



## Relatives Road Trip, Cross Country Drive (R18A-1)

Like 2017 my final trip of the year was a road trip out to Illinois and Iowa to visit family. I mixed some all-day drives with some planned and ad hoc sightseeing to break up the driving. Not as much sightseeing as I figured on, though. I spent my second day in sometimes heavy rain, the remnants of a Pacific hurricane. Heavy rain, local flooding and even near-blizzard conditions on various days throughout much of the trip kept me in the car more than I had expected.

I did have a good first day, repeating a favorite hike in southern Utah before spending the night in Page, Arizona. No pictures from that hike, though, but I strangely injured a toe that limited some of my subsequent hiking plans a bit later in the trip.



I stopped at Capulin Volcano National Monument on this trip last year, but rain and low clouds hid much of this cinder cone, its crater and area sights from view. So I returned here just for a photo stop.



View into Capulin's crater. I hiked down there the first time I visited Capulin. There are a number of extinct volcanoes and volcanic features in the region, part of the Raton-Clayton Volcanic Field.



State Highway 551 is an out of the way road segment in northeast New Mexico that leads to an out of the way area in southeast Colorado. But back in pioneer days this route was a toll road offering an alternative to a steep segment of the Santa Fe Trail. The ruins of the toll station survive here.

A few years ago I was returning to Las Vegas along Highway 160 in southeast Colorado, when I picked up a brochure for the Comanche National Grasslands. I learned from the brochure that there were four marked petroglyph and pictograph sites in the grasslands, two of these to the south of Highway 160.



The first of these sites was at the Carrizo Canyon area. Here I'm approaching Carrizo Canyon.



Although the trail was soon overgrown with brush, I didn't think anything of it until I saw this sign. The things I will do to bring you the latest in prehistoric rock art.

Or not. Over the years I've only had one mild reaction to poison ivy, but I didn't want to chance it, so I gave up for now. At least I'm not one of those people who will feel itchy when they merely see such a sign or a picture of poison ivy, feeling an overwhelming urge to start scratching their arms and legs.



I had better luck at Picture Canyon's Crack Cave, shown here.



The purpose of these Crack Cave lines hasn't been determined, although some speculate that they may have been used to track stars. Kind of like a prehistoric People Magazine, I suppose.



This pictograph features a horse, so it clearly was drawn during the historic era after European explorers introduced the horse to the Americas.



A warrior pictograph and a bit of the abundant modern graffiti at the site



In 1878 Punished Woman's Fork in Battle Canyon north of Scott City in western Kansas was the site of a battle between the US Army and a group of Northern Cheyenne seeking to return to their homeland. This was the last Indian battle in Kansas.



Rock-lined rifle pits created for the battle survive at the battle site.



At nearby Lake Scott State Park are the El Cuartelejo Ruins, the restored foundation of the northernmost Ancestral Puebloan ruins site and the only such site in Kansas. After a native uprising pushed Spanish colonizers out of New Mexico, the Spanish retook the area. This prompted a small group of natives from Taos and Picuris Pueblos to head for present-day Kansas, where they lived for a number of years before returning home.

By 1706 the Native Americans were gone, but the French and Spanish sometimes used the building as an outpost.

I passed through Atchison, Kansas at night some years ago and promised myself to make a more thorough stop someday. So Atchison was one of my targeted destinations for this drive.



Founded in 1859 the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway was chartered to connect Atchison and Topeka, Kansas to Santa Fe, New Mexico. This the historic Santa Fe Freight Depot, built in 1880.

The depot today is home to the Atchison County Historical Museum, which among other things houses the “World’s Smallest Presidential Library”. Atchison is named after David Rice Atchison who was President Pro Tempore of the US Senate on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1849. That was supposed to be the day that Zachary Taylor was sworn in as president of the United States and Millard Fillmore was sworn in as vice president. But it was also a Sunday and both men refused to be sworn in on the Sabbath. Their predecessors’ terms had expired. In those days the President Pro Tempore was third in line of presidential succession, making Atchison the highest ranking elected official in the US that day.

Does that make Atchison “president for a day”? Most constitution scholars say no, but it’s a useful tourist draw nonetheless.



