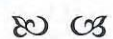


AMERICAN JOURNEYS COLLECTION



The Explorations
of
Jedediah Strong Smith

DOCUMENT NO. AJ-112



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DIGITAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES



|| www.americanjourneys.org || www.wisconsinhistory.org ||
© Wisconsin Historical Society 2003

III. Jedediah Strong Smith

—Jedediah Strong Smith, unlike most of his contemporaries in the fur trade, came of pioneer New England stock. His father, plain Jedediah Smith, a native of New Hampshire, following that first stream of emigration into the Mohawk Valley, settled in Chenango County, New York, toward the close of the eighteenth century. Here, on June 24, 1798, in the town of Bainbridge, his son, Jedediah Strong, was born, being one of fourteen children.³⁷³ Subsequently his parents pushed farther west living for a time in Erie, Pennsylvania, and finally in Ashtabula, Ohio.

During his childhood, Smith acquired from a friendly physician, Dr. Simons, "the rudiments, of an English education, and a smattering of Latin," and a fair hand.³⁷⁴ All through his life, Smith retained a warm affection and respect for this gentleman, whose daughter later married one of Smith's brothers. It may very well have been he who first suggested to Smith the utility of making a careful geographical study of the far West, an object which Smith had seriously in mind

³⁷³ Smith, E. D. "Jedediah Smith and the Settlement of Kansas" in Kansas Historical Society, *Collections*, vol. xii, 242, *footnote*. Compare "Captain Jedediah Strong Smith: An Eulogy," *Illinois Magazine*, June, 1832, reprinted as an appendix in Sabin, *Kit Carson Days* (Chicago, 1914), 512 ff. Smith was not born in King's County, Ireland, as stated by Hugh Quigley [*Irish Race in California*], nor in Connecticut, as stated by J. M. Guinn ["Captain Jedediah S. Smith," Southern California Historical Society, *Publications*, vol. iii, part 4, 46].

³⁷⁴ There is still extant a shipper's manifest made out by Smith at the age of fourteen for a cargo of goods shipped on Lake Erie, "written in a clear and distinct hand." — Guinn, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

during the last years of his life. In 1830, Smith wrote one of his brothers,

I am indebted to Doctor Simons for his epistle dated, March 15, 1830, and I wish you to express my gratitude in becoming terms of respect. I fear that Doctor Simons thinks I only feel bound where I sign my name, but, if so, he to whom I am under so many obligations, is much mistaken. How happy I should consider myself if I could *again* be allowed the privilege of spending some time with my much esteemed friend. I think the Doctor recollects this excellent precept, "If you have one Friend, feel or think yourself happy." I hope I have one *friend*. On my arrival at the settlements (should I be so fortunate as to gain that point), I intend writing to Doctor Simons.³⁷⁵

It may have been he, too, who gave Smith that deep religious sentiment which marked him off from the mass of the men with whom he was associated. Before he left home, Smith became a member of the Methodist church, and though most of his life far from the ministrations of religion, remained a devout Christian.³⁷⁶ Finally, in making arrangements to expend the small fortune he had accumulated in the fur trade, he wrote, "In the first place, my brother, our parents must receive of our benefaction, and if Dr. Simons is in want, I wish him to be helped."³⁷⁷

At the age of thirteen, Smith secured a clerical position on one of the freight boats of the Great Lakes,

³⁷⁵ Letter of Smith to his brother, Ralph, dated Blue Fork, Kansas River, September 10, 1830, Kansas Historical Society, *Smith Mss.* Again he writes, "I wish to consult Dr. Simons on the method of educating our brothers as it is my wish to carry them into some of the higher branches of education."—*Ibid.* to *ibid.*, dated Wind River, east of the Rocky Mountains, December 24, 1829, Kansas Historical Society, *Smith Mss.*

³⁷⁶ Waldo, William. "Reminiscences," Missouri Historical Society, *Waldo Mss.*; Smith, *op. cit.*, vol. xii, 254. The "Eulogy," however, states that "with out being connected with any church, he was a Christian."—Sabin, E. L. *Kit Carson Days*, 517.

