


Annotated Resource Set (ARS)







Title / Content Area:	Bent's Old Fort
Developed by:	CH/TPS
Grade Level:	4-8
Essential Question:	Explain the ways in which Bent's Old Fort served as a cultural crossroads in the 19 th century.
Contextual Paragraph	<p>In the late 1920s the Bent brothers arrived in the area along the Arkansas and north of the Purgatoire River in what would become Southeastern Colorado.</p> <p>They partnered with Ceran St. Vrain in establishing Fort William, or as it came to be known, Bent's Fort. Located on the Santa Fe trail, it became an important stop for trader, trappers, American Indian groups and travelers.</p> <p>The old fort was destroyed in 1849. William Bent moved to a new area in the "Big Timbers" section of the Arkansas River and in 1853 began a new trading post known as Bent's New Fort.</p>







LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS

TEACHING
with PRIMARY
SOURCES

Resource Set



<p>Bents Fort c. 1859</p>	<p>Bent's Old Fort, outside La Junta in Otero County, Colorado c. 2015</p>	<p>Bent's Old Fort, outside La Junta in Otero County, Colorado c.2015</p>	<p>Old Fort Bent, La Junta, Otero County, CO</p>	<p>William Bent</p>	<p>Prowers House, Boggsville, CO c. 2009</p>
<p>Drawing shows Bent's Fort on a plateau above the Arkansas River in eastern Colorado, near present-day Prowers.</p>	<p>Occasionally referred to as Fort William, the fort is a 1976 reconstruction of an 1833 fort built by William and Charles Bent, along with Ceran St. Vrain.</p>	<p>View that would have been seen as people approached Bent's Old Fort from a distance.</p>	<p>Located on the US side of the Arkansas River this was a walled adobe structure housing personnel; providing rest, shelter, trading and repair facilities to early travelers, trappers and Indians.</p>	<p>Head and shoulders portrait of William Bent founder of Bent's Fort on the Santa Fe Trail. Portrait was made sometime in the decade before his death in 1869.</p>	<p>View of the Prowers House on the Boggsville Historic site in Bent County, Colorado.</p>
<p>William Bent erected a new establishment on the Arkansas in 1853. This fort was about thirty miles east of Bent's old fort, by then in ruins.</p>	<p>The post for trading with trappers and Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho Plains Indians for buffalo robes.</p>	<p>This view emphasizes the starkness of the plains and the welcoming presence of an oasis of civilization in the region.</p>	<p>Historic American Building Survey plans for the frontier days trading post/fort built by William and Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain on the Santa Fe Trail.</p>	<p>Donated in the 1930s to Historic Colorado.</p>	<p>Two story territorial style structure that was the home of John W. Prowers a teamster who worked for William Bent and Ceran St. Vrain</p>
					
<p>http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c28890</p>	<p>http://www.loc.gov/item/2015632784/</p>	<p>http://www.loc.gov/item/2015632783/</p>	<p>http://www.loc.gov/item/co0001/</p>	<p>http://digital.denverlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15330co</p>	<p>http://digital.denverlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15330co</p>

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Governor Charles Bent, March 1847	Christopher Carson, bust c. 1880-1910	Ceran St. Vrain	Susan Shelby Magoffin	Owl Woman (Mistanta) 1828-1847	The entrance to Bent's Old Fort
Head and shoulders portrait of Charles Bent, who served as governor of the New Mexico province taken in the Mexican American War, until he lost his life in a 1847 battle.	Christopher "Kit" Carson, 1/2 length seated studio portrait, wearing suit jacket, vest, and tie; photograph of a portrait.	Head and shoulders portrait of Cerain St. Vrain, fur trader from Colorado. He wears a white shirt and collar, with a dark jacket and cravat.	One of the first Anglo women to travel on the Santa Fe Trail. Her diary is one of the major sources about 1840s life in the American Southwest	First wife of William Bent	"Gate" or main entrance for those coming to Bent's Old Fort.
Eldest of the Bent brothers who founded Bent's Fort along the Santa Fe Trail.	Carson was one of the well-known frontiersmen who spent time at Bent's Old Fort.	St. Vrain was one of the founders of Bent's Old Fort.	Magoffin, pregnant at the time, took ill at Bent's Old Fort and suffered a miscarriage there.	Endeavored to aid relations between whites and Indians throughout her life.	Gate with watchtower above it speaks to the security measures in place at Bent's Old Fort.
					
