



PIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Newsletter August— 2017 Vol. 11 No. 7



HARDEST 11 DAYS- WET MOUNTAIN VALLEY INTO THE SAN LUIS VALLEY

by Allan Vainley (WE QUOTE PIKE IN GREEN.)

Venturing into the uncertain is a challenge many of us face. In January 1807, Pike and his men were to face the uncertain and eleven of the hardest days on either expedition in the Wet Mountain Valley, CO.

Many challenges faced them- they needed to seek help- shelter from winter snows and possibly the natives, and they needed to find food. All this with having to face possible hostile Spanish territory. (The Spanish eventually were able to provide cordial, gracious help.)

Further, crossing the Sangre de Cristo Mountains into the San Luis Valley on January 27th has often puzzled us. What were they going to run into? More snow & cold? Game to hunt for food? Reading Pike's Journal we find no mention of snow as found in the Wet Mountain Valley, but they found firewood for warmth and decent hunting. From the 17th to the 27th (January) they indeed suffered hardship, snow, frostbite, and lack of food in the Wet Mountain Valley.

Pike had observed his 28th birthday in Cañon City and he willingly accepted his responsibility and challenge into the unknown- travel south up today's Grape Creek.

On January 14th, sixteen men, "each of us caring 45 lbs. and as much provision as he thought proper, which, with arms, &c. made on an average, 70 lbs. leaving Baroney and one man, Patrick Smith [at the Cañon City stockade]" left the Arkansas to seek help venturing into the unknown.

16th January, Friday.- Marched up the creek all day. Encamped early as it was snowing. I went out to hunt, but killed nothing.

17th January, Saturday.- About sunset we came to the edge of a prairie, which bounded the foot of the mountain [Sangre de Cristo], and as there was no wood or water where we were, and the woods from the skirts of the mountains appeared to be at no great distance, I thought proper to march for it; in the middle of said prairie, crossed the creek, which now bore east. Here we all got our feet wet. The night commenced extremely cold. When we halted at the woods, at eight o'clock, for encampment [at Horn Creek]; after getting fires made, we discovered that the feet of nine of our men were frozen, and to add to the misfortune, of both of those whom we called hunters among the number. This night we had no provision. Reaumer's thermometer stood at 18 1-2° below 0. {-10° F}" Two [Dougherty and Sparks] "who were frozen bad as not to be able to move" and had to be left on January 22 after 5 days. The party moved south to North Colony Creek, Music Pass Creek and Muddy Creek. On January 27th "Here left Menaugh who was froze & gave out." at Muddy Creek.

They suffered for ten days and on the eleventh [January 27th] began the 800 foot climb over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at Medano Pass.

27th January, Tuesday,- We marched, after a bad days march, through snows, some places three feet deep; we struck on a brook which led west, which I followed down, and shortly came to a small run, running west; ... Saw some sign of elk."

Now on the east side of the Sand Dunes they on the 28th January, Wednesday- "discovered after some time that there had been a road cut out, and .. left the sandy desert to our right; kept down between it and the mountain. Then we encamped, I ascended one of the largest hills of sand, and my glass could discover a large river, [the Rio Grande]. The sand hills extended up and down at the foot of the White mountains, about 15 miles, and appeared to be about 5 miles in width.

Their appearance was exactly that of the sea in a storm, (except as to color) not the least sign of vegetation existing thereon." <-- well-known quote

29th January, Thursday.- They kept their elevation and from Middle Zapata Creek under Mt. Blanca could view the



Rio flowing below through the valley and likely winter steam above McIntire Spring on the Conejos River. Perhaps they were thinking- Warm bath. Dr. Hobey Dixon told me that the temperature can be 15° F warmer at Zapata than in Alamosa below because of inversion layers.

They crossed the Rio Grande River on the 31st. Things on Pike's mind on 31st January, Saturday-Building a stockade 5 miles up the Conejos River and "while the others returned to assist the poor fellows who had been left behind at different points."

First Rescue attempt- 17th February, Tuesday.-

"...This evening the corporal and three of his men arrived, who have been sent back to the camp of the frozen lads. They informed me that two men would arrive the next day; one of which was Menaugh, who had been left alone on the 27th January, but that the other two, Dougherty and Sparks, were unable to come.

