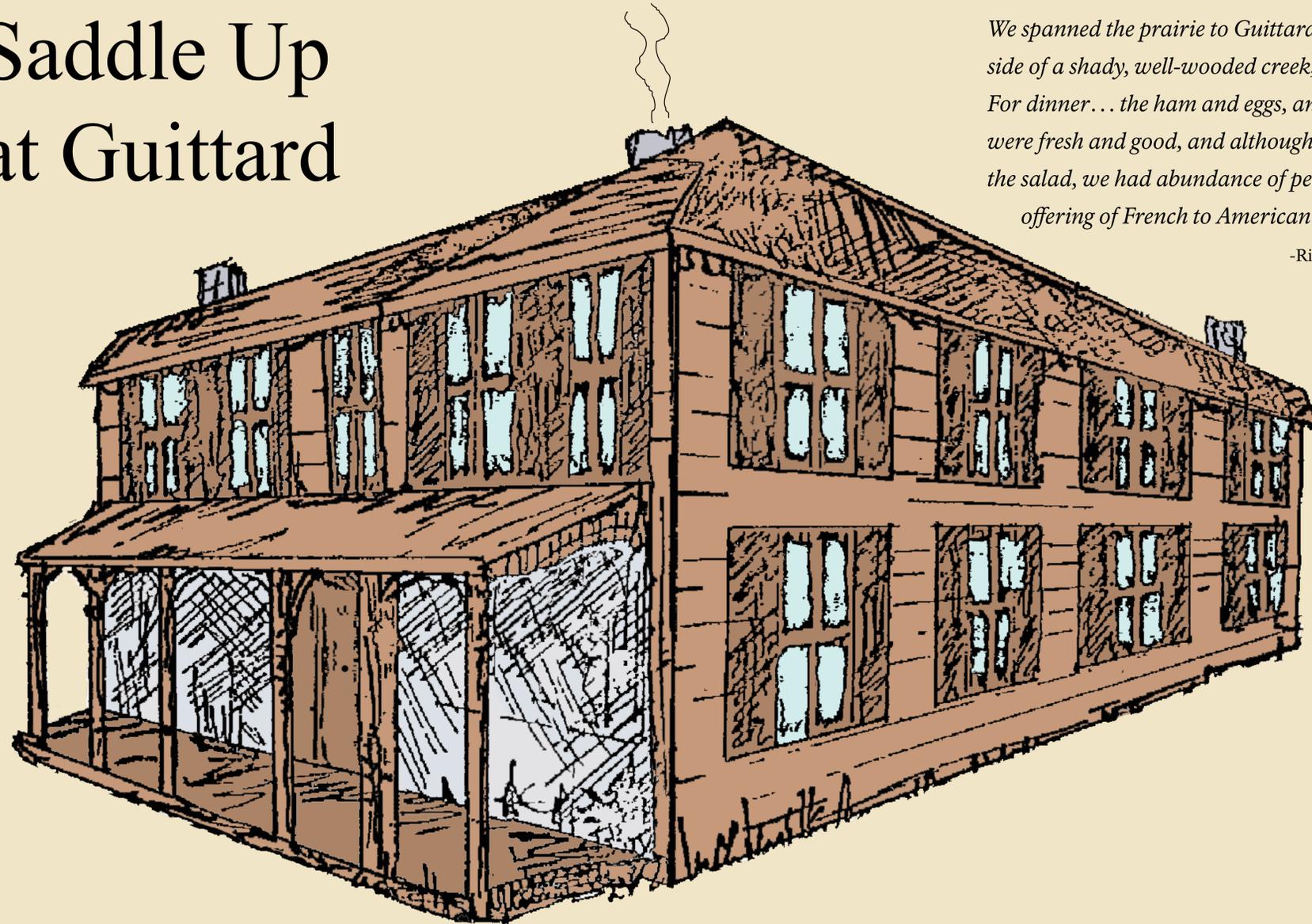


# Saddle Up at Guittard



*We spanned the prairie to Guittard's Station, on the far side of a shady, well-wooded creek, the Vermillion... For dinner... the ham and eggs, and hot rolls and coffee were fresh and good, and although drought had killed the salad, we had abundance of peaches and cream, an offering of French to American taste.*

-Richard F. Burton 1860

## George Guittard

George Guittard, a former French magistrate, came to America in 1833. He journeyed west in 1857 with his family of five, traveling by rail to St. Louis, by river steamer to St. Joseph, and by ox team to Kansas. Their ranch on Vermillion Creek (Robidoux) became the first permanent settlement in northeast Marshall County. Son Xavier served as postmaster for 42 years. He distributed mail through pigeon holes inside the west entrance of Guittard Station.



In 1859 George Guittard built a 12-room, two story lodge to accommodate the needs of more and more people passing through by wagon, coach, and horseback. Guittard Station served as an inn to refresh travelers, sell supplies and water, graze and shelter animals, and aid in repairing wagons and coaches.

This location became a relay station for the famous Pony Express in 1860 as part of its mail dispatch between Missouri and California. The station had two stables with over 20 horses. Mounts were prepared for riders, saddled and ready. A fresh horse, water, and food made Guittard Station a welcome stop after a fast ride across the rolling green prairie.

## Pony Express

In 1845 it took six months to get a message from the East Coast to California. By the late 1850s, a half a million people had migrated west and were demanding up-to-date news from home. Something had to be done to deliver mail faster! Enter the Pony Express—formed on January 27, 1860. Pony Express riders galloped from one relay station to another, carrying mail and telegrams between Missouri and California in only 10 days.



Guittard Station became a thoroughfare for Russell, Majors, and Waddell's Pony Express and their Overland stage line; and the Ft. Leavenworth to Fort Kearny Military Road. The location of Guittard Station is on private property (just to the southeast of here). No remnants of the station exist.