four fur-trading posts on South Platte River in eastern Colorado. Present-day communities in brackets.*



*Louis Vasquez, 1951 drawing by Mrs. A. J. Hale, great-granddaughter of Vasquez. Picture courtesy of Colorado State Historical Society.*

furs and robes which had to be protected from heat as much as possible.

Room 9 located in the northeast corner of the trading post could well have been the "back porch" of the fort. There was no fireplace, a low incidence of beads and other trade goods while there was a fairly high count of bone, 346. This room also had an outside entrance. Just where this room extended is an unanswered question since outside the walls to the north the ground is covered with a blacktop parking area. It is quite possible that it opened on to a corral, but there is no way to verify this hypothesis.

The present pseudo-adobe walls cover a short length of stone wall which begins at the *former* northwest corner of the original trading post and runs east for approximately eight feet. No explanation for this stone wall has been found since the rest of the trading post's foundation is tamped earth under adobe, and stone is unsuitable for adobe foundations.<sup>40</sup> One possibility is that the original plans called for building the trading post of stone since red sandstone outcrops are quite common along the ridge to the east, but the work may have been halted before it had progressed too far. Another possibility is that when the post was reoccupied a rebuilding program was started, but then abandoned. It is also possible that the church that tried to fill the social vacuum in the region may have undertaken a building project, but stopped. These however are pure speculation made in the darkness created by the lack of *any* evidence, documentary or archeological.

The list of artifacts recovered from Fort Vasquez is important for not only what it contains in assisting to determine room function, but also for what it does not contain. It was expected that certain items would be found, but they were not, and some items were not found in the quantity projected from preliminary research. Such items as gunflints, a necessity for the early trader who pushed European culture and civilization onto the Great Plains and into the Rocky Mountains, were practically non-existent. One English, one French and one hand-chipped gunflint were recovered from all of the excavations; the French gunflint came from Colorado State University's excavations in 1968 and the other two were unearthed in 1970. Only small seed beads were found in any quantity. Only five polychrome beads, the prize of most Indian tribes, were recovered. Remnants of copper kettles were not found. Only one musket ball was recovered. Three hawkbells were found. While the trading post had had a history of visitors picking up things for pleasure, this comparatively low incidence of Indian trade goods at an "Indian trading post" indicates a deliberate, planned abandonment of the fort. Since the definite record of bankruptcy of Locke and Randolph does exist, there is both written and archeological justification for this conclusion.

No eating or cooking utensils were recovered from the excavations. This is indicative of what would be considered sloppy eating habits in today's society by the mountain man of the past, and also of the high value which the later travelers through the region placed upon such items. It is instructive to remember that the bison was relied upon heavily for food by the traders, and

a scalping or skinning knife was always at hand. This tool was quite sufficient to slice off a piece of buffalo meat broiled over an open pit or in a fireplace. The high incidence of bison rib is also indicative of the life-style of these early Great Plains soldiers who lived in and visited the fort even though their rank was recognized only by their own kind. Ribs could be eaten with the hands, either bare or perhaps wrapped with a piece of rawhide. Ribs could also be torn away from the rest of the carcass with comparative ease and roasted over the fire much like present-day hot dogs. When the meat had been eaten or torn off the bones, the latter were tossed either on the floor or back into the fireplace, a practice documented on paper and by many excavations.

While this practice is frowned upon today, it was in common vogue among the Indians, and many of the mountain men adopted their habits. Ladles and spoons were often made of buffalo horns, and these deteriorate rapidly in the ground leaving little or no evidence of their ever having been there. Since the area was remote and the distance to a supply house long, forks and knives would have been treated with care and removed when the post was abandoned.<sup>41</sup>

Archeology at Fort Vasquez revealed several things beyond a mere count and analysis of artifacts. The size of the trading post was determined archeologically as being 100 feet east to west inside the main walls and 98.5 feet north to south. Measurement from the outside of the south wall to the inside of the north wall was exactly 100 feet. The original north-south walls were oriented 5° west of true north. These two factors alone indicate that the outside walls were laid out with some care and planning. This followed the usual pattern of building with adobe, i.e., laying out the outside walls with extreme care before the interior walls were considered — a pattern which persists in adobe country today.<sup>42</sup>

The adobe bricks utilized in the construction of the trading post averaged 18 x 8.5 x 3.5 inches. This original adobe was analyzed by the Soil Testing Laboratory at Colorado State University and was found to be composed of 24% clay, 60% sand, 15% silt, and 1% or less of organic material. This original adobe also contained an occasional bone which could not be identified due to size: incomplete chips, and so forth, and were noted as stray material that just happened to be in the soil as the adobe was originally mixed.