³⁷⁷ Letter of Jedediah S. Smith to Ralph Smith, December 24, 1829, Kansas Historical Society, *Smith Mss.*

where he soon had occasion to meet traders and trappers of the English fur companies, who were ever passing back and forth between Montreal and the interior country. A natural roving disposition, which has so frequently characterized the stock of which he came, with a determination to better himself, attracted Smith to this occupation, which seemed to offer so much in the way of adventure and profit. Being an American, he naturally repaired to St. Louis, the entrepôt of the fur trade of this country, arriving in time to join one of Ashley's early expeditions to the mountains.³⁷⁸

The first incident in this period of Smith's career that can be fixed beyond question is his participation in the engagement with the Arikaras in 1823.³⁷⁹ Smith was with the detachment that camped on land with the horses at the time of the first encounter. He and David E. Jackson, after having fought bravely round the animals till most of them were dead, made their way to the shore, leaped into the river and managed to swim

³⁷⁸The date of his arrival is uncertain. The "Eulogy" gives 1821. Sabin, *op. cit.*, 512. Chittenden [*American Fur Trade*, vol. i, 252] says, "At about eighteen years of age," i.e. 1816. E. D. Smith states that he was in St. Louis in 1818, where he immediately undertook an expedition to Santa Fé "on his own account." On his return, he left Santa Fé, says Smith, by way of Taos "for some reason unknown," thence "going north and west, he reached the Great Salt Lake, and turning north and east reached the headwaters of the Platte River." Here he is alleged to have fallen in with some trappers with whom he descended that stream, arriving in St. Louis some time in the winter of 1819-1820. In 1822, according to Smith, he guided William Becknell to Santa Fé, returning the same year "to St. Louis, and thence to Wayne County, Ohio, to pay a visit to his brother Ralph."—Smith, *op. cit.*, vol. xii, 254 ff. These early travels of Smith, it need hardly be added, can not be substantiated by any evidence available. Gregg, moreover, refers to Smith in 1832 as being unfamiliar with the Santa Fé route, "Captain Smith and his companions were new beginners in the Santa Fé trade, but being veteran pioneers of the Rocky Mountains, they concluded they could go anywhere."—Gregg, Josiah. *Commerce of the Prairies*, in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, vol. xix, 236.

³⁷⁹Waldo, William. "Reminiscences," *Waldo Mss.*, Missouri Historical Society.

to the boats unscathed by the shower of shot and arrows concentrated upon them. When, after the battle was over and before the arrival of the relief party under Colonel Leavenworth, it became necessary to send word to Major Henry, it was Jedediah Smith who volunteered for that service. Accompanied only by a French Canadian hunter and traversing nearly a thousand miles of unfamiliar country swarming with vigilant and hostile Indians, he pushed through in excellent time, found Henry on the Yellowstone, gave an account of the battle and of the urgent need of support, and immediately turned back with the relief detachment.³⁸⁰ On their way down stream, they sailed bravely through the Arikara villages.

The first battle had been fought June third. By about the second of July, Smith was back at Ashley's camp, now removed to the mouth of the Cheyenne River. From this point he was despatched to St. Louis with the furs which Henry had brought down. Arrived at the city, he had an interview with General Atkinson in which he related the incidents of the first Arikara fight and the departure of the Leavenworth relief expedition, and then hastening back, rejoined Ashley in time to take command of one of the companies in the battle of the tenth of August.³⁸¹

After the conclusion of peace, Smith returned to the mountains with Andrew Henry, spending the fall and winter in the Crow country and in winter quarters near the mouth of the Big Horn. It is uncertain whether

³⁸⁰ The "Eulogy" states that he accompanied the expedition of 1822. Sabin, E. L. *Kit Carson Days*, 512.

³⁸¹ Atkinson, Brigadier-general Henry. Letter to Major-general Gaines, St. Louis, August 15, 1823, in United States Senate, *Executive Documents*, 18th congress, 1st session, no. 1.

he accompanied Thomas Fitzpatrick through the South Pass to the headwaters of Green River in the spring of 1824, but in the summer or fall of that year, as noted above, he headed the party of Ashley's men which followed the South Pass road to the Columbia, met Alexander Ross, accompanied him to Flathead Post, and from that point returned in the winter to the Great Salt Lake and Cache Valley. In the spring of 1825, he was with the united trapping parties that met Ashley at the appointed rendezvous near Green River. From rendezvous, he accompanied Ashley to the Big Horn, continued down that stream to the Yellowstone and the remainder of the distance to St. Louis.

