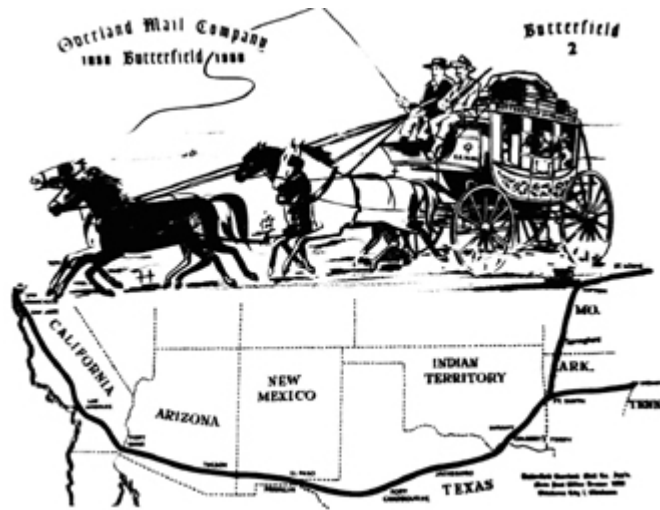


# Photo of the Month

## Butterfield Trail



Photograph: Overland Mail Company route. Negative #N010705.

Formed by John Butterfield of New York in 1857, the Overland Mail Company was awarded the contract to carry letter mail from the railroad terminus just west of St. Louis to San Francisco. The Company was able to cover the main route in less than 24 days, carrying letters at ten cents each and passengers at ten cents per mile.

The first stage stopped in Arkansas on September 18, 1858, at Callahan's Tavern, located near a spring in what is now northeast Rogers. From there the stage went on south to Fayetteville, where horses were exchanged for mules in preparation for the trip through the rugged terrain of the Boston Mountains. Butterfield was so impressed by Fayetteville that he sent his son to manage the stop there and bought a ranch nearby where he entertained friends and business associates.

By the time the Civil War began, the Overland Mail Company was a highly successful concern employing about 2,000 people. In 1861 the main line ran through Confederate territory, and Congress felt it would be impossible to continue using it. Mail continued to be carried by stagecoach until 1869, when the transcontinental railroad was completed.