Most of the outside walls were built by laying adobe bricks side by side rather than lengthwise. This gave a maximum of thickness although it took many more bricks. Where they were found to have been set lengthwise, two rows were laid in order to keep the wall the same thickness. Along the south wall, an extra row of bricks was laid beside the others which resulted in a total thickness of 26.5 inches at the base. The latter feature in the fort's design may have been a structural necessity due to the presence of the gate in the middle of the south wall as shown on the reconstructed floor plan. The thickness of the wall was undoubtedly planned to protect those inside against possible Indian attacks, and as protection against both the heat of the summer and the



## II — Fort St. Vrain

ca. 1837-1844



*Ceran St. Vrain. Engraving courtesy Colorado Historical Society.*

Marcellin St. Vrain, younger brother of the more famous Ceran St. Vrain, was the bourgeois of the Bent, St. Vrain and Company trading post along the South Platte River in northeastern Colorado. He and a group of his men were at St. Louis to dispose of the robes and furs which had been taken in at the fort in trade and to replenish their supplies for procuring more in the future. A normal crew was left on duty at the fort, and during St. Vrain's absence, a large group of Arapaho Indians gathered around in anticipation of his return. This occasion would be marked by a large feast and a display of the latest Indian trade goods. In the late 1830s, the time period involved, the

Indians thought the latter to be the epitome of western engineering and technological genius; these same items were usually referred to with diplomatic scorn by the traders as gewgaws.

While awaiting the upcoming fair, the Arapaho discovered that St. Vrain's squaw and papoose were from an enemy tribe. After a hasty conference the Arapaho under Chief Friday, decided that these two enemies had to be scalped to avenge past wrongs their tribe had committed against the Arapaho. The next morning the Arapaho came into the fort with weapons concealed beneath their blankets, and those who were holding down the fort were quickly overpowered and held at bay. St. Vrain's squaw and papoose were found and Chief Friday's order to "kill'em quick" was carried out. The Arapaho retreated back to their camp jubilant over the two fresh scalps they had in hand; Arapaho law had been upheld and frontier justice had prevailed.

The men at the fort were released, and they buried the remains of the squaw and child inside the fort while the Arapaho calmly awaited St. Vrain's return and the upcoming celebration; this fact serves to emphasize the point that the Indians felt no remorse over their act, were indeed of the opinion that they were justified in committing the murders and above all were confident St. Vrain would see things their way. With this point of view, they were anxious for his return.

When St. Vrain did return he learned the circumstances of what had happened from his men, but instead of seeing things through the Arapaho eyes, he was furious. He had thought a great deal of the squaw and papoose, but he concealed his anger and pain from everyone. The preparations for the traditional feast were set in motion when St. Vrain sent some of his better hunters out to bring in a large deer or elk. Everything appeared to be on schedule for the open-air banquet, but St. Vrain had made a few critical changes. He took his men into his confidence and had the brass cannon of the fort concealed in one of the towers, loaded and primed for action, with his cannoneer at the station. In addition to this basic groundwork for his personal revenge, he hid several men at strategic positions around the interior of the fort. Food tables made up of barrel tops and tailgates of wagons were placed so that the Indians who would be intent on eating would be concentrated in a small area — with his own men out of the line of fire. St. Vrain ordered his men to shoot into the group at almost pointblank range when he gave the signal.

If any of the Arapaho had been uneasy, they were soon convinced that St. Vrain had not been upset nor harbored bad feelings towards them by their act by his assurance that "one squaw, more or less, did not make a great deal of difference." The elk was barbecuing in the center plaza of the fort and this further alleviated their fears. When the meat had cooked through to the cottonwood spit upon which it had been placed and the wild sage used to season it had permeated to the bones of the large mammal, St. Vrain invited the Indians into the fort. The invitation was qualified however and would prove

and some evidence of trash deposits still were being found at this distance; pipe stem fragments and small pieces of glass and bone were recovered. Testing continued at the site proper utilizing a seven inch trencher to try and find an architectural feature of the old post that might have been in between the V-shaped trenches which the grader had previously dug. These efforts, however, were mostly futile and no features of the fort could be discovered. The leveling job had been complete, and the Fort Saint Vrain of old was evidently completely gone. No further work has been attempted, and there seems to be little reason for it.

