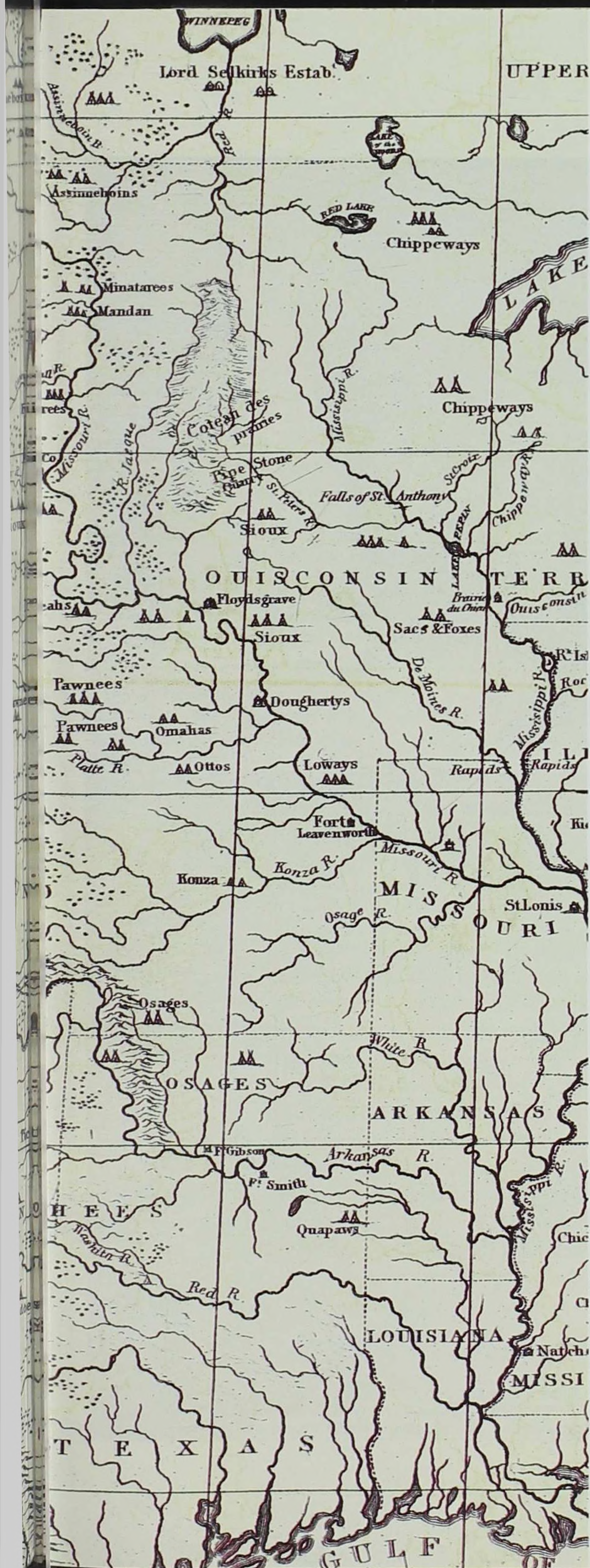


OUTLINE MAP
OF
INDIAN LOCALITIES
in 1833.

in Vol. 2, see Map of
LOCALITIES in 1840.
since all the tribes have
been removed from the States,
W. of the Mississippi.

Buffalo Range



"The trails are about people..."

... the pioneers who crossed the trails, the reasons for their crossings, and the people who aided, or impeded, their journeys. The trails are about American Indians who interacted with the overlanders, the overlanders who interacted with American Indians, and the ways their relationships developed and continue to evolve today.

"The trails are about the entrepreneurs who found ways to make money before, during, and after the migration. They are about the people who went to live in the Mormon settlement at the Great Salt Lake and the people who went in search of California's gold. They are about soldiers and fur-traders, free blacks and bridge-builders, newspaper writers and ferry operators.

"The trails are the story of women who worked side-by-side with men, of children who were born during the journey, and of people of all ages who died before reaching their destination. The trails are about these people and the myth that surrounds them."

Thus the planners of the Western Historic Trails Center articulated the interpretive goal of their exhibits. Drawing from historical accounts, they identified events that drew these diverse people together. Sculptor Timothy Woodman then depicted those events in the following ten trails scenes.