Leaving St. Louis in company with Ashley in the spring of 1826, Smith entered on the first stage of a journey which was to carry him, the first white man, from the Mississippi to the Pacific over the midland route. As Lewis and Clark discovered the northern route, so Smith, utilising the discoveries and experience of Ashley between the Missouri and the Great Salt Lake, traced the south-western and central routes to the coast. Though the Great Salt Lake was to terminate the expedition for Ashley, it marked only a half-way station for Smith and many of the men who had accompanied them thus far, for from this point Smith continued his outward journey to California, approximating the course of the San Pedro, Los Angeles, and Salt Lake Railroad, returning, next spring, across the state of Nevada by the Central Pacific route. Before leaving St. Louis, Smith and Ashley had presumably come to an agreement regarding the transfer of the latter's business to Smith in company with the two other Ashley men, David E. Jackson and William

L. Sublette.³⁸² On their arrival at rendezvous, the transfer was concluded.³⁸³

Smith, Jackson, and Sublette now undertook to operate in the field opened up by Ashley's men two years before. It was still immensely rich in beaver and capable of continued trapping for a number of years and was also untouched by competition. But the ambitious young men who succeeded Ashley had visions of pushing their trapping parties even farther west. Aware that a vast area must lie between the Great Salt Lake and the Pacific Ocean, but ignorant of its barren and beaverless nature, they resolved to penetrate this new field at once. The first step, however, was naturally one of exploration and survey. To turn a large division of the company into this unworked field before its business possibilities had been determined would be folly. It was decided, accordingly, that two of the partners, Sublette and Jackson,³⁸⁴ should remain in the mountains with the main company, while Smith should set out with a few men to investigate the new area to the west. Besides determining the fur-bearing resources of the new country, Smith may also have had in view the possibility of shipping furs from one of the

³⁸² Beckwourth says that Ashley's men, who had been left in the mountains in 1825, "learned previous to the arrival of the general, that General Ashley had sold out his interest to Mr. Sublette, embracing all his properties and possessions."—Bonner, *op. cit.*, 107.

³⁸³ According to E. D. Smith [*op. cit.*, vol. xii, 257] Smith had bought out Henry's interest in the business on the latter's withdrawal in the fall of 1824. J. J. Warner refers to him as the direct successor of Andrew Henry and speaks of the firm name, "Ashley and Smith."—Warner, J. J. "Reminiscences of Early California," in Southern California Historical Society, *Publications*, vol. vii, 186. Compare Thwaites, *op. cit.*, vol. xix, 237, *footnote*.

³⁸⁴ It should be said of David E. Jackson that, through the entire life of the firm of Smith, Jackson, and Sublette, he was the resident partner, remaining continually in the mountains while Sublette returned regularly to the states. This is one reason why so little is known of him. Compare Victor, F. F. *River of the West*, 48.

Californian ports. He would thus revive the project of John Jacob Astor, fifteen years earlier, but with a central or southern Pacific port. Ashley himself had had such a project in mind. In the draft of a letter written about this time, he stated that it was "reasonable to suppose the whole of the fur trade west of the mountains will take that direction [to the Pacific] to market as soon as any place on the sea coast may be established to a trade operated about the 43rd degree of latitude."³⁸⁵ Later, however, he wrote to Thomas Hart Benton, "I should myself prefer transporting my furs from the vicinity of the Grand Lake to St. Louis in preference to taking them to the Pacific."³⁸⁶ Perhaps also, like Brigham Young, twenty years later, Smith also intended to explore the Colorado as a possible waterway from Utah to the sea.

Smith was selected to command this exploring expedition because he already knew more about the country than anyone else in the company. He had met Alexander Ross and Peter Skene Ogden at Flathead House in the fall and winter of 1824 and, as Ashley himself testified, used his opportunities to find out all that he could about the country in which the Hudson's Bay Company was operating and the extent of its business. He had talked also with its trappers, men who, for years, had been employed on the Snake country expeditions and who, consequently, would be well informed about the country south of the Columbia and the Snake. Whatever they may have told him, if they were truthful, was probably disheartening, though it is not unlikely that Smith took their descriptions of that truly barren country with reservations, knowing their

³⁸⁵ *American Monthly Magazine*, vol. xxxii, 329.