The artifacts recovered from Fort St. Vrain were too few and too scattered to properly analyze them as pertains to room location, room function, the outline of the post or even how much trade might have been carried on. It is instructive at this point however to recall how much material was obtained at Fort St. Vrain from Fort Jackson, and conversely, the unverified story of Marcellin St. Vrain's subsequent desertion of the post.

The artifacts, with no locus, were tabulated as follows:

#### CERAMIC

Total pieces and fragments:	118
Pipestem fragments	8
Pipebowls and fragments	2
Earthenware dish fragments	71
Earthenware cup fragments	5
Earthenware bowl fragments	3
China dish fragments	4
China cup or bowls	11
Insulator fragments	1
Sewer pipe fragments	3
Balance of insulator fragments given to the Public Service Company	10

#### GLASS

Total pieces and fragments:	178
-----------------------------	-----

#### BEADS

Total beads:	47
8/32"	1
7/32"	2
6/32"	2
5/43"	8
4/32"	20
3/32"	4
2/32"	6
Balance of broken or otherwise unmeasured	4

#### MOTHER OF PEARL

Total pieces:	4
---------------	---

#### METAL

Total pieces and fragments:	1,155
Lead total	22
Lead balls	2
Lead dross	20
Barbed wires	18
Tacks	1
Painted metal objects	1
Metal cylinders	1
Unidentified fragments, mostly corroded	943
Cylindrical object	1
Bullet shell	1
Manufactured plaque	1
Buckle	1
Turnbuckle fragment	1
Nails and fragments	82

#### ADOBE

Total sacks of samples:	17
-------------------------	----

#### WOOD AND CHARCOAL

Total sacks of samples:	17
-------------------------	----

#### ROCK

Total:	8
Agate	1
Flint	6
Lime	1

#### COAL

Total sacks of samples:	4
-------------------------	---

#### GYPSUM

Total samples:	7
----------------	---

#### SLAG

Total sacks of samples:	24
-------------------------	----

#### CHALK

Total sacks of samples:	4
-------------------------	---

#### CEMENT [CONCRETE]

Total pieces of samples:	1
--------------------------	---

#### ORGANIC MATERIAL

Total pieces:	7
---------------	---

#### MANUFACTURED OBJECTS

Total pieces:	22
Buttons	6
Cuff links	1
Garter hooks	1
Hardened drops of paint	2
Leather fragments	1

the major factors which determined the location of the post.<sup>13</sup>

The 1838 inventory of Fort Jackson shows that there were domestic animals at the post: one yoke of oxen, one heifer, six mules, six horses in good condition and one lame mare. Such livestock required feeding and some shoeing. The inventory also shows that scythe blades and whetstones had been used and wild hay, a major resource all over the west, was probably put up for feed. The blacksmith shop's inventory is not extensive, but sufficient for the necessary shoeing which would have been done: one shoeing hammer, five pairs of mule shoes, one pair of old mule shoes, three pairs of new horse shoes, and two and  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds of horse shoe nails.<sup>14</sup>

Traffic in alcohol is revealed on this 1838 inventory. Two kegs are listed, containing ten gallons, three quarts, one pint. One brass liquor cock in perfect condition is listed, but two are shown to be damaged and broken. Whether the latter was due to excessive use, rough treatment or inferior quality is of course undetermined, but it definitely shows the traffic in rotgut. Whether this was intended for the mountain man or to loosen the Indian up in trading operations is also undetermined, but the latter is known to have been a common practice.<sup>15</sup>

Status of the beaver pelt in relation to the buffalo robe is also noted. One piece of beaver trap chain is found listed, but no complete traps. There is no castorium, the standard bait for beaver, widely used by trappers. Conversely, powder and lead are well represented as are all types of Indian trade goods.<sup>16</sup>