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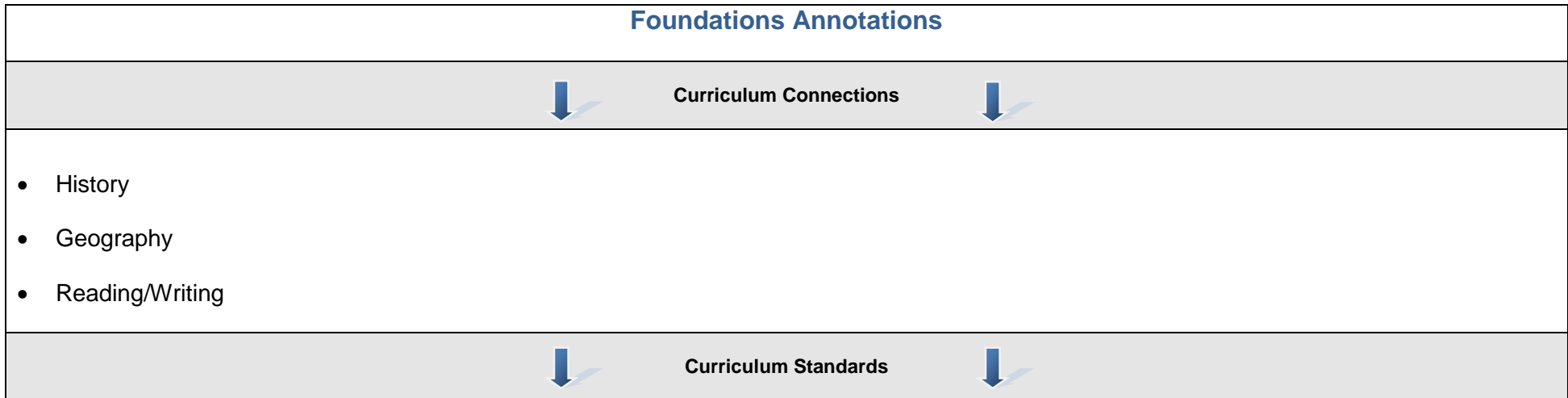
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Courtyard and interior structures at Bent's Old Fort	Courtyard and interior structures at Bent's Old Fort	Pioneer wagons Bent's Old Fort	Kitchen	Blacksmith Shop	Carpenter Shop
Looking toward the kitchen of the fort, a bucket sits on the bench air-drying.	Fur Press located in the courtyard of Bent's Old Fort.	Wagons of travelers parked outside the walls of Bent's Old Fort.	Typical smells included cottonwood smoke, spices, grease droppings and spoiled meat and foodstuffs.	Activities in this room included constructing wagon parts, manufacturing and repair of tools, livestock shoeing and wheel repairs.	In addition to the tools used by carpenters, there were collections of various parts of wagons to be recycled for use in the repair of wagons for trade at the fort.
View provides insight into daily life inside Bent's Old Fort.	Illustrates how pelts were pressed and bundled for transport.	Examples of the types of wagons used by travelers in the 1840s.	Hearth and fireplace designed for food preparation. Kitchen utensils of the period.	Workshops such as this were typically cluttered places smelling of coal, smoke and hot-shod shoes.	Repair of wagons was critical to the success of Bent's Fort.

					
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Warehouse	Magoffin Room	Laborers Quarters	Billiard Room	Living Quarters	St. Vrain's Room
These warehouses were used as storage areas for the goods awaiting transport to St. Louis, MO.	Susan Magoffin recuperated in the doctor's quarters after suffering a miscarriage as she travelled the Santa Fe Trail.	Sleeping and eating quarters for laborers, employees, and travelers from the states and Mexican workers who made adobe for the fort.	Billiards helped travelers and employees cope with boredom, idleness and loneliness. Many games were played to ease the long hours.	Trappers employed by Bent and St. Vrain and living at the fort included Kit Carson, "Old Bill" Williams, "Peg-Leg" Smith and "Uncle Dick" Wootton.	Highly respected in Santa Fe, his relationships in New Mexico were invaluable to the Bents. This served as his quarters at the fort.
Four warehouses in all, contained barrels, bags and bundles of trade goods. One served as a "bank vault."	First known as the quarters of Dr. Hempstead, resident physician. He was reported to have had a well-stocked library.	These rooms reflect the customs and beliefs of Mexicans hired to build the fort.	An 1839 ledger shows a diverse assortment of drinks that were served. Lt. James Albert also used it as an art studio.	Three living quarters illustrate the conditions for military, fort employees and fur trappers.	While away, St. Vrain's room was used as a guest room. It's most notable occupant was Lt. James Albert.