—The Editor

People following the trails into the West would not find an empty, unpopulated land but one already inhabited by American Indian nations with established traditions and social structures. This map, "Indian Localities in 1833," appeared in an 1844 report for Protestant Episcopal missions in the West.

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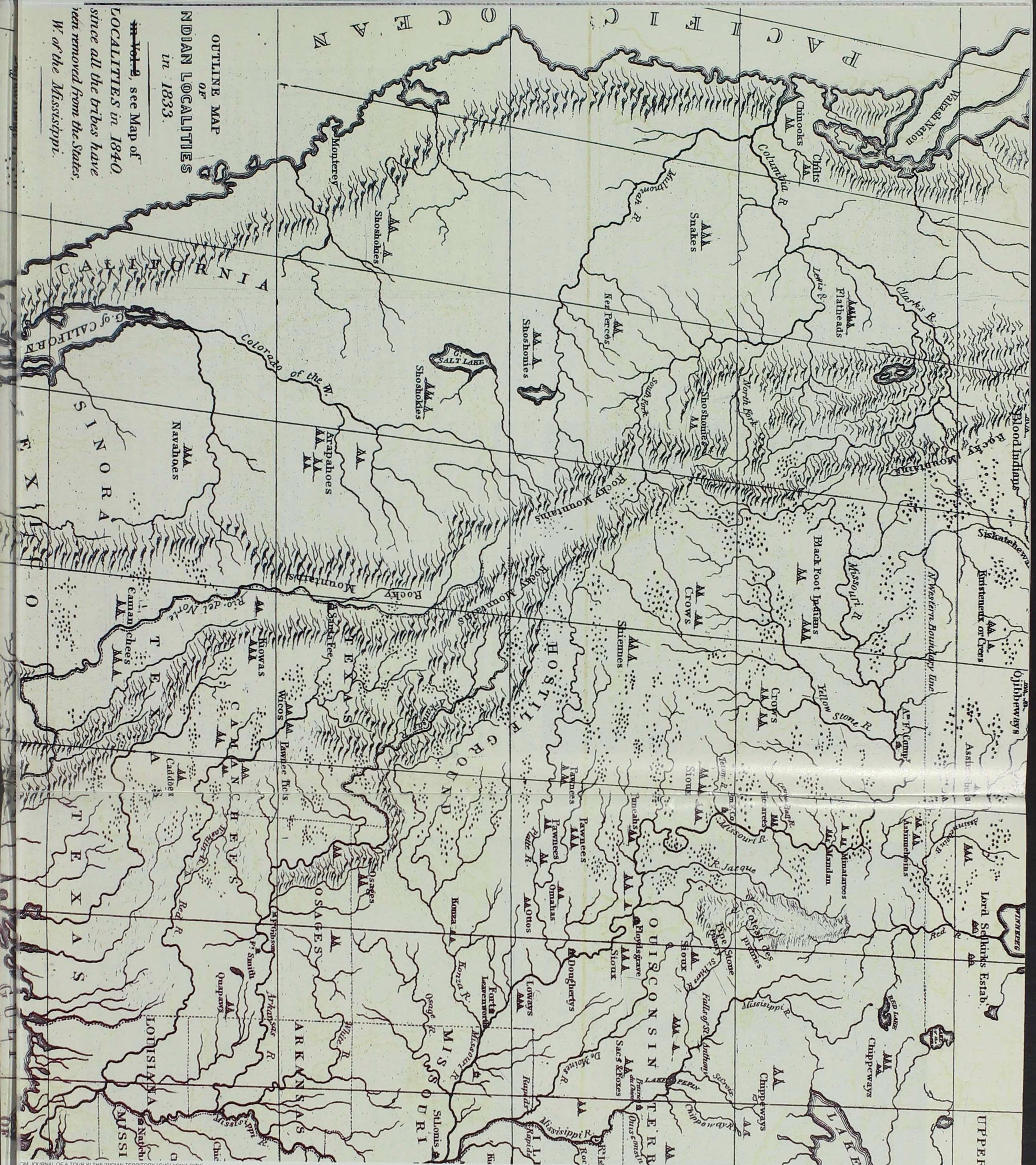
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Trappers' Rendezvous

In the scene above, a wagon filled with blankets, pots and pans, coffee, weapons, and liquor sits near two trappers speaking with an Indian woman. An Indian man negotiates his pelts with a fur trader from St. Louis, Missouri. An Indian woman with her child prepares a meal outside her family's tipi.

