

RED RIVER BRIGADE

The Trace

December 2013



From The Booshway:

Howdy Brothers

Well the year is just about gone. It won't be long before the Christmas season is upon us.

I hope all of you will have plenty to eat and your camps will be snug and warm. I am thankful to be associated with such fine men as we have in the Red River brigade.

This has been a good year for us and we have grown and added several new members. Look around, if you see a man that you think has what we're looking for; consider bringing him to a camp. I would like to see more of you out and get on the ground this coming year.

I and several others are making our plans to attend the annual trip to Bents Fort this year. I'm

looking forward to it, as I have not been before.

Just a reminder that membership dues are due at this time. I know how easy it is this time of year to say I'll do that tomorrow and get busy and just not send them in. Send them in now and avoid having to put our Chief Clerk Dan'l B. in a rush to keep you listed as a member in good standing. Also, as always, if there is a man that is having a problem, let us know and I'm sure that there is something that we can do to help.

One last thing, to **Party Booshways**, now is the time to send me what your parties have been doing this past year, along with who did what and when it occurred, also a complete list of members and contact information. I must file my report to the Western Segundo and Capitaine at the year's end. So *please* get this to me promptly.

As we look forward to another year may you all have a blessed season!

'Till trails cross again,

Yr. Svt. Kraig



Bear Lodge Fall Camp, 15 November 2013

The Bear Lodge party held it's annual Fall encampment in the Piney Woods, near Linden Texas. Jason Mays and I met at my cabin and with two men that were to attend the camp as guests. Ron Butler, aka Buckskin Billy and Cody Livingston both from "French Territory" across the Red River. These men are thinking of perhaps joining our brigade.

The four of us saddled up our horses and struck the trail in the afternoon. It was a short ride through the back country to the rendezvous site.

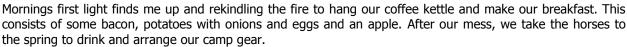
As we rode in to the area, we found two other men from our party Bill Rasco and Dick Erwin that had come in several hours

earlier.

After announcing ourselves, we made our way to a suitable camp and began to unsaddle our horses and put them out to graze. Jason and I put up our oilcloth tarps as we have been concerned it might be wet and cold in the days to come. The other men with us laid out a flat camp and we gathered wood for a fire before night. As night comes on the weather is cool and clear sky above, with a full moon on the rise.

We have our evening meal that consists of sausage and cheese with tortillas. Cody cooks some venison and we all share in the food. Afterwards, we go to visit the other men at their camp and catch up

on the news. We sit at their fire for a while and finally go back to our camp and our bed rolls.





Jason has agreed to cook for us today and makes a dish called Pasole. He has procured a venison shoulder for the meat.

We relax around camp and enjoy the beautiful day. Clouds start to roll in and just before our supper is ready we get a few sprinkles of rain. It doe's not continue and we are able to eat out in the open and dry.

The six of us all mess together and enjoy our sumptuous fare. Afterwards, we sit

back and build up our fire and enjoy some spirits and good conversation, which lasts long into the night.

Later, one by one, we all go to sleep and listen to the sound of the coyotes as they sing their night song.

Sometime late I am slightly aware of the sound of rain lightly hitting my tarp over head, but I am warm and dry and drift off back to sleep.





Sunday morning, most of us wake up around daybreak and get to our camp chores, build up our fire and set coffee to boil. We must leave today and began to gather our plunder and roll up our bedding.

After seeing to the stock, we visit the other men and are offered some bacon for breakfast.

We were expecting about nine to ten men at the encampment but it was only the six souls throughout our time here.

We bid the others farewell and saddle up our mounts and once again get on the trail, back to the settlements. It is always sad to be leaving the company of good men and a good camp. All said, it was a fine doin's!

Yr. Svt. Kraig



Spirit Blessing

Oh Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives life to all the world - hear me. I come before you, one of your children. I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset. Make my hands respect the things you have made, my ears sharp to hear your voice. make me wise, so that I may know the things you have taught us, the lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock. I seek strength not to be superior to my brothers, but to be able to fight my greatest enemy, *MYSELF*. Make me ever ready to come to you, with clean hands and straight eyes, so when life fades as a fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame

Historical Blast from the Past

Brief History of the American Mountain Men

By Walt Hayward

The organization "The American Mountain Men" was started in 1968 by Walt Hayward. Of the original seven members, five; Walt Hayward, Fred Hutto, Ken Smith, Dennis Jackson, Stan McDade, Mark McDade and Brad McDade are still members [Feb 1986]. At this time, the organization was not primitive but rather a modern survival club known as "The Brotherhood of American Mountain Men", a rather long name for a rather small club, small in numbers, but large in ideals and dreams.