More insight into both the condition of the fur trade and the financial condition of Fort Jackson is obtained from an examination of Fort Jackson's pelt and robe take for 1837-1838. The total number of buffalo robes received by the trading post during the 1837-1838 winter was 2,761, worth a total of \$9,319.37. During the same period, the trading post took in only 53 beaver pelts, worth \$193.37.<sup>17</sup> These figures show that beaver pelts were still worth \$3.56 and buffalo were bringing \$3.37. In this particular case, the figures are lying as concerns value; the fur trade was fast turning from beaver, and New York tanners had (finally) learned how to make leather out of buffalo robes; the result was a rising market for buffalo robes and a steady decline in the demand for beaver. Even with the prices nearly equal, the weight was not. Those responsible for hauling the pelts or robes to the market place in St. Louis were being saddled with heavy buffalo robes which was in sharp contrast to the much lighter and easier to handle beaver pelts. This raised the transportation costs and the net profit was lowered. These factors coupled with the depression of 1837, evidently forced the American Fur Company to give up the Fort Jackson venture and desert the region along the South Platte. Bent, St. Vrain and Company bought Fort Jackson and its complete stock of goods on October 6 and eliminated one of its competitors.

After the stock from Fort Jackson had been removed to Fort St. Vrain, the Bent Company post on the South Platte also known as Fort Lookout and Fort George, a wrecking crew from Fort Laramie, the American Fur

Company's post on the North Platte arrived and began to level the former fur trading post. This destruction met no opposition from the Bent Company. Since this latter organization had one large and strong fur trading post in the region, they were probably just as happy that the AFC saved them the trouble of doing the job for them since a ready-made building could not be left sitting for another entrepreneur to move into. The crew burned Fort Jackson and wrecked it so thoroughly that further use was impossible.<sup>18</sup>

One Louie Herod was in charge of the destruction and he evidently did an excellent job. Since the post was leveled in 1838, it was not surprising that the location of the fort has been in doubt and its site eluded searchers of today. It was thought that perhaps the outline of charred foundations would show up from the air by utilizing specialized photographic methods, but these efforts, as well as ground surveys, have failed to turn up any trace of the post, which may have been one of the first wooden buildings in this region.

### INVENTORIES AND INVOICES

"Invoice of goods sent by Mr. James C. Robertson Dec. 2, 1837 from Fort Jackson to the Arkansas River for trade with Indians during winter:

4 prs 3 point red blankets		\$11.01	\$44.04
3 prs 3 point green blankets		9.63	28.89
3 prs 3 point white blankets french [sic]			34.50
3 prs 3 point blue blankets		6.90	20.70
5 prs 3 point white blankets English		7.59	37.95
3 prs 2½ point white blankets English		6.44	19.32
4 prs 2 point white blankets English		3.84	15.00
5 prs 1 point white blankets English		2.77½	13.87½
2 pieces save List blue cloth	38 yds	1.54	58.65
2 pieces Scarlet cloth	40 yds	1.55½	62.20
5 green blanket capotes		7.35	36.75
9 Red flannel shirts		1.47½	13.27½
7 woolen caps		.40¢	2.80
9 Domestic plaid and check shirts		.77¢	6.93
5 Scarlet Chief Coats		8.25	41.25
5 Blue Chief Coats		7.70	38.50
2 pieces Red ground Calico	59 yds	.26½	16.32
1 piece cotton furniture check	46¼ yds	.17	7.86¼
1 piece cotton stripe	43 yds	.13¼	5.69¼
1 piece Bleached Domestic sheeting	30 yds	.14½	4.32
1 ——— [?] cotton shawls	8	.96	7.68
3 pr Sattinett Pantaloon	Avge	3.15	9.45
2 Fur Hats		1.92½	3.85
10 masses white barleycorn beads		.90¢	9.00
7½ Masses white Agate Beads		1.80	13.50
6 Masses Blue Agate Beads		1.68	10.08
1 Mass Red Barleycorn Beads			1.20
10 Masses white small Barleycorn Beads		.15¢	1.50½
8 bunches spotted Italian beads		.60¢	4.80
52 lbs Blue and white seed beads		.38½	20.02
3 setts wampum moon shells		1.50	4.50

