

1875: VERDE RESERVATION OPEN TO SETTLEMENT; Wagon Trains Arrive.

By Glenda Farley Verde Heritage Aug 21, 2012

The Verde Reservation was opened to settlement on April 23, 1875. Dispatches from Camp Verde in July spoke of large numbers of wagons and people who followed the 6th Cavalry from Kansas going to Prescott and the Salt River. On August 4, there were 15 wagons passing through the Verde. Wagon trains with people who intended to settle in the Verde Valley began arriving on August 23, 1875.

The wagon train of the "Parson" James C. Bristow family and friends: "In 1875 a neighbor returned to Missouri from the Verde Valley in Arizona with descriptions that so impressed them that they decided to move westward." ... "On April 26, 1875, nine wagons drawn by oxen started from Humansville, Mo., for the Verde Valley in Arizona. The wagon train included the Bufords, the Dickinsons, the Hawkins, the Davidsons, Letts, Hutchinsons, Tom Smiths, James Humans, Pleasant Bristows, and the James C. Bristow family. ... "Parson" James C. Bristow arrived with his "wife and six children, which included Mrs. James Human. Another daughter, Mrs. Martha Ralston, and her husband, John-Will Ralston, remained in Missouri for two years. The family located at Middle Verde, six miles north of Camp Verde." (Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley; 1933, 1954; "Pioneer Preachers of the Verde Valley;" by Stella M. Jordan; page 58.)

"My parents, James and Mary Human, were early settlers in the Verde Valley. They left Humansville, Missouri, April 26, 1875. They traveled with ox team and wagon, along with eight other wagons. The party consisted of the Bufords, Dickinsons, Hawkins, Letts, Hutchinsons, Tom Smiths, Pleasant Bristows and James C. Bristow. ... They arrived in the Verde Valley in August. ... Their first child, a girl, Jane, was born October 27, 1875." (Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley; 1933, 1954; "Among the Early Settlers;" by Dora Dickinson; page 194.)

"In the year of 1875 my father hitched up Ben and Baldy." I was 12 years old when we "left our dear old home in Missouri. ... We got out of provisions, so my father, P. W. Buford, said, 'I will go to Camp Verde and take a pack horse with me and bring back a load of grub if anybody will go with me.' Charley Dickinson said, 'I will go with you.' ... They were gone four days. It was close picking before they got back. ... We arrived on Beaver Creek at the Wales Arnold ranch on August 23, 1875." (Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley; 1933, 1954; "Crossing the Plains in '75;" by Mrs. Charles Dickinson; page 22.)

"We started from Missouri in the first days of May with a number of other families. there were the Parkers, the Stackhouses, the Pankeys, the Wagners, the Letts, the Dickinsons, the Bufords, the Davidsons and maybe others I can't remember." ... When we got to "Sunset Crossing, a few miles above where the town of Winslow now stands, my folks and the Lett family stayed at this place a few days to let their stock rest. We were joined at this place by another wagon train from Arkansas." ... "We went to where McGuireville now stands. We got there on August 28th, 1875. That was the end of our trip. Taking everything into consideration we had a very good trip. ... My folks and the Letts camped at this place for a while, then moved down to the Verde." (Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley; 1933, 1954; "The Gaddis Story;" by H. F. "Tack" Gaddis; pages 127-128.)

"My mother Hettie Davidson, came from Stockton, Missouri to Arizona by ox-teams, when only a girl, age eight. They started the trip in the early part of May in the year 1875. There were several families in their wagon train, which included the Davidsons, Parkers, Stackhouses, Pankeys, Wagoners, Dickinsons, Bufords, Letts, and Gaddis and probably several more." (Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley; 1933, 1954; "Westward Bound in 1875;" by Charles L. Morris; page 130.)