³⁸⁶ December 28, 1828, *Ashley Mss.*, Missouri Historical Society.

anxiety to keep Americans out of it. Smith, furthermore, was the best educated of the three partners and consequently better able to handle the affairs of the company among the Mexican population of California. Last of all, he was a man of recognised character and courage.

On Smith's return to rendezvous in the summer of 1827, he despatched the following letter to William Clark, superintendent of Indian Affairs, in which he briefly sketched his course and summarized the more important incidents of his sojourn in California.

LITTLE LAKE OF BEAR RIVER,³⁸⁷ July 17th 1827.
GENL. WM. CLARK,³⁸⁸ Supt. of Indian Affairs

Sir, My situation in this country has enabled me to collect information respecting a section of the country which has hitherto been measurably veiled in obscurity to the citizens of the United States. I allude to the country S.W. of the *Great Salt Lake* west of the Rocky mountains.

I started about the 22d of August 1826, from the Great Salt Lake,³⁸⁹ with a party of fifteen men,³⁹⁰ for

³⁸⁷ Rendezvous was usually conducted at the southern or upper end of the lake near Laketown, Rich County, Utah.

³⁸⁸ This letter is contained in Superintendent of Indian Affairs, *Letter-book*, Kansas Historical Society. The letter was printed in full in the *Missouri Republican*, October 11, 1827. There is a French version of it in Eyries, de Larenaudière, et Klaproth, *Les Nouvelles Annales des Voyages* (Paris, 1826-1833), second ser., vol. vii, 308-312.

³⁸⁹ He probably started from the trading post built this year, to which Ashley sent the four-pounder the year following. On August 22, 1826, presumably the date of his departure, Smith presented a number of useful articles to the Utah Indians and a few days later made another and more generous gift. In addition to these articles bestowed at the start, he carried with him a stock of merchandise to be distributed en route.

³⁹⁰ The names of some of the men are recoverable from the Harrison G. Rogers Journal, which contains, interspersed with the narrative, memoranda of allowances to the employes. Among the names occurring in these accounts are the following: James Reed, Silas Gobel, Arthur Black, John

the purpose of exploring the country S.W. which was entirely unknown to me, and of which I could collect no satisfactory information from the Indians who inhabit this country on its N.E. borders.

My general course on leaving the Salt Lake was S.W. and W. Passing the Little Uta Lake³⁹¹ and ascending Ashley's river, which empties into the Little Uta Lake.³⁹² From this lake I found no more signs of buffalo; there are a few antelope and mountain sheep, and an abundance of *black tailed hares*. On Ashley's river, I found a nation of Indians who call themselves *Sam-patch*; they were friendly disposed towards us.³⁹³ I passed over a range of mountains running S.E. and N.W. and struck a river running S.W. which I called

Gaiter, Robert Evans, Manuel Lazarus, John Hanna, John Wilson, Martin McCoy, Daniel Ferguson, Peter Ranna [or Ransa], (colored), and Abraham Laplant. This makes a total of twelve. H. H. Bancroft [*History of California*, vol. iii, 155 ff.] names but four of Smith's men, as follows: Isaac Galbraith, Joaquin Bowman, John Wilson, and Daniel Ferguson. The name, Galbraith, occurs in none of the Casualty Lists furnished by Smith, Jackson, and Sublette, but is to be found in a list furnished William Clark in 1831 by John Dougherty with the names of Marishall and Rogers as among those slain on the "Coast of the Pacific Ocean of the Columbia river."—Superintendent of Indian Affairs, *Letter-book*, Kansas Historical Society. John Bowman did not come to California till 1831 and hence was not of this party.

³⁹¹ The first indication of the name applied to this body of water, now Utah Lake. He probably followed the Salt Lake Valley, east of the lake, the route of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. This is the course assigned to him on Chittenden's "Map of the Trans-Mississippi Territory," accompanying his *History of the American Fur Trade*, vol. iii, and by I. B. Richman on his "Map of Twenty-two Spanish and American Trails, etc.," accompanying his *California under Spain and Mexico* (Boston, 1911). Bancroft says twice that he *crossed* Utah Lake. Bancroft, H. H. *History of California*, vol. iii, 152, 154, *footnote*. This lake is marked *Ashley L.* on the Gallatin map but without connection with Great Salt Lake.