150 Turquoise shells	.10¢	15.00
1 Doz Fox tail plumes		3.60
½ Doz Red cock plumes	3.30	1.65
4 pr woolen Socks	.32½	1.30
1 lb Linen thread		.91
6 Leather Belts	.46¢	2.76
9 packs playing cards	.15¢	1.35
23 Doz assorted knives	2.28	52.44
1 gross Indian awls		1.49
1 Doz fire steels		.60
1½ gross gilt coat Buttons	2.10	3.15
4 packs small Hawks Bells	.45	1.80
4 packs large Hawks Bells	.72	2.88
1 m [Dozen] Brass Tacks		.60
4 Doz paper covered looking glasses	.46¢	1.84
6 large Britannia Looking glasses	.33¢	1.98
6 assorted Britannia Looking glasses	.25¢	1.50
2 gross finger rings	Avgc .90¢	1.80
8 Doz combs	.60c	4.80
16 Assorted files	.14½¢	2.32
5 Battle Axes	1.92½	9.62½
25 Squaw Axes	.82c	20.50
15 common Hoes	.36¼¢	5.44
6 Long Fusils	5.10	30.60
6 Short Fusils	4.95	29.70
7 Powder Horns	.82½¢	5.78
Flints and gun worms		1.00
50 lbs powder	.33c	16.50
100 lbs Trade Balls	.08c	8.00
7 Brass Kettles assorted sizes	30 lbs .62½	18.75
2 Jappaned Kettles	1.92	3.84
3 Sheet Iron Kettles	20 lbs .27½	5.50
1 Frying Pan	For Use .37	
15 gallons alcohol	1.10	16.50
90 lbs common Tobacco	.11¢	9.11 [sic]
5 house Bells	.15¢	.75
50 Sleigh Bells		2.50
7 polished Bells	6 lbs 3.09	
12 lbs vermilion	1.32	15.84
5½ lbs Brass Kettles wire	.55¢	3.02½
3 lbs Iron wire	.15¢	.45
3 Collins Axes	1.70	5.10
2 Calico Shirts	1.21	2.42
1 pair Silver wristbands		1.50
1 Silver Half moon gorget		3.00
1 small sword		2.25
35 lbs coffee	.16½¢	5.77½
60 lbs Sugar	.13½¢	8.10
10 lbs Rice	.05½¢	.55
20 lbs Lead for use	.07	1.40
Total		\$937.95

Fort Jackson April 22d, 1838, E Excepted [sic]"<sup>19</sup>

"Inventory of Merchandise, Utensils, Buffalo Robes, Furs and Live Stock formerly belong to Mess. Sarpy and Fraeb [Fort Jackson] delivered Messrs. Bent, St. Vrain and Co. at Platte River:

*No. 1 One Box containing:*

56 lbs blue seed beads  
60 lbs white seed beads  
8 blue chiefs coats  
3 scarlett chiefs coats

*No. 2 One bbl containing:*

22½ Doz Best Wilkinson' Scalping Knives  
18 Doz 2nd quality scalping knives  
24½ doz 6 inch butcher knives  
8 doz 7 inch butcher knives  
1 11/12 doz green handled cartouch knives  
1 11/12 doz inlaid fancy handled knives

*No. 3 One box containing:*

2 green blanket capotes. 1 damaged by mice  
13 masses white Rickaree beads  
1 ps Salampoon Calico 16 yds  
4 doz black silk hdkfs  
2 damaged green table covers  
4 cotton hdkfs invoiced ¾ cotton shawls. Damaged by mice.  
[The previous line is unexplained; this is the way it appears on the original inventory.]  
7½ masses blue Rickaree beads  
24¼ lbs vermilion  
180 prs large ear bobs  
200 prs small ear bobs  
14 masses white barleycorn beads  
3 masses red barleycorn beads  
12 bunches white barleycorn beads small  
4 masses imitation wampum, wt 2 lbs  
2 grace gilt coat buttons  
1¾ grace finger rings  
11 packs small hawk's bells  
2 packs large Hawk's bells  
2 setts pierced Braecky  
3 setts embossed Braecky  
10/12 doz fine ivory combs  
10/12 gross Indian awls  
1 M [M = one dozen] brass tacks

*No. 4 One box containing:*

1 ps cotton plaid 38 yds  
1 ps cotton stripe 13 yds  
Remnant bleached shirting 17½ yds, cost 11 cts  
11 11/12 doz crambo combs  
1 doz paper covered pocket looking glasses  
½ doz 7 inch butcher knives (rusty)  
½ doz 7 inch butcher knives perfect  
1/6 doz 6 inch butcher knives  
7/12 doz 5 inch butcher knives  
42 bunches blue cut glass beads  
10/12 doz pocket knives, 1 blade