Fur traders, trappers, and Indians attended annual gatherings at specified locations in the Rocky Mountains to exchange the year's harvest of furs for supplies. Besides trading, the annual rendezvous featured such social activities as horse racing, storytelling, drinking, dancing, card playing, and carousing.

"At certain specified times during the year, The American Fur Company appoint a 'Rendezvous' at particular localities (selecting the most available spots) for the purpose of trading with Indians and Trappers, and here they congregate from all quarters. The first day is devoted to 'High Jinks,' a species of Saturnalia, in which feasting, drinking, and gambling form prominent parts. . . . The following days exhibit the strongest contrast to this. The Fur Company's great tent is raised;—the accumulated furs of the hunting season are brought forth and the company's tent is a besieged and busy place."

Alfred Jacob Miller

These ten scenes, created by sculptor Timothy Woodman, were photographed by Mike Whye at the Western Historic Trails Center. Text is adapted from the Trails Center exhibit "People and Their Experiences."

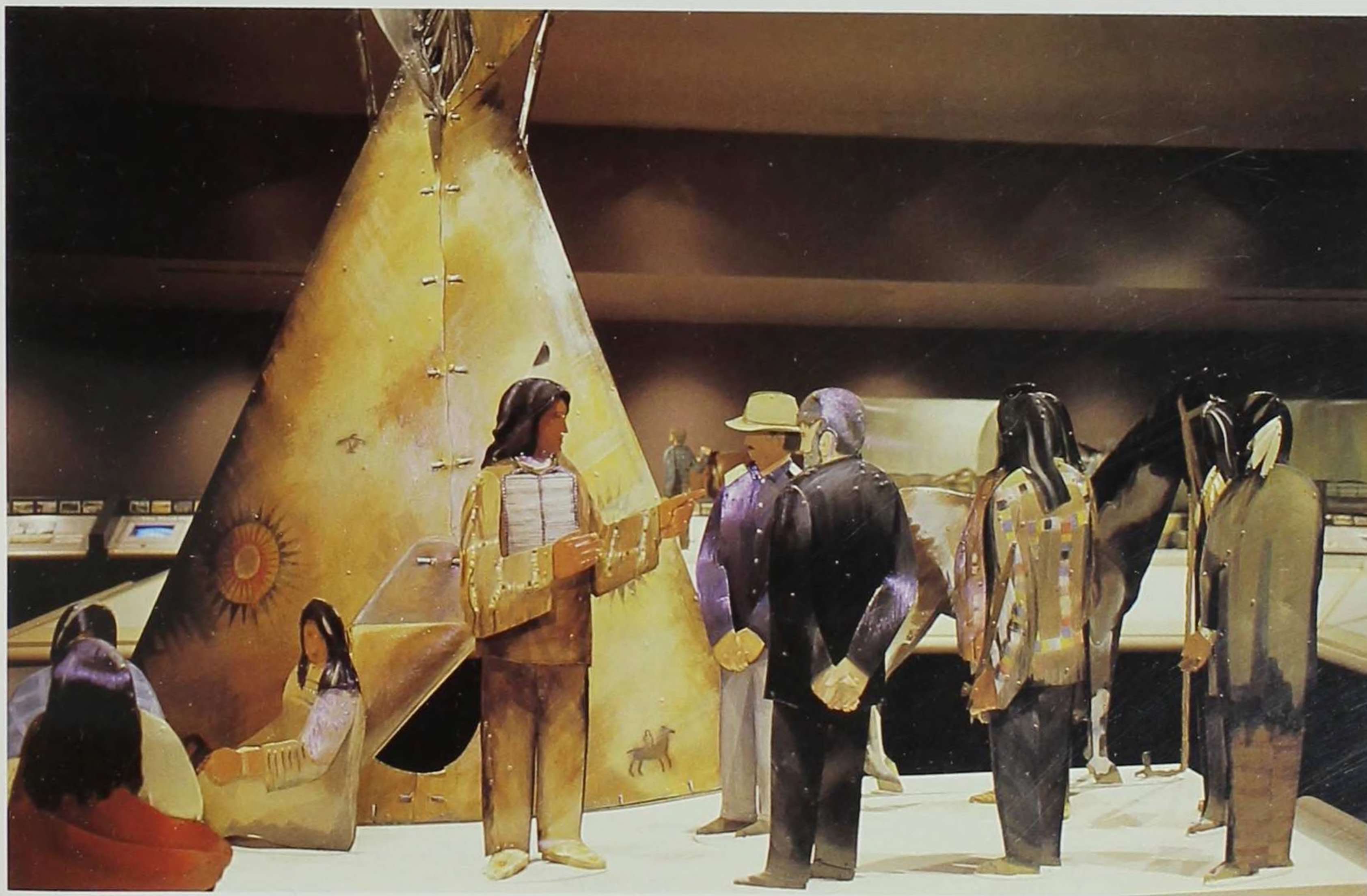
Indian Council

American Indian leaders from many nations discuss the contents of a treaty proposed at the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty Council. Between 8,000 and 12,000 Indians, representing the Arapahoe, Arikara, Assinaboine, Cheyenne, Crow, Lakota, Gros Ventre, and Mandan Nations, attend the council. Indian women also voice concerns.

The treaty defined boundaries between nations, authorized roads and military posts on Indian lands, and established a system for punishing those who violated anyone's personal rights.