³⁹² Ashley's river is presumably the Sevier, which, however, does not empty into Utah Lake but into Sevier Lake. Ashley's mistake in this matter may be due to the fact that he seems to have reached the Sevier only after "passing" Utah Lake.

³⁹³ Sanpet Indians, a branch of the Ute tribe of Shoshonean stock, living in the Sanpete Valley and along the Sevier River. They have never been numerous, amounting in the year 1873 to only 36.

Adams River, in compliment to our President.³⁹⁴ The water is of a muddy cast, and is a little brackish. The country is mountainous to East; towards the West there are sandy plains and detached rocky hills.

Passing down this river some distance, I fell in with a nation of Indians who call themselves *Pa-Ulches*³⁹⁵ (those Indians as well as those last mentioned, wear rabbit skin robes) who raise some little corn and pumpkins. The country is nearly destitute of game of any description, except a few hares. Here (about ten days march down it) the river turns to the South East.³⁹⁶ On the S.W. side of the river there is a *cave*, the entrance of which is about 10 or 15 feet high, and 5 or 6 feet in width; after descending about 15 feet, a room opens out from 25 to 30 in length and 15 to 20 feet in width; the roof, sides and floor are solid rock salt, a sample of which I send you, with some other articles which will be hereafter described. I here found a kind of plant of the prickly pear kind, which I called the cabbage pear, the largest of which grows about two feet and a half high and 1½ feet in diameter; upon ex-

³⁹⁴ Smith's route is difficult to follow from his confused and inadequate directions. The only stream running south-west is the Virgin, presumably named for Thomas Virgin, who accompanied Smith on his second expedition. It is over one hundred miles from the point where Smith seems to have struck Sevier River, up that stream, and across the divide to the headwaters of the Virgin, which he named Adams River. He arrived there before October first. Either this year or the next, he seems to have learned of Sevier Lake. Says Albert Gallatin, "The discoveries South and West of that place [Great Salt Lake] appear to belong to others and principally to J. S. Smith. Another river, known by the name of Lost River, coming also from the coast, falls into another lake without outlet situated in 38° N. latitude and the same longitude as L. Timpanogo."—American Antiquarian Society. *Transactions*, vol. ii, 141.

³⁹⁵ *Paiutes*, a name applied at one time or another to most of the Shoshonean tribes of western Utah. They were confined to the area of southwestern Utah, southwestern Nevada, and northwestern Arizona.

³⁹⁶ The Virgin flows slightly to the west of south in its lower course. Smith's "southeast" is inexplicable.

amination I found it to be nearly of the substance of a turnip, altho' by no means palatable; its form was similar to that of an egg, being smaller at the ground and top than in the middle; it is covered with pricks similar to the prickly pear with which you are acquainted.³⁹⁷

There are here also a number of shrubs and small trees with which I was not acquainted previous to my route there, and which I cannot at present describe satisfactorily, as it would take more space than I can here allot.

The *Pa Ulches* have a number of marble pipes, one of which I obtained and send you, altho it has been broken since I have had it in my possession; they told me there was a quantity of the same material in their country. I also obtained of them a knife of *flint*, which I send you, but it has likewise been broken by accident.

I followed Adams river two days further to where it empties into the Seedekeeden a South East course.³⁹⁸ I crossed the Seedskeeder, and went down it four days a south east course; I here found the country remarkably barren, rocky, and mountainous; there are a good many rapids in the river, but at this place a valley opens out about 5 to 15 miles in width, which on the river banks is timbered and fertile.³⁹⁹ I here found a nation of Indians who call themselves *Ammuchabas*; they cultivate the soil, and raise corn, beans, pumpkins, watermelons and muskmelons in abundance, and also a little wheat and cotton.⁴⁰⁰ I was now nearly destitute of

³⁹⁷ Of the genus, *Echinocactus*.

³⁹⁸ His course was south-southwest. He reached the Colorado, which he recognized as the Seedskedee, or Green River, by October 5. There is now a ferry across the river at this point. See United States Geological Survey, *St. Thomas Quadrangle* (topographic sheet).

³⁹⁹ The Mohave Valley.