3/12 pocket knives, 2 blades *Damaged*

3¼ bunches green cut glass beads

½ M gun flints

¼ lb linen thread, assorted colours

*No. 5 box containing:*

9 strands pigeon egg beads, wt 4 lbs

1 mass blue oblong glass beads

1 mass white oblong glass beads

1¾ mass white barleycorn beads

2¼ mass white agate or Rickaree beads

1¼ mass blue agate or Rickaree beads

½ mass red barleycorn beads

1¾ mass yellow barleycorn beads

2 masses red or coral beads

10 strands large blue barleycorn beads

17 strands white barleycorn beads

½ mass smallest white barleycorn beads

4 masses striped fancy beads

4 strands flat white beads

1 4/5 masses garnett beads

1 2/5 setts wampum moons

32 turquoise shells bought in this country, cost 25 cts  
each, p in goods

½ lb blue and white seed beads

¾ doz fire steels

3 doz 7 inch handsaw files

¾ doz Sawhich whipsaw files

½ doz 9 inch whipsaw files

1/6 doz half round wood rasps

1/6 doz flat wood rasps

¼ doz Bastard flat rasps 7 inch

½ doz Bastard flat rasps 13 inch

1 gross Indian awls

*No. 6 Cow skin bale containing:*

3 green blanket capotes

1 doz best Wilkinson Scalping Knives

2 2/12 doz 2nd quality scalping knives

1 11/12 doz white handled cartouch knives

1 ps furniture check 46¼ yds

1 remnant furniture check 5¼ yds

5 madras hdkfs

2 x 8/4 cotton shawls

2 remnants cotton plaid 27 yds

1 remnant cotton stripe 23 yds

1 remnant red ground calico 3 yds

1 remnant scarlet cloth 1 yd

2 remnants blue cloth 9½ yds

5 red flannel shirts

6 woolen caps

1 blue chiefs coat

1 scarlet chiefs coat

1 plaid shirt

½ lb linen thread

1 doz red cock feathers

1 doz Fox tail feathers

6¼ doz gilt coat buttons

*No. 7 Cow skin bale containing:*

1 pr 3 pt [point] green blankets

1 pr 3 pt blue blankets

1 pr 3 pt red blankets

1 pr 3 pt white blankets

2 pr 2½ pt white blankets

1 pr 2 pt white blankets

1 pr 1½ pt white blankets

3 Britannia looking glasses, No. 4, largest size

4 Britannia looking glasses, No. 3, 3d size

½ doz paper covered glasses

*No. 8 Cow skin bale containing:*

4 green blanket capotes

1 blue blanket capote

3 blue chief's coats

3 scarlett chief's coats

8 red flannel shirts

5 cotton check shirts

3 cotton plaid shirts

1 woolen vest

5 woolen caps

*No. 9 Cow skin bale containing:*

3½ prs 3 pt red blankets

1 pr 3 pt green blankets

1 pr 3 pt blue blankets

1 pr 3 pt white blankets

1 pr 2½ pt white blankets

1 pr 2 pt white blankets

1 pr 1½ pt white blankets

1 pr 1 pt white blankets

*No. 10 Cow skin bale containing:*

1½ prs 3 pt blue blankets

1 pr 3 pt red blankets

½ pr 3 pt white blankets

1 pr 3 pt green blankets

½ pr 2½ pt white blankets

1 pr 2 pt white blankets

1 pr 1½ pt white blankets, slightly damaged

1 pr 1 pt white blankets, perfect

4 red flannel shirts

½ mass white Rickaree beads

¼ mass white barleycorn beads

3 masses fancy striped beads

1 lb white seed beads

72 lbs blue seed beads

300 sewing needles

2 pr goggles

200 trout fish hooks

1 yd bleached sheeting

*No. 11 Cow skin bale containing:*

1 remnant blue sattinett 7¾ yds

4 remnants blue cloth 14 yds

- 1 remnant red moleting 11¼ yds
