

Who was Jedediah Smith?

His travels were exceeded only by Lewis and Clark.

He led expeditions up the Missouri River with such characters as keel boatman Mike Fink.

He discovered the South Pass through the Rockies and the first land route to California. He led settlers across the Santa Fe Trail, the Mojave Desert, the Sierra Nevada's and up the Oregon Coast.

His name was **Jedediah Smith**, born JUNE 24, 1798. Jedediah operated a successful fur trading company out of Salt Lake City. Jedediah noted in his Journal: "Then let us come forward with faith, nothing doubting, and He will most unquestionably hear us."

On December 24, 1829, from Wind River on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, Jedediah Smith wrote to his parents in Ohio:

"It is a long time since I left home & many times I have been ready, to bring my business to a close & endeavor to come home; but have been hindered hitherto... However I will endeavor, by the assistance of Divine Providence, to come home as soon as possible...but whether I shall ever be allowed the privilege, God only knows. I feel the need of the watch & care of a Christian Church. You may well suppose that our Society is of the roughest kind. Men of good morals seldom enter into business of this kind- I hope you will remember me before the Throne of Grace... May God in His infinite mercy allow me soon to join My Parents is the Prayer of your undutiful Son, Jedediah S. Smith."

In a letter to his brother, Ralph, December 24, 1829, Jedediah Smith wrote: "Many Hostile tribes of Indians inhabit this Space...In August 1827, ten Men who were in company with me lost their lives by the Amuchabas Indians...In July 1828, fifteen men who were in company with me lost their lives by the Umpquah Indians...Many others have lost their lives in different parts... My Brother...I have need of your Prayers...to bear me up before the Throne of Grace."

On May 27, 1831, Jedediah Smith was ambushed by Comanche's near Santé Fe and killed. Just four months earlier, January 26, 1831, Jedediah Smith wrote to his brother Ralph in Wayne County, Ohio:

"Some, who have made a profession of Christianity & have by their own

negligence caused the Spirit to depart, think their day of grace is over; but where did they find Such doctrine? I find our Saviour ever entreating & wooing us."