⁴⁰⁰ The Mohave Indians, the most populous and warlike of the Yuma

horses, and had learned what it was to do without food; I therefore remained there fifteen days and recruited my men, and I was enabled also to exchange my horses and purchase a few more of a few runaway Indians who stole some horses of the Spaniards. I here got information of the Spanish country (the Californias) and obtained two guides, recrossed the Seedskadeer, which I afterwards found emptied into the Gulf of California about 80 miles from this place by the name of the Collarado; many render the river *Gild* from the East.⁴⁰¹

I travelled a west course fifteen days over a country of complete barrens, generally travelling from morning until night without water.⁴⁰² I crossed a Salt plain about 20 miles long and 8 wide; on the surface was a crust of beautiful white salt, quite thin. Under this surface there is a layer of salt from a half to one and a half inches in depth; between this and the upper layer there is about four inches of yellowish sand.⁴⁰³

On my arrival in the province of Upper California, I was looked upon with suspicion, and was compelled to appear in presence of the Governor of the Californias residing at San Diego, where, by the assistance of some American gentlemen (especially Capt. W. H. Cunningham of the ship *Courier* from Boston) I was enabled to obtain permission to return with my men tribes. They have lived in this valley, chiefly on the eastern side of the Colorado, for centuries.

⁴⁰¹ He was still on the Colorado as late as the fifth of October. He crossed at the Needles. The reference to the Gila is not clear.

⁴⁰² He followed presumably the present route of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fé railroad, identical with what was presently to be the Santa Fé-Los Angeles trail. Compare Richman, *op. cit.*, 289.

⁴⁰³ The Mohave Desert. The route indicated on the Chittenden map is incorrect. According to the Gallatin map, he followed the Mohave River which is fittingly called "Inconstant" River. He entered California *via* the Cajon Pass.

the route I came, and purchased such supplies as I stood in want of. The Governor would not allow me to trade up the Sea coast towards Bodaga.⁴⁰⁴ I returned to my party and purchased such articles as were necessary, and went Eastward of the Spanish settlements on the route I had come in. I then steered my course N.W. keeping from 150 miles to 200 miles from the sea coast.⁴⁰⁵ A very high range of mountains lay on the East.⁴⁰⁶ After travelling three hundred miles in that direction through a country somewhat fertile,⁴⁰⁷ in which there was a great many Indians, mostly naked and destitute of arms, with the exception of a few Bows and Arrows and what is very singular amongst Indians, they cut their hair to the length of three inches; they proved to be friendly; their manner of living is on fish, roots, acorns and grass.

On my arrival at the river which I named the *Wimul-che* (named after a tribe of Indians which resides on it, of that name) I found a few beaver, and elk, deer, and antelope in abundance.⁴⁰⁸ I here made a small

⁴⁰⁴ They arrived at the mission of San Gabriel, November 27, 1826. For a discussion of the principal events during their sojourn here, see the Harrison G. Rogers Journal, *post*.

⁴⁰⁵ He overestimates his distance from the sea. As he goes north, he keeps at an average of about one hundred miles from the coast.

⁴⁰⁶ The Sierra Nevada Range. The directions jotted down by Rogers [see *footnote* 433]. "Two days above Saint Fernando [?], plenty of beaver at a lake. Three days above Santa Clara River, Pireadero, Two Larres or Flag Lake" give some indication of their route. They crossed the Santa Clara River north of San Gabriel, whence they proceeded to Tulare Lake, and so northwest.

⁴⁰⁷ Three hundred miles would bring Smith a little beyond the San Joaquin River at the point where it emerges from the mountains to the east, but his route was naturally circuitous, and there is an indication that he slightly overestimated distances. Compare Warner, J. J. "Reminiscences of Early California," Southern California Historical Society, *Publications*, vol. vii, 180 ff.

⁴⁰⁸ The Wimilche Indians, a Yokuts (Mariposan) tribe, formerly living north of King's River. The stream which Smith reached and which he

hunt, and attempted to take my party across the [mountain] which I before mentioned, and which I called *Mount Joseph*, to come on and join my partners at the Great Salt Lake. I found the snow so deep on Mount Joseph that I could not cross my horses, five of which starved to death; I was compelled therefore to return to the valley which I had left, and there, leaving my party, I started with two men, seven horses and two mules, which I loaded with hay for the horses and provisions for ourselves, and started on the 20th of May, and succeeded in crossing it in eight days, having lost only two horses and one mule.⁴⁰⁹ I found the snow

named from the tribe dwelling on it, I take to be the Stanislaus. The Wimilche never lived much farther north.