"You have split the country and I don't like it. What we live upon, we hunt . . . and we hunt from the Platte to the Arkansas, and from here up to the Red Butte and the Sweetwater. The Cheyennes and Arapahoes agree to live together and be one people, and that is very well. But they want to hunt on this side of the river. . . . These lands once belonged to the Kiowas and the Crows, but we whipped these nations out of them, and in this we did what the white men do when they want the lands of the Indians. We met the Kiowas and the Crows and whipped them at the Kiowa Creek. . . . We met them and whipped them again, and the last time at Crow Creek. This last battle was fought by the Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Oglalas combined, and the Oglalas claim their share of the country."

Black Hawk, Oglala Lakota leader





Kanesville / Council Bluffs

As a man loads his family's wagon, his wife listens to a promoter selling guidebooks for the journey. Inside the supply store, a man heading to California in search of gold buys tools and talks with the shopkeeper. Two American Indian men watch the events from a wooden sidewalk.

People gathered in Kanesville (later named Council Bluffs) on the Missouri River. There they formed wagon trains with other eager emigrants seeking prosperity on Oregon farms or in California goldfields.

"One Saturday morning father said that he was going . . . to hear Mr. Burnett talk about Oregon. . . . Mr. Burnett hauled a box out on to the sidewalk, took his stand upon it, and began to tell us about the land flowing with milk and honey on the shores of the Pacific . . . he told of the great crops of wheat which it was possible to raise in Oregon, and pictured in glowing terms the richness of the soil and the attractions of the climate, and then with a little twinkle in his eye he said 'and they do say, gentleman, they do say, that out in Oregon the pigs are running around under the great acorn trees, round and fat, and already cooked, with knives and forks sticking in them so that you can cut off a slice whenever you are hungry.' . . . Father was so moved . . . that he decided to join the company that was going west to Oregon. . . . Father was the first to sign his name."