The brotherhood had not been in existence long before it became clear to us that we were taking the wrong path, that modern survival concepts could and would only mislead us, that the true survivalists were those we took our name from. This started our study of the history of the Mountain Men, or at least our attempts to study the history and methods of the original Mountain Men. We soon found out that they were the forgotten pioneers of American history. Still we did what we could, picking up bits and pieces here and there.

In 1972 it was suggested by Ken Smith that there must be a few others across our nation who held the same interests that we did and that these individuals might be interested in joining with us. By now anything modern was strictly (almost, anyway) forbidden. We were working within the 1820 - 1840 era. We felt this fact alone would keep the number of interested individuals down to a very few if any. At this time, one of the pioneers of modern blackpowder sports was Major Slim Ackerman of New Mexico, who just happened to be writing a weekly blackpowder and related activities article for "Gun Week". Walt Hayward wrote a letter to Slim, outlining what we were attempting to do and what our ideals and goals were. Slim took the information from this letter and devoted one of his articles to us, giving our address so that any who might be interested could contact us.

The few responses we thought we would receive turned into several hundred, enough to keep both Walt and Fred busy three or more hours each night for several weeks. Naturally not all who took the time to write to us were to become members, many wanted another magazine and nothing else, and others wanted just another black powder club. These did not fall within our objective and were refused membership. We wanted men who would attempt to embrace the total life style of the original Mountain Men, who would research all they could about these rugged individualists and then go into the field and through practice see if what they were able to find out was even possible. We needed men who would be able and willing to take the time

to share their findings with the other brothers through the medium of our magazine, "The Tomahawk & Long Rifle".

There was still much to be done before we could call ourselves a national organization. For practical reasons the name was shortened to "The American Mountain Men", a symbol was accepted and a rough set of by-laws was written and accepted. This gave us a base to work from and helped to cement our objectives and goals. From this time on growth would be slow but steady, and not without the usual growing pains. We have still not realized our total goals, perhaps we never will, but we will never give up our attempt to do so. We are not a large brotherhood and it is not our desire to ever be so, but rather to remain a small compact group of select brothers working together for a common goal, just as the original American Mountain Men were.

The AMM has continued its growth and knowledge through the years. Members have done a considerable amount of research, both academic and "getting on the ground", to learn the ways of the original mountain men.

AMM members have written articles for every one of the eight Book of Buckskinning, a series of books on the history and "how to" of the mountain man. Members have penned innumerable articles for magazines concerned with the mountain men and the fur trade era.

Members of the AMM started the Fort Bridger rendezvous, and for the first years, were in charge of this event which has developed into the largest rendezvous in the West.

A memorial to "Liver Eating" Johnson was built in Cody, Wyoming by AMM members. The tradition was continued as other notable mountain men were honored at the memorial.

Hollywood has noted the skills and knowledge of many AMM members who have appeared in, and acted as technical advisors for many movies (including The Mountain Men, with Charleton Heston and Brian Keith) and numerous television documentaries.

AMM members continue their quest for knowledge of primitive skills of the original mountain men and Native Americans. We are happy to share the knowledge that we have gained with those who are interested.

AMM National Rendezvous 1976 Cache Valley, Blacksmiths Fork, Utah









Modifying a Victor Long-Spring Trap. By Brother Allen Harrison

It isn't easy for everyone to own and use hand forged traps, and not many would bring originals out of retirement. Both replicas and original traps are expensive and considering there is always a good chance of losing them on a trap line, it isn't feasible for most of us to do. If you run a large trap line, the next best thing to do is modify cheaper modern made traps.

This is an option for anyone wanting to modify modern traps. You can do this with almost any long-spring or single-spring trap and you will have a more period correct looking trap. I chose a couple of Victor double long-spring traps for this project as they are easy to find and they are cheap to buy.



