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Title: **Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, Trail Excerpt by Jesse Nathaniel Smith**
Provenance:

Category: **Document**
Person: **Jesse Nathaniel Smith**
Date:

Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, 1847–1868 Source of Trail Excerpt: Smith, Jesse Nathaniel, Journal of Jesse Nathaniel Smith, the Life Story of a Mormon Pioneer, 1834-1906 [1953], 11-12. Read T

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Read Trail Excerpt:

From that time on I herded stock until the 9th of June, 1847, when we started for the mountains, the Pioneer Company having started the previous April. The companies rendezvoused at the Elk Horn, which stream was very high; the cattle swam over, the wagons being ferried on rafts. When we organized Perrigrine [Perrigrine] Sessions was our captain of fifty, though the company was known as Parley's Company. Parley P. Pratt and Jacob Weatherby started back to Winter Quarters on business with a pair of steers, a wagon and two women. They were unarmed, they were attacked by three Indians armed with rifles, in the struggle Weatherby was killed. His body was brought back and buried at the foot of the Liberty Pole, on the Elk Horn, which had been raised in camp.

The first day we reached the Platte. Here the bones of a man were found who had been killed by the Indians as supposed; he was thought to have been a mountaineer, as Indian traders and trappers were then called. I drove Uncle John's wagon—two yoke of oxen—occupied by himself and Aunt Clarissa. John L. Smith and wife, another wagon. Silas [Sanford Smith] drove Mother's [Mary Aikens Smith] wagon, and Thomas Callister with his wives, Caroline Smith and Helen M. Clark,

made up our mess. Nothing of much note occurred until we reached the buffalo country when all was life and animation among the hunters. There was now no lack of buffalo meat either dried or fresh. We kept on the trail of the Pioneers on the north bank of the Platte, some times leaving the river some miles, crossing streams and sand hills and passing long reaches without a single tree to relieve the sameness of the river valley. One day our train stopped over an hour to let a herd of buffalo cross the road. There was abundance of other game, one Isaac Brown of our fifty was an excellent hunter and kept the camp supplied with fresh antelope meat. I recollect one day that a large heavily loaded wagon ran over one of Bro. Pratt's little boys, about two years old; he took up the child and laid hands on him, and the child never complained, and soon was as well as before to all appearance.

We met the Pioneers on their return at a stream called "Little Sandy"; we had previously met some of the boys belonging to the Mormon Battalion on their way to Winter Quarters, or elsewhere, to join their families. Meeting was called and addressed by Pres. Young, and many others. Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor were censured about the organization of the traveling companies. Glowing descriptions were given of the valley of Great Salt Lake and surrounding country. Uncle John Smith was proposed to be president of the stake to be organized and the names of high councilors were suggested. George A. Smith seemed very healthy; he rode a little mule. He gave us some very attractive descriptions of the new land of promise. At the meeting Willard Richards announced that "they had found the place for the gathering of the

saints," that they had laid off a city and named it "Great Salt Lake City, Great Basin, North America."

We stopped one day with the Pioneers and then resumed our journey, reaching Great Salt Lake Valley on the 25th of September, 1847.