Unidentified child of an emigrant

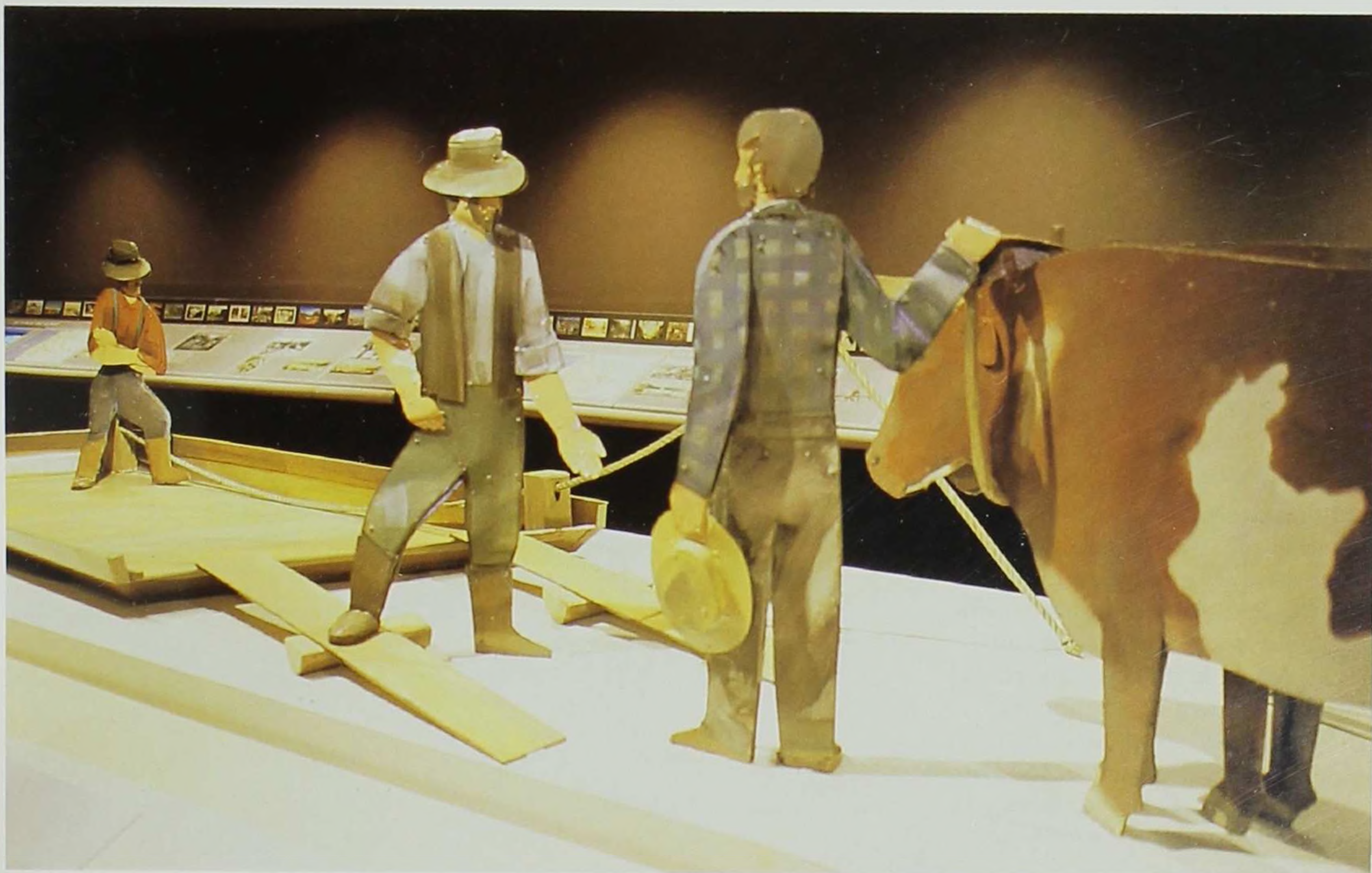
Ferry Crossing

As one ferry operator waits to transport a wagon across the river, his partner negotiates a price with an overlander. The man remains cautious as he knows that ferry operators often try to overcharge for their services.

Emigrants usually forded wide, shallow rivers without the services of a ferry. American Indians offered assistance along the trails as guides and purveyors of food.

"It was difficult getting over the river. They carried the goods over in a boat & drew the waggon over by hand with ropes but when the current struck them they would frequently roll several times over in the water & smash their bows out. They also came near drowning their Horses And one man would have been lost if the brethren had not picked him out with the boat."

Wilford Woodruff





Winter Quarters

Women tend livestock and haul water while a man and boy supply the household with firewood for heating and cooking.

During the winter of 1846/47, almost 5,000 Latter-day Saints moved into Winter Quarters near present-day Omaha, Nebraska, and into more than 80 smaller communities in southwest Iowa. The Saints traveled west periodically in unified companies sharing a common purpose. While in Winter Quarters and other Iowa communities, they acquired supplies and equipment necessary to follow their prophet, Brigham Young, to a land no one else wanted.

"Let each company bear an equal proportion, according to the dividend of their property, in taking the poor, the widows, the fatherless, and the families of those who have gone into the army, that the cries of the widow and the fatherless come not up into the ears of the Lord against this people."

"Let each company prepare houses, and fields for raising grain, for those who are to remain behind this season; and this is the will of the Lord concerning his people."