⁴⁰⁹ Smith left the vicinity of San Gabriel sometime after January 27. J. M. Guinn says that he did not leave until February. He adds, however, that they had removed their camp to San Bernardino. See Southern California Historical Society, *Publications*, vol. iii, part 4, 48. After traveling three hundred miles they reached a river where they made a small hunt, attempted to cross the mountains, failed, returned to the valley, and established a camp. Then Smith started again across the mountains with two men on May 20, 1827. The hunt, the first attempt at crossing, and the return and disposition of the party must have consumed at least three weeks, which would place his arrival at the foot of Mt. Joseph toward the end of April. The location of Smith's route is impossible to determine with accuracy. Warner states that he followed up the American fork of the Sacramento. Warner, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, 181. Richman takes him to the Mokelumnes River and Chittenden to the Merced. It seems more probable that he followed the Stanislaus, starting eastward along the route followed in the opposite direction by the Bartleson-Bidwell party of 1841. The evidence for this is the fact that he named the stream the Wimilche from the tribe of Indians dwelling on it. The Wimilches live north of King's River but certainly not as far north as the American fork of the Sacramento, which was north of the northernmost limit of the Mariposan group to which the Wimilches belong. On the Stanislaus River he was in the midst of a Mariposan area and he was not far north of King's River. Again, orders were issued in October, 1827, to bring into San Francisco the trappers on the Rio Estanislao. Governor's Orders of August 3, September 14, October 1 and 16 in *Departmental Records Mss.*, vol. v, 78, 88, 94, 102 cited in Bancroft, *California*, vol. iii, 158, *footnote*. Compare Bojorges, *Recuerdos*, Ms., 12-14, cited in *idem*. In the third place, Smith states that he traveled north three

on the top of this mountain from 4 to 8 feet deep, but it was so consolidated by the heat of the sun that my horses only sunk from half a foot to one foot deep.

After travelling twenty days from the east side of Mount Joseph, I struck the S.W. corner of the Great Salt Lake, travelling over a country completely barren and destitute of game. We frequently travelled without water sometimes for two days over sandy deserts, where there was no sign of vegetation and when we found water in some of the rocky hills, we most generally found some Indians who appeared the most miserable of the human race having nothing to subsist on (nor any clothing) except grass seed, grass-hoppers, etc. When we arrived at the Salt Lake, we had but one horses and one mule remaining, which were so feeble and poor that they could scarce carry the little camp equipage which I had along; the balance of my horses I was compelled to eat as they gave out.⁴¹⁰

hundred miles from San Gabriel, which would bring him approximately to the Stanislaus.

Assuming that, in continuing his journey, he followed up the middle fork of this river, he would pass to the south of Mt. Stanislaus (11,202 feet), [his Mt. Joseph] and on the other side of the Sierras would strike the upper reaches of the West Walker River, which he would follow down into the plains to the east, presumably passing to the north of Walker Lake without visiting that body of water. Thence he would go northeast to Great Salt Lake. A highway follows this route to-day. See United States Geological Survey. *California-Nevada, Jackson, Big Tree, Sonora, Yosemite, Dardanelles, Bridgeport, Pyramid, Peal, Wellington, Carson, and Wabuska Quadrangles* (topographic sheets). For the Bidwell route see Richman, "Map," *loc. cit.* and Bidwell, "The First Emigrant Train to California," *Century Magazine*, vol. xix, 106 ff.

⁴¹⁰ The route shown on the Gallatin map is inaccurate for the reason that Gallatin confuses Smith's two expeditions. Gallatin says, "The ensuing year [1827], he visited Monterey and St. Francisco; ascended the river Buenaventura some distance and recrossed the California chain of mountains, called there Mount Joseph, in about the thirty-ninth degree of latitude. He thence proceeded north of west and reached the southwestern extremity of Lake Timpanogo." True, he went up the Buenaventura [American fork of the

The company are now starting, and therefore must close my communication. Yours respectfully,

(signed) JEDEDIAH S. SMITH, of the firm of
Smith, Jackson and Sublette.

