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Review of *Over the Chihuahua and Santa Fe Trails, 1847- 1848: George Rutledge Gibson's Journal* Edited and annotated by Robert W. Frazer

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Over the Chihuahua and Santa Fe Trails, 1847-1848: George Rutledge Gibson's Journal. Edited and annotated by Robert W. Frazer. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. xii + 111 pp. \$7.95.

Born in Virginia in about 1810, George Rutledge Gibson studied law and later opened a law office in Vincennes, Indiana, in 1834. During the early 1840s he moved his practice to Weston, Missouri. Gibson also dabbled unsuccessfully as a journalist, but his two newspapers proved to be financial failures.

When the Mexican War started, Gibson volunteered and was elected a second lieutenant. He was part of Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny's Army of the West, which left Fort Leavenworth for the occupation of New Mexico in 1846. He later became assistant quartermaster and commissary and accompanied Colonel Alexander Doniphan's forces to El Paso and Chihuahua, seeing action at the Battle of Brazito on 25 December 1846 and the Battle of Sacramento on 28 February 1847.

The first section of Gibson's journal begins when he left Chihuahua in April 1847 to return to Santa Fe. During the one-month journey,

Gibson provided descriptions of the land and people and the several hardships he encountered. The second section of the journal details his eight-hundred-mile trip from Santa Fe to Fort Leavenworth beginning in April 1848, after his stay of about one year in Santa Fe. Again, Gibson recorded his adventures, impressions, and feelings along the way.

Robert W. Frazer, professor emeritus of history at California State University, Long Beach, and an authority on military history, has done a fine job of editing the journal. Frazer aptly notes Gibson's ethnocentricity in the unflattering comments he made about Mexicans and Indians. The editor could have, however, included an epilogue containing information on Gibson's career after he returned home.

The book is the first in a new series jointly planned by the Historical Society of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico Press. Gibson's observations provide a firsthand account of the Southwest during the late 1840s.

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