

The settlers of the Sangamo Township used the trail known as the Edwards Trace to reach their destination. From Edwardsville the trip was over seventy miles up the narrow unimproved trail. The trace was their only link to the outside world. In order to get improvements made to the trace the Commissioners Court of Madison County would have to approve a petition.

A group of citizens of Madison County signed a petition and presented it to the commissioners. It was read the 7th of December 1819. The petition was for a road from Edwardsville to the junction of the north and south forks of the Sangamon River then on to the head of the Clear Lake in the direction of Fort Clark. The commissioners ordered that Field Jarvis, John Ferguson and Robert Stice be appointed viewers to lay out said road. Jacob Judy was appointed surveyor and ordered to accompany the viewers. The same day the commissioners also ruled that the petition be laid over for a second reading the next day. This decision by the commissioners must have been to discuss the wants of a second group of citizens.

The following day the issue was taken up again and the petition was read a second time. This time Stephen Dewey, Matthew Eads, and John Esterbrook were to view the road and Jacob Judy was to survey the road. The commissioners had ordered a survey of two routes to the Sangamon Country. Leaving Edwardsville they would both use the Edwards trace until they reached the area of the South Fork of the Sangamon. In the area of the South Fork one route would stay to the west and follow the old trace to where it crossed the river just west of the forks of the Sangamon. The other route would ford the South Fork and go up the east side of the South Fork to a point on the Sangamon River. Both routes then would go on to the head of Clear Lake.

On March 8th Jacob Judy and the viewers Dewy, Eads, and Esterbrook returned to Edwardsville. They presented the court with their report and the commissioners found it as a road laid out to be of public utility. Jacob Judy was allowed the sum of 170.00 for the surveying of the road. This approval would allow for the use of tax dollars to make improvements to the trace. Jarvis, Ferguson, and Stice the viewers of the first road returned only to state that they had doubts the road surveyed stayed within the county limits. They believed they might have ventured into neighboring Bond County. The court on this route ordered a stay until the next term. The route viewed by Jarvis and others did enter into Bound County and though it was not chosen at this time though we do find later a ford on the South Fork named Jarvis Ford. The Edwardsville to Sangamo road as it became known was marked with a post every mile. Road commissioners were appointed sections of the road and to view to the maintenance. On March 9th 1820 George Hayworth was appointed supervisor from the south side of Brush Creek north to the 68-mile stake. And to have control of all hands within four miles either side of the road. The citizens living in the area of the road was to work on the road. The Edwards Trace had survived this time but in its future it would under go so many changes that most of it becomes lost into the landscape.