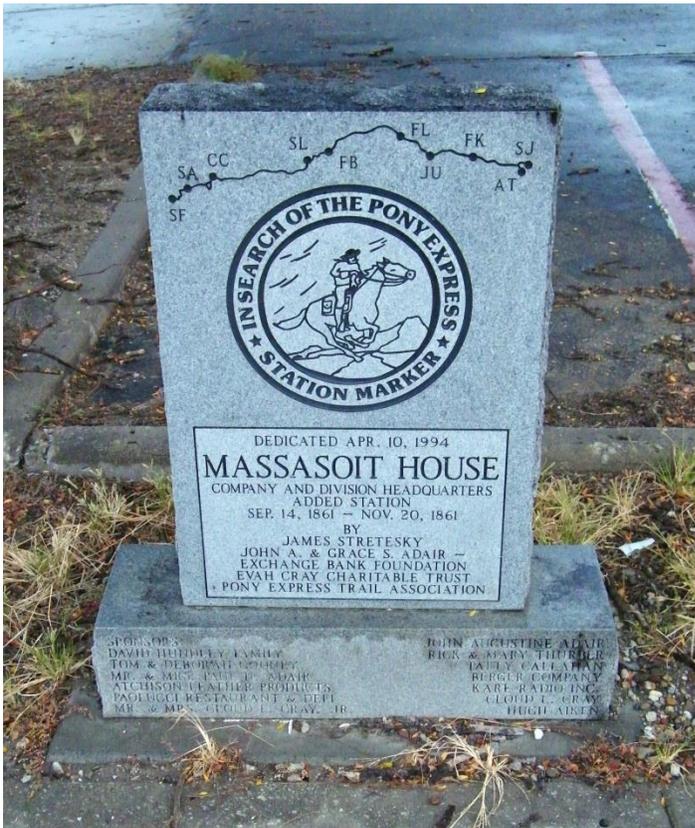
On the grounds of the depot is the Atchison Railroad Museum, which displays a number of train cars, many associated with the Santa Fe Railroad (now part of BNSF Railway).



In 1897 Atchison was the birthplace of aviator Amelia Earhart.



As Atchison sits on the bank of the Missouri River, it is a stop along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. The Lewis and Clark Pavilion in the city's Riverfront Park has several historical markers. The expedition camped five miles to the north at Independence Creek on July 3-4, 1804.



This downtown parking lot was once the site of Massasoit House, a Pony Express station and divisional headquarters.



Finally, a small piece of the USS Arizona is on display at a soldier's memorial on the Atchison riverfront.



I made a stop in Hamilton, Missouri when I saw a sign informing me that I'd find the boyhood home of James Cash Penney there. Penney, the founder of JCPenney, was born in Hamilton in 1875.



Penney opened his first store in Kemmerer, Wyoming (the Fossil Fish Capital of the World) in 1902. I got this picture of the "mother store" when I visited Kemmerer several years ago.



I made a family genealogy-related stop in Chillicothe, Missouri, and then took a walk around downtown Chillicothe because I saw some signs and this mural proclaiming Chillicothe as the “Home of Sliced Bread”. I finally found a local brochure that led me to the building below.



Iowan Otto Rohwedder patented an automatic bread-slicing machine. It was first put to use on July 7, 1928 in this building that at the time housed the Chillicothe Baking Company. Within two weeks, the bakery’s bread sales had risen 20-fold, making sliced bread the greatest thing since... well, since whatever the greatest thing was before sliced bread.



The Locust Creek Covered Bridge is now a state historic site. The 151 feet long bridge was built in 1868, and eventually was part of one of the first transcontinental road routes. The bridge hasn't moved, but the route of Locust Creek changed.



Laclede, Missouri is home to General John J. Pershing Boyhood Home State Historic Site.

Hannibal, Missouri, boyhood home to Samuel Clemens (a.k.a. Mark Twain), was another of my targeted destinations for my drive east. Hannibal has certainly embraced its famous native son.



Although I stopped here in 1999 rather than on this trip, Mark Twain was born in this house in 1835, preserved at the Mark Twain Birthplace State Historic Site. It is located in the small town of Florida, Missouri, just to the west southwest of Hannibal.



The Clemens home in Hannibal. Note the whitewashed fence and fake bucket of paint for those who want a Tom Sawyer-inspired photograph of themselves whitewashing the fence.



Across the street, this was the home of Laura Hawkins, the inspiration for Twain's Becky Thatcher character.



This nearby building once housed the law office of Mark Twain's father, John Marshall Clemens.



These buildings are among the oldest in downtown Hannibal. This particular building was constructed by Abner Nash in 1836. He was the inspiration for Twain's "aged and needy postmaster" character. Nash's son Tom was one of Twain's lifelong friends.

The printing office of the Missouri Courier was housed in the building next door. Twain once worked for that newspaper.



The Mark Twain Museum in downtown Hannibal.