They said that they hailed them with tears of joy, and were in despair when they again left them, with a chance of never seeing them more. They sent on to me some of the bones taken out of their feet, and conjured me by all that was sacred, not to leave them to perish far from the civilized world. Ah! little do they know my heart, if they could suspect me to conduct so ungenerous. No! before they should be left, I would for months have carried the end of a litter, in order to secure them, the happiness of once more seeing their native homes; and being received in the bosom of a grateful country.

A rescue party brought back Menaugh on February 18th.

< Pike Field maps

Second rescue attempt- 19th February, Thursday.- "Sergeant William E. Meek, marched with one man, whose name was Theodore Miller" voluntarily left to retrieve Baroney Vasquez, Patrick Smith, Thomas Daugherty and John Sparks successfully.

Truly amazing. They marched into the face of uncertainty and danger successfully. Pike was obedient to his orders, an efficient and sympathetic

leader. His men [most on both expeditions] followed him faithfully and he didn't lose a man on either expedition.

PIKE MONUMENT INVENTORY

Thus far **108** Pike Commemorative Panels, Markers, Stones, Plaques have been photographed with gps readings in locations across the US and Canada. Place names are many. What this means is that Pike has been and is respected across our country. We trust that legislators realize that Pike is admired and respected for being an American hero who gave his life and for his loyalty to our country.

So far we have documented items (with how many) in:

First Expedition **Minnesota- 10, Wisconsin- 1, Iowa- 6, Illinois- 1**

Second Expedition **Missouri- 6, Nebraska- 1, Kansas- 4, Colorado 54, New Mexico- 0, Chihuahua- 0, Durango- 0, Coahuila- 0, Texas- 0, Louisiana (Natchitoches)-1**

Others- **New York- 12, Toronto, Canada 3**

At least one each in **Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Ohio, Maryland, Georgia, & Pennsylvania**

There are more out there. We need your help in finding, photographing and getting location gps readings.

As you can see New Mexico and Texas are noticeably missing... We live in Colorado with 54 found.

In the next issues of this Newsletter we thought we would share what we have found.

The project is NOT complete.

We will be able to print many pictures in our inventory. However because of file size we must be selective.

PIKE ENCAMPMENTS- WET MTN AND SAN LUIS VALLEY

2nd January Friday to 13th January, 1807 Tuesday.-

Camp Location: **Cañon City, CO Stockade** Fremont County 38.434625, -105.255755

Left Cañon City Stockade

14th January, Wednesday.-

(Pike Field Map Enct. unnumbered 1)

Camp Location: **On Grape Creek 1 mile above the head of Temple Canyon** between Horseshoe and Dawson Mtns. Fremont County, CO 38.396930, -105.331195

15th January, Thursday.-

(Pike Field Map Enct. unnumbered 2)

Camp Location: **1 mile N of Fremont/Custer County line** 6970' 38.27865, -105.35493

16th January, Friday.-

(Pike Field Map Enct. unnumbered 3)

Camp Location: **Down creek from DeWeese Reservoir on Grape Creek at Fourmile or Johnson Gulch** Custer County 7520' 38.21845, -105.41463

17th to 21st January, Saturday to Wednesday-

(see Pike Field Map Enct. 4)

Camp Location: A five day camp **Horn Creek** Custer County 38.055312, -105.515472
8840' Probably on the Campo family property.

22nd January. Thursday

(Pike Field Map Enct. 5)

Camp Location: **North Colony Creek** Custer County 38.011455, -105.481082 8540'

23d January, Friday

(Pike Field Map Enct. 6)

Camp Location: Extreme headwaters of Grape Creek, **due east of Music Pass-**
Sangre de Cristo range. Custer County, CO 37.936297, -105.446126

24th to 26th January, Saturday to Monday (Pike Field Map Enct. 7)

Camp Location: **At the confluence of North and South Muddy Creek** - Wet Mountain Valley Custer Co.
Muddy Creek 37.885750, -105.361317

Medano Pass

27th January, Tuesday (Pike Field Map Enct. 8)