Brigham Young

Trail Camp

An Indian woman ventures into camp to trade. An African-American woman heading to California rests after a day's trek. A missionary reads from his Bible as his wife prepares an evening meal. A gold-seeking 49er unloads his mule.

At day's end, the overland travelers cooked their meals, visited with friends, tended the sick, shared their concerns, and planned for the next day's journey.

"Aside from the thoughts of home . . . our thoughts, our hopes, our fears and our anxieties are all centered about the train—the health and spirits of the company, the grass and water for the oxen, and in a limited way, fuel with which to cook our meals. . . . Rumors of hostile Indians are floating in the air most of the time, and while we pay little attention to them, we cannot altogether dismiss them from our minds, so that you can see the world in which we actually live scarcely extends beyond the dust of the train by day and the smoke of the camp fires at night."

John Benson





Rail Camp

Chinese immigrant workers along the Central Pacific Railroad construct the road bed in preparation for the track layers. Their Euro-American foreman checks the engineering specifications. Along the track bed, the cooking tent holds food and tea imported for the Chinese workers, which they heat on a tripod over an open fire. They shun alcohol, drink only tea, and eat only their traditional foods.

"All of these Chinamen were 'coolies' who had been shipped to America to work hard for the 'Central Pacific' as railroad section-hands for just a few years out of their lives and they had crossed the Pacific Ocean with the fond hope of saving up a few hundred American Dollars which they could later exchange for a great deal more of Chinese Money so that after a certain few years in America they would return to China as 'Money Lords' instead of living out their lives as just plain coolies. Many of them never did return to China."

Wallace A. Clay

Homestead

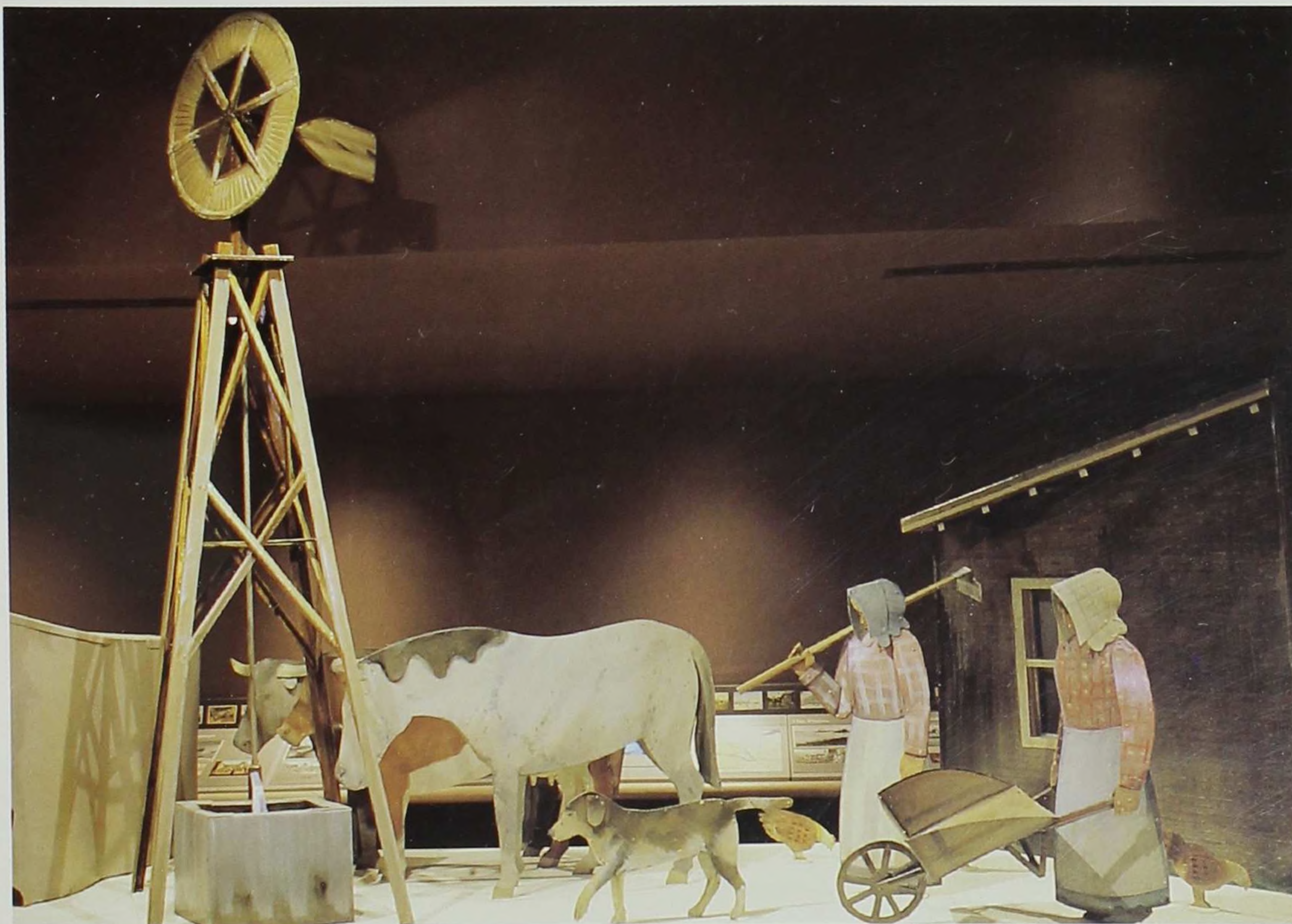
Two unmarried sisters share the responsibility and independence of homesteading on the prairie. They had claimed 160 acres through the 1862 Homestead Act. By locating adjacent claims, they have created a larger farm that will aid their enterprise. The law required them to remain on the land and make improvements for five years in order to gain title. The land is now theirs. Simple furnishings fill their cabin. Their livestock drink from a wind-powered pump. Chickens scurry as the sisters head for their fields to cultivate corn.