Our goal here is to make a modern trap look like this trap below; this chain attachment is one of the more common types.

It's actually simple to do and only takes a few minutes.





The first thing I wanted to do was to remove some of the rust off the trap and make sure it was working decent.

Swivels are super important; a good trapper does not trap without them. Without them an animal can twist and bind the trap giving him the leverage to break free. If you can make a period swivel that's great, but if you can't, then it's best to leave this modern swivel in place.





All we want to do here is remove the modern wire chain and replace it with something better when we are done.



The Victor pan is an obvious thing to change, and it's easy. Just spread the hinge of the trigger enough to remove it.

The Victor pan is spot welded to the trigger. If you just cut the weld you won't have any good way of attaching a square pan without welding it on. To combat this I leave part of the pan attached to the trigger, just enough to rivet on the new pan.





I did switch pans with a number 4, they are the same size however and it won't make any difference to the project.



As you cut the pan make sure you leave enough metal to rivet the new pan.

Here's what your trigger should look like after cutting. Now we can move on to drilling the holes for the new pan.





I used a 1/8" size drill bit and drilled two holes on each side of the trigger, through what's left of the pan. I had several welding rods laying around so that's what I used for the pins. A nail works just fine if that's all you have.



Now to make the pan, you'll want really thin stock here. It's going to be bigger than the old pan, thus weighing more. This is a small issue but the extra weight can make the pan drop when it's set.

It's always best to repurpose any scrap you have, so take advantage of something like this old smoker if you have a chance.





I used a scrap plate metal for now, just to make it easy to show how to cut it.



First we need a measurement; I put the trigger back on the trap and placed the old pan under it just to get a good idea of how big to make the new pan. For the sake of good pictures I wired the springs open so you can see I'm trying to fill the whole inside area of the trap with the new pan. This is the common thinking of our old traps, the bigger the pan-the better your chance of a catch will be.

So measure out the 3 ¼ inch square and cut this out with a hack saw. Use a file and smooth up the edges.





This little notch is an evil necessary because we are using the Victor trigger. The pan needs to set centered up in the opening of the jaws and because the trigger sets forward this notch has to be made.



To attach the pan to the trigger, I turn it upside down and mark just one hole for now.





Now that you have the one rivet done, you don't have to worry about the second one lining up correctly.



Now that both pins are done you're ready to attach this pan and trigger back onto the trap.

Here are two Victors that I modified during this project. The chains are the last step. You want hand forged, long link chain of course but this isn't something just anyone can produce. The next best thing is to buy antique chain at flea markets or antique stores. I found this trammel chain for about five bucks and gave it a new life on the Victor below. You can at least buy simple modern chain and file off the machine welds.



Keepsake Biscuits

by Brother Lanny Ratcliff

This is an old time recipe for Keepsake Biscuits used by travelers long ago. They are very high in fat and keep well when traveling...hence the name. However, they are not especially tasty when eaten cold. They are best eaten warm, which can be easily done by impaling them on a stick and holding them over a fire for a while.

Mix together the following:

- 1 Quart milk or cream
- 1 ½ cups butter or shortening
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 heaping teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cream of tarter

To this mixture add enough flour to make stiff dough. (about 4 cups)

Knead well and mold into neat, small biscuits with your hands. Bake at 375 for 10-15 minutes depending on your oven. Do NOT bake these until they are "golden brown and delicious" or you will make them very hard. Pull 'em out when they are a light tan. One of these biscuits eaten out of hand is goo...but one warmed over a fire is much better! Another use is to break the biscuit into pecan sized chunks and simmer a few minutes in hot liquids (or stew) to make dumplings. Another use is to simmer dried fruit and sugar (along with a few scraps of cinnamon) until the fruit is rehydrated and hot, adding the aforementioned pecan sized chunks of biscuit for a few minutes to simmer that's makes a great campfire cobbler. You might find yourself wondering what the "poor folks" are eating today!



This picture is for aesthetics only and they are probably over-cooked according to the recipe!

The Death of a True Man

The death of a true man is not to be mourned.

For should he return, you, he would scorn.

A true man lives with one thought in mind,

to return to a time when life was more kind.

When men were men who spoke true and straight, who fought for glory, for love and for hate.

