

## How Did the Mountain Pride end up in Lincoln?

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Of late, a few members of HHS have visited the museum in Lincoln County and rediscovered the stagecoach once owned by Sadie Orchard and, later, Fred Mister. The question of why it is in Lincoln and how it got there has once again arose. In looking through my own files, I realized that we don't know much about the coach's history once it left Hillsboro. I did discover an article entitled "Seligman Stage Coaches Revisited" written by Arthur Seligman Scott, grandson of New Mexico Governor Arthur Seligman. It is marked "Draft", and I wasn't sure how I had acquired it. An online search revealed Mr. Scott contributing regularly to *Voces de Santa Fe* :(<http://vocesdesantafe.org/social/index.php/homepage>). Mr. Scott's article is posted at: <http://vocesdesantafe.org/social/index.php/explore-our-history/santa-fe/item/829-seligman-stage-coaches-nm-history-museum>. He has graciously given me permission to draw from it:



**Mrs. Arthur (Frankie) Seligman rear window. Her daughter Richie, is on top foreground. Others are unknown. Photo was probably taken by Arthur Seligman 1916-18. (Personal photo collection of Arthur Scott).**

"The photo above clearly shows "Mountain Pride" above the door and a painted image of the Apache Chief, Victorio on the door. The stage had been named after the Mountain Pride hotel in Hillsboro. The woman looking out the rear window is my grandmother, Franc E. (Mrs. Arthur) Seligman. I believe the woman in the foreground on top is her daughter and my aunt, Mrs. John March, nee. Richie Seligman. This photo was taken at the Lake Valley, New Mexico train station probably around 1916-18. The stage line had closed and my

speculation is that this was when my grandfather purchased this coach. . I know he dabbled in photography, so I would guess he took this photo. He owned two stage coaches at the time of his death in 1933

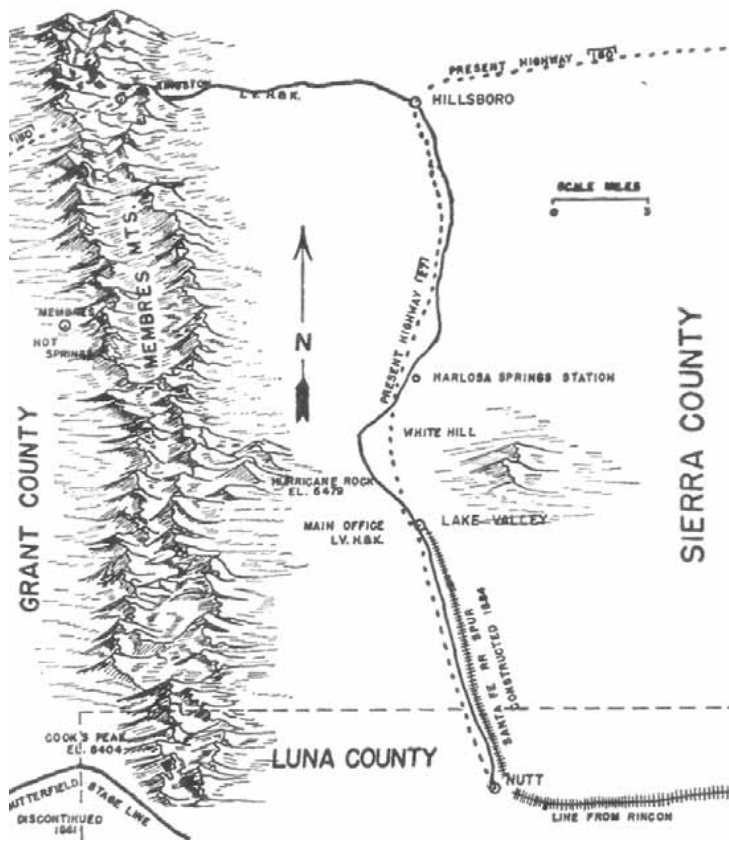
“ . . . after my grandfather had died my grandmother donated two stagecoaches to the New Mexico Historical Society (precursor of the Museum) in 1935. One was ‘the Mountain Pride’ s . . . a “Concord style coach built by the Abbot-Downing Company of Concord, New Hampshire. . . .

