

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Washington, D. C.

August 29, 1963

Dr. Robert H. Bahmer
Acting Archivist of the
United States
National Archives
Washington, 25, D. C.

Dear Dr. Bahmer:

Thank you for your letter of August 23rd regarding General John Charles Fremont's connection with a party of surveyors engaged in mapping the Cherokee Indian Territory in Western Carolina (my Congressional District) in 1837-38 under the direction of Captain W. G. Williams, U. S. Army Topographical Engineers.

Your letter seems to leave no doubt that the civilian "C. Fremont" working on this survey was actually General John C. Fremont, the celebrated "Pathfinder" of later years.

However, I am puzzled by the last sentence in the second paragraph of your letter, stating that Captain Williams' party of surveyors were engaged in surveying, in the then Cherokee Nation, a proposed railroad from Cincinnati to Charleston.

On February 27, 1836, there was received in Washington by Colonel Albert, Chief of Topographical Engineers, a Memoir of some 35 pages from Captain Williams, bearing date of 8th February, 1838 at Fort Butler (then Huntington and now present Murphy, Cherokee County, North Carolina) reporting in great detail on his survey of the Cherokee Nation.

Dr. Robert H. Bahmer
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I have just been reading this document and I note that on page 20, Captain Williams begins listing the surveys he conducted by numbers 1 to 9 and nowhere does he make mention of a survey for a railroad from Cincinnati to Charleston.

In fact, I am unable to find the word railway or railroad mentioned in the entire 35 pages of this Memoir, it apparently having dealt exclusively with trails, wagon roads, Forts, etc.

On page 34, at the bottom, Captain Williams states that he was assisted in these surveys, by Messrs. P. Harry, Fremont, Campbell, Adams and Stimpson, "gentlemen of intelligence (and) to whose industry and zeal I feel greatly indebted."

I am advised that these records are filed with those of the General Land Office at the Archives, (RG 77-US 125).

Is it possible that two surveys were conducted by Captain Williams and his assistants?

Sincerely,

Roy A. Taylor, M. C.

RAT:llh

bcc: Bob Barker
2710 Webster
Mt. Ranier, Maryland