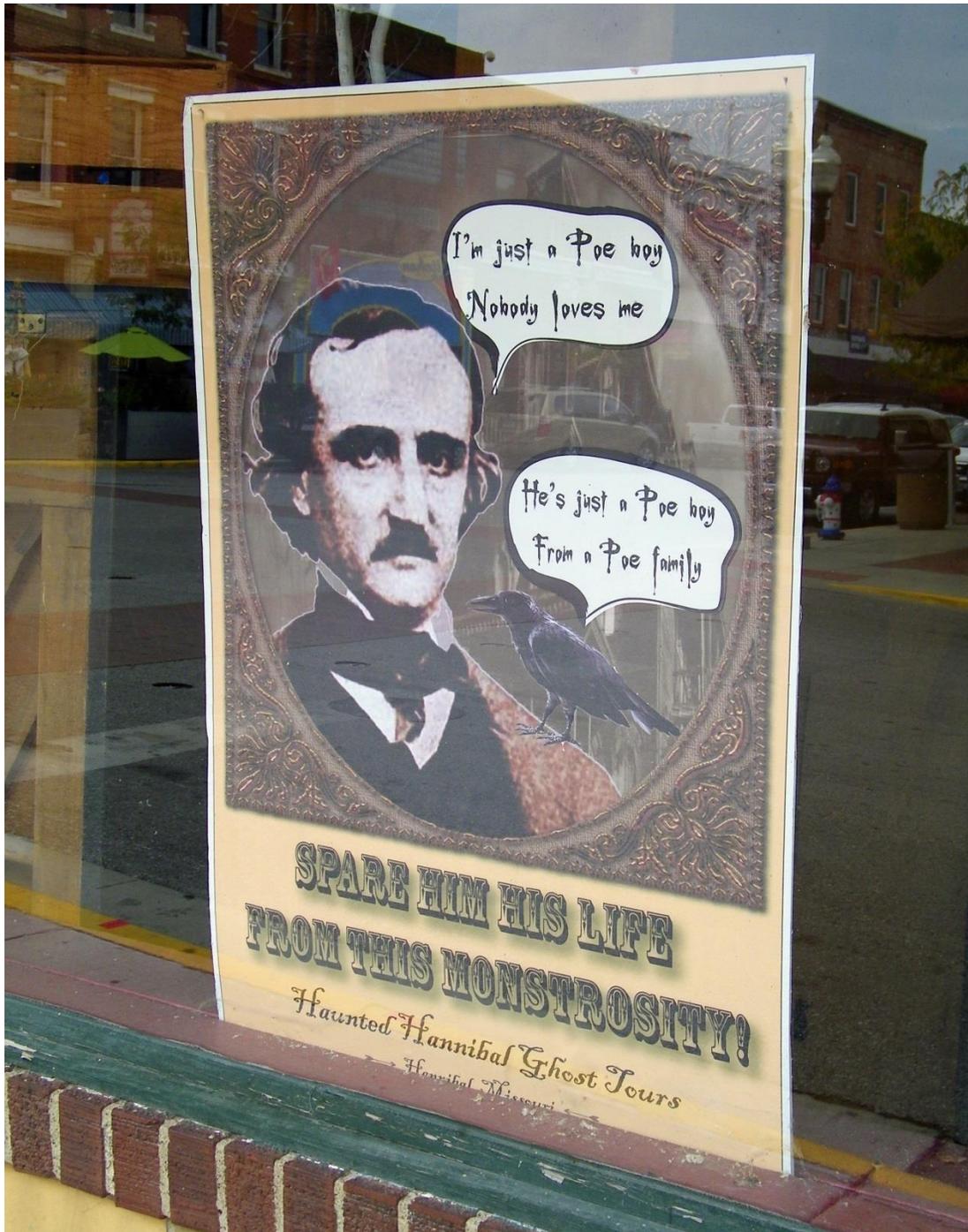
Sculpture of characters Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn



Statue of Mark Twain



The Mississippi River and riverboat-based restaurant



Queen vs. Edgar Allan Poe. Poster in a downtown Hannibal window.



I can certainly vouch for this.



The "Unsinkable" Molly Brown was born here in Hannibal in 1867. Margaret "Molly" Brown survived the 1912 sinking of the Titanic. Her birthplace is now a museum.

Weather and flooding caused me to cancel subsequent sightseeing plans until I was returning home on I-70 in western Colorado. I made a few photo stops along the interstate to get some pictures of the recent beautiful mountain snow.



Silverthorne, Colorado



Vail Pass, Colorado



South Park, Colorado



East of Glenwood Springs, I-70 passes through Glenwood Canyon, carved as much as 1300 feet deep by the Colorado River. This was the final segment of I-70 to be built.

I left I-70 at Glenwood Springs to head south to Paonia for another family genealogy-related stop. I enjoyed more pretty scenery along the way.



Site of the long-gone mining town of Placita, Colorado



I was driving a Jeep. The cowboy in the bottom left of the picture was driving some cattle.



Muddy Creek, just upstream from where it enters Paonia Reservoir at Paonia State Park



My last Colorado stop was at the Trail Through Time, in Rabbit Valley, McClinnis Canyons National Conservation Area back along I-70. Trail Through Time features an active dinosaur fossil quarry (above) and markers that provide information about the dinosaur fossils excavated here.

It's one of a number of stops along the Dinosaur Diamond National Scenic Byway that spans east central Utah and western Colorado.



Fossil of a dinosaur's pelvis along the Trail Through Time



Petrified wood along the Trail Through Time

I followed this stop with three days of sightseeing in the Moab-Green River, Utah area, covered separately.