Men of wit, kindness and strength,

Men who's judgment could span time's length.

unlike today's men who are thoughtless and weak,

They lust for the dollar-how shallow, how meek.

In a world that is filled with corruption and hate a true man lives in a dormant state.

Awaiting a time when his soul may return to a time and a place that his heart often yearns.

So, shed no tears when he passes this life but bury him deep with his gun and his knife.

And next time you roam the woods and the hills you might feel the presence that may bring cold chills.

Relish the feeling as long as you can and look close beside you, you may see a true man.

(This poem was read aloud in the tavern at the Eastern National in November. The Brothers there were reading it in honor of an AMM Brother that had passed away. Kraig and I were moved by it and felt we should share with our Red River Brigade Brothers.)

WARREN ANGUS FERRIS 1810 – 1873 MOUNTAIN MAN, SURVEYOR, AND EARLY TEXAS SETTLER

Warren Angus Ferris was born December 26, 1810 in Glens Falls, New York. He was a fifth generation descendant of early New England settlers. (1) When Warren was three years of age, his father Angus died leaving a widow with two small children, Warren and his younger brother, Charles.(2)

Warren's mother, Sally, latter married Joshua Lovejoy, a successful merchant, who fathered three children during that union. Joshua died in 1824, leaving Sally with five children.(3)

During Warren's teenage years he enjoyed hunting, fishing and listening to tales about Lewis and Clark, John Coulter, Hugh Glass and other early mountaineers. Also during his early years, he was trained to be a surveyor under the tutelage of his half-brother, Henry Lovejoy. He received a good general education for the time, acquiring a smattering of Latin and French, extensive mathematics and English.

In 1828, seventeen year-old Warren Ferris left home to seek his fortune. Although family tradition has it that his mother's public rebuke of her son's incessant pipesmoking played a part in this decision, it was likely his own sense of adventure that took him west.(4)

- (1) "Land is the Cry" P. 1
- (2) ibid., P. 2
- (3) ibid., P. 7
- (4) "Conquest of the Threeforks, Manuscript by Homer DeGoyler, Dallas, Texas. 1924, Dallas Public Library

Warren first made his way south to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where he was employed as a merchant for three months. He then went to Cincinnati where he landed a job selling subscriptions for a magazine. Soon he was restless and took passage on a steamer for Louisville, Kentucky where he described the exotic sights and sounds of cockfighting and gambling, and other excitements of life in a river town. He then shipped to St. Louis with his funds exhausted in June 1829.

Jobs were hard to find so he opened a "Mathematical and English School". He had bad luck getting the parents to pay so he closed his school after the first term. His dreams of seeing the West materialized when he learned that Pierre Chouteau, Jr. of the American Fur Company was organizing an expedition to the Rocky Mountains.

Warren left St. Louis February 16, 1830 with an expedition of the American Fur Company led by Andrew Dripps and Joseph Robidoux. (5) The Party consisted of about thirty men. They started overland via St. Charles where they crossed the Missouri River on flat boats, then to Franklin where they encountered a terrible snowstorm. They proceded westward across Missouri to the trading house of John Cabanne, eighteen miles below Council Bluffs, after suffering snow, rain, prairie fires and ornery mules.

At Cabanne's Post, the party was joined by Lucien Fontenelle.(6) There they left the last white settlement behind them as they made their way to Council Bluffs. At this point, the brigade organized into a tightly knit, military-like unit with sentries

- (5) "Life in the Rocky Mountains" Chapter 1, Page 1
- (6) "Land is the Cry" Page 18

taking two hour watches.(7) On May 14, Ferris saw his first buffalo and two days later a small herd. At night they dined on buffalo steak, a welcome change from boiled corn.(8)

The brigade proceeded west along the "Great Platte River Road" after crossing the North Platte in bull boats in June at the foot of the Laramie Range. They skirted the mountains, dropped down to the Sweetwater River, across the South Pass and into the Cache Valley.

The American Fur Company brigade leaders were experienced river traders, but knew not a thing about trapping. They hoped to locate the Rocky Mountain Fur Company trappers and follow them to the best beaver locations. This failed and there was a poor fall hunt for 1830.(9) They went into winter camp on the Salt River near present day Afton, Wyoming. Around Christmas 1830, Ferris and others explored the Great Salt Lake.(10)

In early April 1831, the party broke camp. The 1831 hunt ranged from the headwaters of the Columbia River on the western slope across the Divide to the headwaters of the Missouri through Lemhi Pass. It was during that summer that Ferris first met the Flathead Indians with whom he would spend much time during his career in the mountains.