Camp Location: **'Pikes gap' at the top of Medano Pass** Great Sand Dunes National Park Mosca, CO
Huerfano County, CO 37.856232, -105.432698 9600'

Sand Dunes

28th January, Wednesday (Pike Field Map Enct. 9)

Camp Location: **Below High Dune Sand Dunes** Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve,
Saguache/Alamosa County line 8300' 37.745200, -105.504888

Mt. Blanca

29th January, Thursday (Pike Field Map Enct. 10)

Camp Location: **Below Mt. Blanca** Middle Zapata Creek at Raspberry Canyon
Alamosa County 37.64781, -105.56436

30th January, Friday (Pike Field Map Enct. 11)

Camp Location: Likely **Washington Stage Stop** (spring) near CR 8S and 116 S
Alamosa County 37.458577, -105.747036

31st January, Saturday- Crossed the Rio Grande (Rio del Norte) at mouth of Trinchera Creek/ Stuart's Crossing
or at either branch Conejos R. Not likely at Lasausas [or Los Sauces] ? historical
crossing Conejos/Costilla County, CO 37.314154, -105.738784

31st January, Saturday to 27th February, Friday 28 days

Camp Location: San Luis Valley **Stockade** Jan 31 to Feb 27 **McIntire Spring Stockade**
Conejos County, CO 37.287137, -105.818666

ZEBULON PIKE AN AMERICAN HERO NEW CHILDREN'S COLORING BOOK

Ed French, former Disney artist, has completed his Pike Children's Coloring Book.

The print price for this 48 page coloring book is \$9.57, \$10 for face to face sales in Fremont County. It is now available on www.amazon.com under Zebulon Pike an American Hero under books.

It is also up on Kindle.

Won't you join our Association also!

We need you to renew your membership or join for the first time. Click here for a membership form:
<http://zebulonpike.org/docs/MembershipBrochure.pdf> or
complete and mail the membership form below.



**Send CHECKS to the Association address below w/ "c/o Harv Hisgen" The
Postal Service has failed to deliver them and returns them otherwise.**

Our Purpose: To Establish federal designation of the Pike National Historic Trail

We are a Charitable nonprofit organization

Our website is www.zebulonpike.org

"Zebulon Pike was an American hero, a patriot who lived and died for his country." -Thomas Jefferson

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE- (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pike-National-Historic-Trail-Association/167853563238403?fref=ts>)

COIN SET AVAILABLE [INDIVIDUAL COINS- \$3] [LOOSE SETS OF SIX- \$20] [FRAME SETS WITH PAMPHLET (PIKE'S WORDS AND AN EXPLANATION FOR EACH COIN) \$30. SHIPPING AND HANDLING- \$ 1.00

The Pike Association's vinyl decals- The cost is \$2.50 each with price breaks at 5, 10, or 25 decals, plus shipping.

Join Now! Please consider membership in our organization

<i>Level</i>	<i>Amt.</i>	<i>Level Name</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Amt.</i>	<i>Level Name</i>
Student	\$15	Corporal Jackson	Small Business	\$75	Robinson-Brown-Miller
Individual	\$25	Sergeant Meek	Corporation	\$200 & up	Carter-Gordon-Mountjoy-Roy
Family	\$35	Menaugh-Stout	Benefactor	\$500	Sparks-Daugherty
Non profit organization	\$50	Vasquez-Smith	Life	\$1000	Zebulon Pike

Name _____

I will be able to help with:

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___ The Pike Assoc. website

___ Historic/heritage investigation

Town _____ State ___ Zip _____

___ Providing educational opportunities

___ Producing educational materials

Phone (____) _____ Cell _____

___ I /we will personally contact legislators for legislative support

e-mail _____

___ I /we will write letters of legislative support

___ I/we would like to help in any way (Assoc. will contact)

Contact us: 303/816-7424 harv.pike@gmail.com Additional gifts are tax deductible. Make checks payable to:

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Pike Aug/Sept 2017 Newsletter

We are a tax exempt not-for profit Association under Section 501 (c) (3) IRC. Your contributions are deductible under section 170 of the Code.