ambition would whisper, "you have another mission to fulfill."

Soon after the grass was well up, in the Spring of '23, I put my trappings on board of an old pack-mule, and straddling a mustang colt, started for Santa Fe along with two fellows who had come up from New Orleans. My companions were agreeable enough, but seemed to have no other motive than to see the country, and enjoy some of the pleasures of hunter life, they had "heered tell on."

We traveled to the source of Red River through the Comanche country, north to the forks of the Canadian River where we took the old Santa Fe Trail, which led us over and through the southern spur of the Rocky Mountains, to Santa Fe, where we arrived without any of those thrilling adventures, or Indian fights, that form the burden of many travelers' stories. We had expected to meet Indians, and were prepared for them, but aside from a party of Kioways, with whom I tried to trade, we did not see any.

At Santa Fe, I lost sight of my traveling companions among the traders, and soon left the trading post for Taos, where I passed the winter. The houses were all one story high, and built of clay or large gray brick. The people were Spaniards, Mexicans, Indians, a mixed breed, and a sprinkling of trappers.

Taos was a lively wintering place, and many were the fandangoes, frolics, and fights, which came off during the season I stayed there. But, though at an age when a young man is most impulsive, I seldom had a desire to join in the dance, and never had but two personal affrays, which, owing to my superior strength, terminated in my favor.

In May, 1824, I had become perfectly disgusted with Taos, and inhabitants, for the latter were a lazy, dirty, ignorant set, and as a whole, possessed less honor than the beggarly Winnebagoes about Prairie Du Chien, at the present time. Informing the Spaniard of my intention to leave, I went down to Santa Fe. Here I found a company of traders preparing to cross the plains, and soon made the acquaintance of a St. Louis merchant, who engaged me to oversee the loading and