Ferris attended the 1831 rendezvous in Cache Valley with the Rocky Mountain

- (7) "Life in the Rocky Mountains" Page 96
- (8) ibid., pages 100-101
- (9) "Land is the Cry" Page 23
- (10) "Life in the Rocky Mountains" Page 42

Fur Company. Winter Camp was on the Salmon River. In 1832 Ferris was promoted to Clerk and given a mission to bring the Flatheads to summer rendezvous at Pierre's Hole.

In October of that year, Ferris and others were involved in a fight with the Blackfoot. Vanderburgh was killed and Ferris was wounded in the shoulder. The winter of
1832-1833 was spent on the Salmon River with Joe Walker, Tom Fitzpatrick and the
Dripps Party.(11)

The rendezvous of 1833 was spent at Bonneville's Fort on the Green River where Ferris met William Drummond Stewart, Scottish soldier/sportsman. It was during that gathering that the beaver country was divided between the two rival companies. Also, the price of beaver dropped to \$3.50 per pound in St Louis, a definite turning point in the history of the fur trade.

During November, 1833 Ferris reached the Flathead camps and met Francis

Ermatinger, an agent of the Hudson Bay Company. There he joined the rival British

firm as an independent trader, working for Nicholas Montour.(12) He did not elaborate

why he went over to the British except English trade goods were cheaper and the prospects for trading were better on the western slope, because buffalo robes were not as

plentiful there. It is supposed he did a brisk trade in blankets.

In April 1834 Ferris left the Flathead post and determined to explore the boiling spring he had heard about from at least twenty men. Taking with him two Indians, he rode sixty miles out of his way to visit what is now Yellowstone National Park. He later

^{(11) &}quot;Land is the Cry" Page 27

⁽¹²⁾ ibid., Page 34

wrote a detailed description of geysers which was the first known descriptions of these wonders in the Yellowstone country.(13)

In the summer of 1835, Ferris received the first letter from home in five years. He learned that his mother was having financial difficulties so he determined to leave the mountains and return home.

Not much is said about his route of return. It would be supposed that he accompanied a caravan returning to civilization along the usual route overland to and from the mountains. He did mention that he passed Ft. Leavenworth. At Boonville, Missouri he sold his horse and equipment, and from there traveled to Buffalo, New York.

Civilization could not hold Ferris for very long. In 1837, after he had helped his mother settle her affairs, he joined his brother Charles, a veteran of the revolution in Texas, and took passage to Velasco, Texas.

Warren took up surveying and settled in Nacogdoches, Texas and became the County surveyor for Nacogdoches County, which at that time covered all of east and most of northeast Texas.

He left that post and became a private surveyor. He joined Dr. William P. King
In an illegal venture to the three forks of the Trinity River in what is now Dallas County
Texas. He surveyed the boundary lines of Dallas, Denton, Kaufman and Tarrant
Counties. These boundaries are still in effect today. Dr. King died and the land speculation venture folded.

In 1845 Warren settled on 640 acres of land he had earlier surveyed,

encompassing the modern Forest Hills Addition of the City of Dallas.(14) he farmed this successfully, and reared twelve children that had been born while in Texas from two different wives, who had both preceded him in death.

Warren was influential in Dallas affairs and wroth many articles for the Dallas newspapers describing his adventures in the Rocky Mountains. Warren died on February 8, 1873 at the age of sixty-two. He was buried on his land beside Ash Creek. His grave is unmarked. The cemetary has an historical marker erected.

Warren is one of the many mountain men who has passed into obscurity with accomplishments not generly known. He gave the first written description of the Yellowstone geysers, he drew an accruate map of the fur country and the early streets of the city of Dallas followed his survey lines. In addition, he gave detailed descriptions of the everyday life during the Rocky Mountain fur trade.

(14) "Land is the Cry" Page 137

Great Links:

<u>www.redriverbrigade.com</u> - Our awesome website under construction.

http://user.xmission.com/~drudy/amm/moreamm.html - you should recognize this site.

