



DOUGLAS COUNTY, KANSAS

FRANKLIN

Frank Holsinger

1857 March 8, from 1904 memoir

“...Yet I plodded on down the Santa Fe Trail.... So I trundled on foot, sore and weary, with all my belongings upon my back. I think this day the hardest day’s work I ever did. Of my own I had \$2.50 in wealth, transportation to Lawrence was 5 by the hack, so I walked, determined to make Lawrence, forty miles away. In this I fell short, making Franklin, four miles east, footsore and weary. Putting up at an inn constructed of clapboards—it was the best ventilated house imaginable. This 8th day of March was cool and a fierce wind seemed to reach the marrow of my bones. A cot with only a light covering made this one of the most disagreeable nights of my life. Such was Kansas in 1857 when I trudged this section first.”

*****Holsinger walked across Johnson County on that day, but the article does not say where he began in the morning, although he had planned to walk 40 miles to Lawrence in one day. Holsinger stopped four miles east of Lawrence. The post office for Franklin was established in December of 1855 and was withdrawn in November of 1867. In 1904 Holsinger speaks of the “Santa Fe Trail”. One might think this refers to the combined Santa Fe, Oregon, and California trails until he headed northwesterly toward Lawrence. One might think that Holsinger was on the combined Oregon-California trail after he left the combined route of Santa Fe, Oregon, and California trails. However, a more direct route to Lawrence would have been the Westport to Lawrence Road, also called the California Road. Did Holsinger call the Westport to Lawrence Road “the Santa Fe Trail”? Rodney Staab, a former director of Grinter House in Kansas City, Kansas, found the above memoir in an issue of the *Western Fruit-Grower*. **Source:** “Walking the Santa Fe Trail Proved Too Much”, *Trails Head Tidings*, 13(1): (February 1999), 6, quote on p. 6.