“The “Pride” was used to carry passengers and mail on the stage line that ran between the Aitcheson, Topeka, and Santa Fe railhead at Lake Valley, New Mexico and the then thriving mining towns of Hillsboro and Kingston. The stage line was founded between 1878 and 1882 by L. W. Orchard . . . .

“The stage line was operated by Orchard until 1902 when he sold it to Fred Mister. Mister continued to operate the stage line until 1916 at which time he closed it. The mining had petered out by then, population in Kingston and Hillsboro dropped, and World War I started. I believe the Seligman photo above was taken about this time. I think the Mountain Pride was then sold to Arthur Seligman. After Governor Seligman’s death in 1933, his widow donated the coach to The New Mexico Historical Society in 1935. ”



**Seligman “Mountain Pride” stagecoach at Lincoln County Courthouse State Monument, 2011. Photo courtesy Josef Diaz, Curator of Southwest and Mexican Colonial Art and History Collections, New Mexico History Museum**



**Map of Mountain Pride route from New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, 1951, "Short-line Staging in New Mexico" By William Swilling Wallace.**

months for adequate protection of the coaches. For the winter, it is planned to close two of the open sides with canvas. The problem, of course, is simply one of providing enough protection for preservation, while allowing enough exposure for good exhibition purposes. It is quite probable that eventually a new room to the building will be added to house the coaches. At the present time no openings are large enough for their entry and no room is available for their display."

Mauzy's hopes for the care of the Mountain Pride were apparently optimistic. In his article, Arthur Scott says:

"During my childhood in the forties, the Mountain Pride was exhibited by the Museum Of New Mexico in an alcove in the center courtyard of the Palace of the Governors. I remember it being in an extreme state of disrepair. Much of the damage could have occurred prior to the donation."

So Arthur Scott and Wayne Mauzy have provided us with insight regarding how the "Pride" arrived in Santa Fe. Why and how it was sent to Lincoln is a less clear, and I am trying to recover the details. So far, I'm finding that trail a little harder to follow. I emailed Gary Cozzens, Manager of the Lincoln Historic site. His reply: "From what I have been able to find out, the stage was brought to Lincoln from the Palace of the Governor's in Santa Fe sometime in 1981 or 82. While in Santa Fe it sat outside and was weathered. The Palace became concerned about the state of the stagecoach and decided it could be better protected in the courthouse in Lincoln. When it arrived, in order to put the stagecoach in

In "Western Stage Coach Days." (*El Palacio*. Vol. XXX-IX Aug. 14-21-28, 1935 Nos. 7-8-9), Wayne Mauzy noted:

"... Since acquisition of the coaches a shelter fashioned after the native ramada has been constructed by the Museum in the patio of the Palace of the Governors near the back wall between the ends of the library building and the offices of the Museum, in the only remaining unbuilt space available. It is an ideal location for exhibition of the coaches as it corresponds well to where such vehicles would be housed, or where a ramada would be built, in any Spanish establishment or hacienda of the old southwest. A secure waterproof roof replaces the ordinary native cover of brush or straw. The adobe wall of the patio forms a dry cover on the back side. It is hoped that this will provide sufficient shelter for the summer

the old Courthouse, the doors were taken off the building and the stage was partially taken apart and then reassembled in the building. Then in 2009 when the New Mexico History Museum opened in Santa Fe, the Museum of New Mexico tried to take it back to Santa Fe. Since they could not get the stagecoach out of the building, it still sits in Lincoln. Things are different now than they were in 1981 and with current historical preservation laws, the doors of the Courthouse will not be removed again in order to take the stagecoach out of the building. However, if the stagecoach were to be removed, I suspect the Museum of New Mexico would like it back before it is returned to Hillsboro.“

I asked if HHS might be involved in care or restoration of the Pride, even if it had to remain in Lincoln. He answered: “On the restoration, yes, but then the issue becomes a space to do it. Where it sits would be problematic in that there is no room to move it around, with one possible exception.”

A year or so ago, I discussed the Mountain Pride with Richard Sims, Director of State Historic Sites. He, too, felt that the Pride was misplaced but at least protected in Lincoln. For the present the legal and physical obstacles required to move it seem insurmountable, and no one but Lincoln has a place to keep it. Historically, the Pride is really ours, but it is safer where it sits. Perhaps HHS should pursue the notion of being involved in its protection, interpretation, and care, even if it is an orphan living 200 miles from home.