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COUNCIL BLUFFS/FERRYVILLE TOWN VICINITY

(north of east end of Interstate 680 Bridge over the Missouri)

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Ferryville, IA, long since disappeared, probably was a support base for the North Mormon Ferry from about

September 1846 until long after the last of the Mormon handcart

companies passed this way in 1860. It can be located only gene-

rally, east of the Missouri River and north of Interstate 680.

Although Ferryville never attained the importance of Council Point near the Middle Mormon Ferry, it was

astride what became the major crossing point for Mormon pioneers,

Gold Rushers and sodbusters.

Spring traffic backed up so far during the early Gold Rush years, starting in 1849, that some travelers had to wait as much as three long weeks before getting across the Big

Muddy. Business must have boomed in Ferryville as well as in

Kanesville. There must have been many headaches dealing with men

frustrated by their inability to cross the river

and to be on

their way to the gold fields of California.

One Gold Rusher saw a silver lining in his

frustration, applied to the Pottawattamie County Court House for

a permit and opened a competing ferry just west of Kanesville in

1850. That ferry provided the means in 1854 for Kanesville busi-

nessmen to cross the Missouri and establish Omaha City after the

Omaha Indians sold their land rights to the United States.

American Fur Company trader Peter Sarpy

bought a steamboat in St. Louis and ferried transcontinental

travelers across the Missouri at Bellevue for \$5 a wagon. Lib-

beus T. Coons, founder of Coonsville (now Glenwood, IA), built a f

erry just south of the Platte River and siphoned off more of the Ferryville business. But there still was plenty of business.