During Smith's sojourn in California, both he and Harrison G. Rogers, the clerk of the company, kept a record of daily occurrences. Rogers's journal has been preserved. Like Smith, Harrison G. Rogers was a man of deep religious sentiment, a stalwart Calvinist. From the entire absence of all mention of him prior to 1826, it would seem not unlikely that he made his first trip to the mountains in company with Ashley and Smith in the spring of that year. Two bits of philological evidence suggest a possible New England or Canadian origin for him. The mission of San Gabriel reminded him of the "British barracks," which he presumably had seen.⁴¹¹ Again, black raspberries he calls by the name, Scotch cap, an Americanism.⁴¹² He was killed July 14, 1828, with eleven other of Smith's men, at the massacre on the Umpqua.

Two of his journals, both of them fragments, have survived. The first covers the period from November 27 to December 20, 1826, and from January 1 to January 27, 1827. The second runs from May 10 to July 13, 1828. What became of the remainder of these journals is unknown. It is possible that the first part of the first journal, the portion covering the march from Great Salt Lake to San Gabriel, was handed over to the Mexican authorities at San Diego. Governor Echeandía, writing December 20, 1826, to the Minister

Sacramento], but in 1828, crossed the California mountains, and continuing north of west, as Gallatin states, reached, not Lake Timpanogo, but the Pacific Ocean.

⁴¹¹ See page 198.

⁴¹² See page 245. Compare the *New English Dictionary*, "Scotch cap."

of War, stated that he was enclosing Smith's diary.⁴¹³ He may, of course, have referred to Smith's own journal, but the abrupt fashion in which the Rogers narrative begins with their arrival at San Gabriel may indicate that Smith took the first section of this with him to San Diego as evidence of his purely pacific and commercial intentions, and that it there came into Echeandía's hands, and was by him forwarded as noted above. Efforts to locate it, however, have been futile. The portions of the journals that have survived⁴¹⁴ were carried about by Rogers from his first arrival in California. If he was one of those who remained in California while Smith returned to Great Salt Lake, as seems not improbable, he very likely continued his journal during that period, though no trace of it has been found.

With Smith's return in the winter of 1827, and the resumption of the journey northward in the spring of 1828, Rogers continued his diary. Day by day, during the tedious and dangerous march through northern California and southern Oregon, he diligently recorded the distance made and the direction pursued, taking pains to make his log as perfect and accurate in detail as the difficulties of an unnamed and unknown wilderness would permit. Nothing escaped his attention from the size of the raspberries to the shape and character of the Indian lodges and the peculiarities of their dialects. Even the loss of a little kitten, which the men had carried along as a pet and mascot, was duly recorded. Occasionally he indicted a little prayer for preservation against the perils and dangers of the way, until, at last, on the thirteenth of July, having arrived

⁴¹³ *St. Pap. Sac. Ms.*, vol. xix, 37, 38, cited by Bancroft, *California*, vol. iii, 155, footnote 6.

⁴¹⁴ They fill 112 pages, 30 cm. by 10 cm.

at the Umpqua, he sets down in his book with an apparent sigh of relief, "Those Inds. tell us after we get up the River 15 or 20 miles, we will have good Travelling to the Wel Hammet or Multenomah, where the Callipo Inds. live." After nearly two years of almost constant danger, they were then within easy distance of the friendly Kallipoo Indians, the Willamette River, and Fort Vancouver, the Hudson's Bay Company's post at its mouth. For the first time the outlook was bright. This, however, was the last entry in Rogers's journal. Next morning after breakfast, he and all the company save three were brutally massacred by the Umpqua Indians, into whose hands fell all the property of the little band, including the furs, the outfit, and the journals themselves. Three refugees only, Smith, Black, and Turner, made their way amid terrible hardships to Fort Vancouver, where they secured assistance from the British in recovering their property.

For many months the journals were in the Indians' possession. Why they did not destroy them is a mystery. Perhaps they regarded them as an unknown and powerful medicine. Finally recovered, however, they were brought out by Smith from the mountains in the fall of 1830. The following summer, after having eluded constant danger and even having escaped the massacre on the Umpqua, Smith was at length shot down on his way to Santa Fé. Ashley, who had been made the executor of his will, took possession of his papers, including the Harrison G. Rogers journals. Instead of returning them to Smith's relatives, who, perhaps, would have scarcely appreciated their value, he retained them. With his death, they passed to the administrator of his estate and so to the hands of Mrs. Benjamin F. Gray of St. Louis, Ashley's grand-niece,