- 4 remnants scarlet cloth 20½ yds
- ½ gross w 2 pieces quality binding
- 5 battle axes
- 5 powder horns
- 1 ps scarlet cloth 17¼ yds
- No. 12 *Buffaloe robe bale containing:*
- 3 ps scarlett cloth 56½ yds
- 1 pr woolen gloves
- No. 13 *Buffaloe robe bale containing:*
- 4 ps blue list cloth 76¾ yds
- No. 14 *Buffaloe robe bale containing*
- 4 ps blue list cloth 73¾ yds
- No. 15 *Buffaloe robe bale containing:*
- 1 ps scarlet cloth 18¼ yds
- 1 ps blue list cloth 19¼ yds
- 1 ps blue strand 20 yds
- No. 16 *Buffaloe robe bale containing*
- 2 ps blue strand 40 yds
- 1 ps blue list cloth 18 yds
- No. 17 *Buffaloe robe bale containing*
- 1 ps blue list cloth 20 yds
- 1 ps scarlet cloth 20¼ yds
- 1 ps scarlet cloth 18 yds
- No. 18
- 1 bale tobacco; wt gross 84 lbs, Tare 2 lbs, nett 82 lbs.
- No. 19 *1 box containing*
- 29 3/12 doz clay smoking pipes
- No. 20 *1 bag containing*
- 78 lbs trade balls
- No. 21
- 1 bag trade balls weighing nett 35 lbs
- No. 22 *1 box containing*
- 4 shaving boxes
- 3 Collins axes
- 2½ packs largest hawk bells
- 5 packs 2d size hawk bells
- 2 doz box combs, common quality
- 3 1/12 doz crambo combs
- 1½ gross gun worms
- ½ M gun flints
- 3 1/12 doz shaving soap
- ¾ lb candle wicking
- D Dutch pipes [sic]
- 1 seythe stone, wt ½ lb
- 3 doz Indian awls
- ¼ doz 7 inch handsaw files

#### Unpacked goods

- 9 large house bells, wt 7½ lbs
- 18 small house bells, wt 6½ lbs
- 38 new square axes
- 8½ lbs
- iron wire
- 8 lbs brass wire

- 1 new frying pan
  - 1 new drying knife
  - 1 new tap-borer
  - 10 long fusils, rusty
  - 3 short fusils, rusty
  - 1 Rocky Mountain knife, 1st quality, damaged
  - 1 Rocky Mountain knife, 2nd quality, damaged
  - 342 lbs bar lead
  - 77 lbs pig lead
  - 12½ lbs verdigris
  - 3 half bbls FFF Duponts gunpowder, wt nett 160¼ lbs
  - 2 half bbls FF Duponts gunpowder, wt nett 110½ lbs
  - 1 bag FF Duponts gunpowder, wt nett 80 lbs
  - 2 pewter basins weighing 1¼ lbs
  - 11 brass kettles weighing 58 lbs
  - 2 largest size tin mess pans
  - 2 2nd size tin mess pans
  - 3/5 nest Japanned kettles or kettles of largest sizes
  - 5 prs new mule shoes
  - 1 pr old mule shoes
  - 3 prs new horse shoes
  - 2¾ lbs horse shoe nails
  - 1 beaver trap chain
  - 3 new corn hoes
  - 2 Indian smoking pipes
  - Ullage bale oakum weighing 64 lbs nett
  - Ullage bale rosin weighing 30 lbs
  - 5 twilled linen sacks
  - 1 new powder horn
  - 2 kegs alcohol containing 10 gallons, 3 qts & 1 pt
- Tools that have been in use at Fort Jackson**
- 1 Jackscrew never used at the Fort
  - 7 augers of different sizes; sum total of the sizes, 26 quarters or 6½ inches
  - 1 mortiring chisel 1¼ inch
  - 3 socket chisels, total of sizes 29 qrs
  - 3 nail gimblets
  - 1 jack plane
  - 1 smoothing plane
  - 1 drawing knife
  - 2 pr pincers
  - 1 iron square, broken
  - 1 shoeing hammer
  - 1 pr carpenter's compasses
  - 1 hand axe
  - 6 Collins' axes
  - 3 squaw axes
  - 1 foot adze
  - 1 pick axe & grubbing hoe
  - 2 bullet ladles
  - 1 pr steelyards
  - 3 corn hoes
  - 2 seythe blades
  - 1 sett candle moulds, 6 moulds damaged
  - 1 sett candle moulds, 6 moulds perfect