<u>www.turkeyfootllc.com</u> - They have great dried food and other wares of high quality. I have ordered from them in the past and been very impressed with their products and service.

<u>www.powderhornsandmore.com</u> - I have bought many powder horns from here to do scrimshaw work and final finishing for many folks. John is a class act, sends beautiful horns and his customer service is excellent. He won't send a product he doesn't want hanging from his shoulder.

http://woodtrekker.blogspot.com/2013/09/living-off-land-delusions-and.html#disqus_thread — This site lists caloric needs from a hunter-gatherer standpoint for long-term survival in the woods, and lists them for specific animals and specific plants. It might be of good use for folks doing their 3-days-hungry. It is very useful data.

http://www.historicproperties.com/ - We are your online resource for buying and selling historic real estate. From projects to completed renovations, residential to commercial, west coast to east coast and now even outside the U.S.A., Federal to Eclectic; you can search our database of properties for sale. If you have a property to sell, you can list it for sale using the List a Home form and view it online within three business days.

http://www.oldlogcabins.com/ - *Old Log Cabins* is dedicated to preserving the spirit of the American pioneer by offering original antique hand-hewn log cabins, structures and materials to our customers. We specialize in locating, documenting, and restoring these historic log cabins, barns and outbuildings. These uniquely American buildings were hand crafted by our ancestors in the 18th and 19th centuries, and their original integrity and character cannot be duplicated.

<u>http://www.smilingfoxforgellc.com/index.asp</u> - We at Smiling Fox Forge strive to bring you the highest quality 18th century reproductions you can buy. Therefore they are neither inexpensive nor cheap! We have all discovered "Real Quality" must be paid for.

Upcoming Events

Red River Brigade Winter Camp 2014

Location: Sterling, Oklahoma

Date: 21-23 February 2014

Amenities: Water available from a good well. There is a one-holer, no need for digging

a hole.

Colleges: Sign language, Friction fire-the bow drill and hand drill and other colleges to

be announced.

Directions: Sterling, Oklahoma is located near the intersection of highways 65 & 17. Approaching H.E. Bailey from the south, exit 36-A marked "Duncan", and proceed to SH 65. Approaching on the H.E. Bailey Turnpike (I-44), *from the north*, exit onto Whitfield Road at EXIT 62, proceed south to the intersection of SH 65 & 17. (You CAN NOT EXIT HERE COMING FROM THE SOUTH!)

Approaching from Lawton: take highway 7 (Lee Blvd within Lawton City limits) to SH 65.

Approaching from Duncan: take highway 81 to highway 7, proceed west to SH 65; north on 65 to highway 17.

Approaching from Chickasha: Proceed south on highway 81 to Rush Springs intersection of highway 17, proceed west.

Approaching from the south on 65: Proceed north approximately 13 miles to the intersection of highway 17.

FROM THE INTERSECTION OF HIGHWAYS 65 & 17 proceed east thru Sterling to 195th St North on 195th to Welch Rd (approximately 1 mile) East on Welch approximately 3/4 mile, look for signs near an entrance on the south side of the road, near an aluminum gate.

Once thru the gate, take a sharp left, & follow the road (it is sand, not yellow brick) to the parking area. There will be a sign in the parking area directing people to the camping area.

This site affords a parking area secluded from the camping area, yet not greatly distant. It also affords a well and an outhouse, but both are conveniently distanced from where we intend to pitch camp.

Upcoming Events

·\$ 2014 - \$3. EASTERN TERRITORIAL RENDEZVOVS October 4-12,2014 6 miles west of Morress, ILLINOIS ON IL. RIVER · HORJES WELEOME (AND REDERS) · RIVER ACCESS FOR CANOES · SQUIRREL HUNTING ALLOWED · FRESH MEAT WILL BE PROUIDED . WOODS WALK SHOOT · WHISKEY / BEER TENT . FLINT KNAPPING DEMO - BEAVER SKINNING DEMO · BRAIN TANNING DEMO · FLY FISHING DEMO CONTACT INFO: TOOD DAGGETT 815 735-6664 JIM ALEXANDER 815 69710727472013

Todd Daggett: 815-735-6664

Jim Alexander: 815-697-2708 or 618-225-2658