



## JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

### BLUE MILLS LANDING (also called LOWER INDEPENDENCE LANDING)

**Virgil Pringle**

**1846 May 5**

“Got underway for Blue Mills. The Blue Mills the best water mills I have seen in the state. ... Went ahead with wagons and commenced loading in my flour for which I pay \$2.00 for Super fine and \$1.75 for fine.”

\*\*\*\*\*Pringle was on his way from central Missouri to Oregon. When he left the mill, he would have been able to cross the Little Blue River on a bridge that was built in 1837. In the 1830s, a mill had been built beside the Little Blue River Crossing. The bridge at this crossing likely was constructed to facilitate people going to and from the mill. Various sources say that for a time Blue Mills was the only mill in Jackson County that ground grain quite finely. Blue Mills continued in operation into the 1860s. The main mill building was not razed until 1923. The mill site is north of Blue Mills Road where Lentz Road dead-ends. This is north of the current city limits of Independence, Missouri. A mill wheel from this mill now is on display at the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, Missouri. **Source:** Mix, Larry and Carolyn Mix. “Western Missouri & Eastern Kansas: Santa [Fe] Trail Tour”. Accessed online at [santafetrailresearch.com/main-route/Missouri-sft-tour-west.html](http://santafetrailresearch.com/main-route/Missouri-sft-tour-west.html) on April 27, 2020.

**Thaddeus A. Culbertson**

**1850 March 25**

“... One of the Independence landings [Blue Mills; also called Lower Independence] was reached soon after [Liberty Landing]; from this one the town is distant about 7 miles; very few passengers landed here but 12 miles further up the river came to another landing [Wayne City; also called Upper Independence] but 3 miles from the town [of Independence] ....”

\*\*\*\*\*Apparently a few from this steamboat disembarked at Blue Mills Landing, even though many more passengers of this boat soon disembarked at the other Independence landing, Wayne City Landing. Both Wayne City Landing and Westport Landing were much more active landings. The diarist Culbertson was in an exploratory party headed to the Badlands to collect fossils. During the nineteenth century, exploring naturalists in the West were common. **Source:** Culbertson, Thaddeus A. *Journal of an Expedition to the Mauvaises Terres and the Upper Missouri in 1850*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, *Bulletin 147*. Wash., D.C.: Govt. Printing Office, 1952, quote on p. 19.