Copy from Thomas Hart Benton papers

(3) Area to right of door.

Immediately opposite armed Indian, also occupying just picture plane, is a trapper, mountain man, a Jim Baker, Bridger, Fitzpatrick, in the half Indian costume of his kime.

He rams a charge down his rifle-long rifle. He carries a pack of furs on his back. He could possibly see armed Indian opposite. Above him but in advance of pioneer group and opposite Indian with pipe is a figure with a broad axe. A felled tree is at his feet.

This could be for repair work on the vagons or just for fire wood. His attention is on Indian offering pine. He weems the stocking cap of the "Voyageur" and represents those Jean Baltistes of all work who accompanied so many western expeditions, who were, as a matter of fact, with the first on the western scene.

Historical justification for selection of subject matter involved in these ${\bf t}$ three areas.

(A) Most important factor in opening of West was the permanent settler. He it was who tuned the country held it and built its American future-made it culturally and politically part of the United States, that is. (This pagener group is central position ower door)

(E)But before the settler, exploring the land, opening the mountain passes and the trail ways to white penetration was the hunter and trapper-the breeds of mountain and plainsman, French and Anglo-and Irish-American. They made possible the operations of the great fur companies, the first business enterprises of the far West. They guideded the official exploring porties. They learned to know the various Indian groups and how to live or fight with these. They comprised the vanguard for the opening of the West.

As before indicated the F ench "Voyageur" was always on the rivers but also every--where-with the transers in the mountains or the trails with the Mexican and Indian traders.And with the emigrant trains.A Jean Batiste Troubode was with the ill fated Donner party.(account of Eliz P.Donner-Honghton).

(c)Defore the nunter and settler however was the original occupant of the land with whom all westward treking groups had to deal.

(4) Area back of and to left of Indians(fer left portion under light slots)

Typical free trader disclaying trinkets and colored cloths which he bargains for
buffalo robes with far western Indians-Cheyennes, Trapahoes, or Commanches, lehind
this another trader loading pack mules, On same plane to left a typical plains Indian show
shewing off horse, lehind him a group of vigman(teepees)/with squas in front screning

Description

Copy of page from the Thomas Hart Benton papers on the proposed mural for the Harry S. Truman Library. This page discusses the historical justification of the mural.

Date(s)

November 5, 1958

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8x10 inches (21x26 cm) Black & White

Keywords Artists Mural painting and decoration

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