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Bent's Old Fort

Colorado National Parks

Bent's Fort Outpost of Civilization

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United States that culminated in the founding of Denver in November, 1858, followed by gold discoveries in Colorado that opened this entire region to settlement.

Bent's Fort Outpost Of Civilization

The fur trading forts followed the Spanish explorations and formed a link between the civilization of the Spaniards in present New Mexico and Old Mexico with trappers and traders north into Canada.

Charles Bent, with his brothers William, Robert and George and Ceran St. Vrain were the real pioneers. They were trappers from the northwest country who came down into this country in the early '20s, settling on the upper reaches of the Arkansas River and trapping. In 1826 they built their first fort, a stockade, on the river between present Pueblo and Canon City.

In 1828 they moved down the river about 12 miles west from the present town of Los Animas and built the first Bent's fort, which was completed in 1832. It was called by them "Fort William," for the brother, but