- 1 grindstone
- 1 pr blacksmith's tongs
- 1 whipsaw with its rigging complete
- 1 pr scissors
- 1 pr candle snuffers, damaged
- 1 brass liquor cock, perfect
- 2 brass liquor cocks, damaged and broken
- 2 ox yokes, deficient of bows & rings
- 1 ox yoke, deficient of its bows only
- 3 padlocks with keys
- 4 red 5 gallon kegs
- 5 pack & riding saddles
- 8 braided cord & sash ropes
- 1 second hand waggon with but its forward wheels, perfect order

#### Kitchen ware that has been in use

- 3 large mess pans, tin
- 4 2nd size mess pans, tin
- 5 small mess pans, tin
- 11 iron spoons
- 2 table knives
- 6 table forks
- 1 coffee pot
- 4 sheet iron & 1 brass kettles, wt 33 lbs
- 6 pewter plates, wt 5 lbs

#### Live Stock

- 1 yoke oxen
- 1 heifer
- 6 mules in good condition
- 6 horses in good condition
- 1 mare lame with foot evil [athlete's foot]

#### Robe Trade of Fort Jackson since April last

- 14 buffaloe robes no. best quality
- 20 buffaloe robes no. 2, 2nd quality
- 69 buffaloe robes no. 3, 3d quality
- 36 appurtenances
- 4 calf skins
- 12 dressed cow skins, 1st quality
- 4 dressed cow skins, 2nd quality
- also

- 4 beaver skins weighing 5¼ lbs that were taken in payment of debts were contracted last year.

Errors excepted [sic] Fort Jackson Oct. 6th 1838

Fort Lookout [St. Vrain], October 24th 1838. Received of Abel Baker Jun., Fort Jackson, with its merchandise, peltries, live stock & etc., as per foregoing Inventory, being property formerly belonging to Mess. Sarpy & Fraeb. Bent, St. Vrain & Co."<sup>20</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Paul C. Phillips, *The Fur Trade*, 2 volumes (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 541-3; David Lavender, *Bent's Fort*, (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1968), 185.

2. Frederick A. Wislizenus, *A Journey to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1839* (n.p.; n.p., 1912), 127.
3. C. M. Clark, M.D. *A Trip to Pike's Peak & Notes By the Way, Etc.* (Chicago: S. P. Round's Steam Book and Job Printing House, 1861), 66.
4. Phillips, II, *ibid.*, 541-3.
5. Invoice, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
6. Lavender, *ibid.*, 192.
7. Memo, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
8. February 29, 1836, Letters of William L. Sublette to Robert Campbell, Campbell Papers, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
9. George Bird Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1962) [2 volumes]. I, 292.
10. Guy L. Peterson, 1974 thesis; Root & Connelley. *The Overland Stage to California*, (Topeka, Kansas: published by the authors, 1901), 87.
11. Grinnell, I, op cit, 307-308; Complete 1838 inventory of Fort Jackson, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis. Doing business with the Fort up to March 1, 1838 were: Albert, John C.; Andrew (Negro); Amouroux; Attabey, Charles; Bartlett, Joseph; Bent, St. Vrain, & Co.; Veovier, Baptiste; Bier, Henry; Boisver, Mossi; Carafelle, Amable; Carriere; Chase, John; Cortova, Antoine; Crawford; Diablo, Juan; Dougherty, James; Garcia, Benito; Gravelle, Antonia; Gray, John; Guerin; Gourouley & son; Gupeaume; Gustart, Vincent; Harvey, R.; Houorez; Jackson, Gilbert; Jeses, Don Jean; Kelley, Washington; Kenney, Charles; Labonte, Amos; Lateunepe; Latereue, Antoine; Lupton, L. P.; Miguel, Don; Montayo, Don W.; Myers, Lewis B.; Proveau, William; Redmond; Robertson, James; Sasanary, Francoix; Sits, Michel; Stevens; Trudelle; Vasques [sic] & Sublette; Walker, Peter Big; Wood, Felix. Names obtained from copy of original at State Historical Society Library.
12. 1838 Inventory.
13. Root & Connelley, op. cit, p. 312.
14. 1838 Inventory.
15. *ibid.*
16. *ibid.*
17. Lavender, op cit, 192
18. *ibid.*, 192
19. *ibid.*, 123.
20. Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.