"I've often been asked if we did not suffer with fear in those days but I've said no we did not have sense enough to realize our danger we just had the time of our lives."

Nancy Hembree Snow Bogart

"A woman had more independence here than in any part of the world. When a neighbor told me 'the range is no place for a clingin' vine 'cause there hain't nothin' to cling to,' I felt I was learning to meet the challenge. The hardships of life were more than compensated for by its unshackled freedom. The opportunity for a full and active life were infinitely greater here. There was a pleasant glow of possession in knowing that the land beneath our feet was ours."

Edith Kohl





Reservation

Indians receive some of their annual treaty payments in goods and food from the U.S. Government. An Indian leader, wearing a hat indicating his rank, receives a pen from an agent to sign a receipt. Meanwhile, the agent's assistants pile up sacks of flour, blankets, and barrels of pork.

In the 19th century, religious and private groups urged the government to assimilate Indians. Although Indian families on reservations had to accept Euro-American supplies and food, they nevertheless preserved their culture over the decades.

"Sometimes at evening I sit, looking out on the big Missouri. The sun sets and dusk steals over the water. In the shadows I seem again to see our Indian village, with smoke curling upward from the earth lodges; and in the river's roar I hear the yells of the warriors, the laughter of little children as of old. My little son grew up in the white man's school. He can read books, and he owns cattle and has a farm. He is a leader among our Hidatsa people, helping teach them to follow the white man's road. He is kind to me. We no longer live in an earth lodge, but in a house with chimneys, and my son's wife cooks by a stove. But for me, I cannot forget the old ways."

*Waheenee-wea, Buffalo Bird Woman,
a Hidatsa woman*

Roadside Camp

A family stops to camp for the night. As the mother and daughter prepare supper, the father checks his automobile blue book to plan tomorrow's route, and the son plays with a toy truck. Nearby, a store owner fills the gas tank of another traveler.

Like early railroads, early highways demanded unusual feats of engineering and construction. Even though plans had developed to connect existing roads into a highway system from coast to coast and north to south, auto tourists often had to map their own routes. Such hardy souls found roadside service, food, and shelter around a new American symbol, the gasoline station.

"It had rained and filled the ruts. The car was bucking on the grades after having had insulting mud splashed in its face for miles. So finally the sun set over the hills . . . and we made camp No. 10 behind a school house out of the wind. We had followed a typical Wyoming trail all day, over the hills and long sweeping valleys—one town in a hundred miles of travel—the highway fenced for miles and miles, but tiny homestead shacks the only sign of habitation: the great wide west with its limitless spaces and its far-reaching emptiness."

Margaret Gehrke