					
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4th Grade

CO State History Standard 1: Organize and sequence events to understand the concepts of chronology and cause and effect in the history of Colorado

- c. Explain the cause-and-effect relationships in the interactions among people and cultures that have lived in or migrated to Colorado

CO State History Standard 2: The historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas and themes in Colorado history and their relationships to key events in the United States

- b. Describe interactions among people and cultures that have lived in Colorado

CO State Geography Standard 2: Connections within and across human and physical systems are developed

- a. Describe how the physical environment provides opportunities for and places constraints on human activities
- d. Describe how places in Colorado are connected by movement of goods and services and technology

8th Grade

CO State History Standard 2: The historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas and themes from the origins of the American Revolution through Reconstruction and their relationships with one another

- d. Evaluate the impact of different factors – of age, ethnicity and class – on groups and individuals in this time period and the impact of these group and individuals on the events of this time period

CO State Geography Standard 1: Use geographic tools to analyze patterns in human and physical systems

- c. Recognize the patterns and networks of economic interdependence

CO State Geography Standard 2: Conflict and cooperation occur over space and resources

- a. Analyze how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape patterns of human population, interdependence, cooperation and conflict
- c. Interpret from a geographic perspective the expansion of the United States by addressing issues of land, security, and sovereignty

CC6-8HR/SS2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct

from prior knowledge or opinions.



Content and Thinking Objectives



- Students will be able to analyze and question primary sources.
- Students will be able to describe life in another historical era, e.g. 19th century on the Santa Fe Trail.



Inquiry Questions, Activities and Strategies



- In small groups, using the Library of Congress' Photo Analysis Sheet, analyze the images related to Bent's Old Fort and share the questions raised with classmates.
- Research the lives of Carson, St. Vrain and others associated with Bent's Old Fort. Assume the identity of the person studied and as that person, present an account of "your" life to classmates.



Assessment Strategies



Depending upon how one uses the resources and which standards are chosen, assessment can take many forms. For example:

4th Grade

- **CO State Geography Standard 2:** (d) Using the images of the inside of Old Bent's Fort, describe how the fort affected the movement of goods along the Santa Fe Trail.
- **CO State History Standard 2:** (b) Give examples that demonstrate the interactions among those visiting Old Bent's Fort.

8th Grade

- **CO State Geography Standard 1:** (c) Explain the patterns and networks of economic interdependence that existed at Old Bent's Fort and along the Santa Fe Trail.

- **CO State History Standard 2:** (d) Evaluate the impact of ethnicity and class as it pertained to Bent's Fort (Old and New) from 1820-1867.
- **CC6-8HR/SS2:** Using the images of various rooms of Bent's Old Fort, describe life in a trading post in the mid-19th century.

Other Resources

Web Resources

- <http://www.cogreatwomen.org>
- <https://www.nps.gov/beol/index.htm>
- <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/co-bentsfort.html>
- http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/bentsfort/bents_home.html

Secondary Sources

- *William Bent: Frontiersman* (Great Lives in Colorado History) by Cheryl Beckwith. Filter Press, Bilingual Edition, 2010 – For students and teachers
- *Bent's Fort* by David Lavender. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1954 – For teachers

Print and Other Media Resources

- <http://video.rmpbs.org/video/2365021102/> - Rocky Mountain PBS Colorado Experience Series – Bent's Fort
- Bent's Fort Exhibit – Colorado Stories at History Colorado

Preservation Connection

The re-creation of Bent's Old Fort based on historical sources written and drawn allows for better understanding life in another era.