Fremont's Expeditions Through Kansas, 1842-1854

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FREMONT'S EXPEDITIONS THROUGH KANSAS, 1842-1854

being

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

by

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Sources for map of American Exploration, 1804-1820:


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FREMONT'S EXPEDITIONS THROUGH KANSAS, 1842-1854

John Charles Fremont made five exploring expeditions through Kansas. The first three expeditions were made at the expense and under the direction of the United States Government. The two later ones were private ventures financed principally at the expense of Senator Thomas H. Benton, Fremont's father-in-law, and himself. A full account of the five exploring expeditions could almost form a complete history of the Trans-Mississippi West during that time—June, 1842, to February, 1854.

The purpose of the study was to examine these five expeditions as they apply to Kansas, and to determine what results were achieved by his travels and subsequent reports. Special emphasis was given to his accounts of the Kansas scene, especially his influence in changing the concept of "The Great American Desert."

A study was made of the available Fremont papers. The bulk of the Fremont personal papers were destroyed many years ago in a warehouse fire in New York.

In writing the account of his five expeditions through Kansas various sources were used. Of the first two Fremont wrote official reports; the third he described in full in his Memoirs of My Life (1886); the fourth and fifth he left without official record, although his letters and documents help reconstruct the expeditions. Bigelow's Life of Colonel Fremont (1856) and Upham's Life, Explorations, and Public Services of John Charles Fremont (1856) help, as secondary sources, to
give us a graphic account of the fourth expedition. S. N. Carvalho in his *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West* gives the most complete and authentic account of the fifth expedition.
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The Bancroft Library at the University of California reported slight holdings which were contained in the papers given the library by Professor Allan Nevins. These papers consisted of clippings, the drafts of a few letters, and a draft of the Memoirs which was edited by Mrs. Frémont. Most of these materials were used by Mr. Nevins in Frémont, The West's Greatest Adventurer (1928).
The Southwest Museum Library (Los Angeles) was also contacted. It reported a collection of the private papers of the Fremont family preserved by Elizabeth Benton Fremont and given by her to the Southwest Museum. The works were available to researchers, but had no microfilming facilities and no listings of the material.

The National Archives and Record Service of the General Services Administration was most helpful. They reported certain official records relating to Fremont in the records of the War Department, the General Land Office, Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, and Senate Documents. Materials relating to this study were purchased on microfilm by the Forsyth Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College.

The Kansas State Historical Society (Topeka) and the Nebraska State Historical Society (Lincoln) were contacted. These agencies were most helpful in furnishing materials for this study. Many sources were used for the bibliography, such as Poore's Index to Government Publications, 1774-1881. One, which was most beneficial to the study was Wagner's The Plains and the Rockies, which is a bibliography of original narratives from 1800 to 1865.

Other related materials were used in the study. The Weather Bureau, U. S. Department of Commerce, furnished weather data and information which helped reconstruct the climatic conditions when Fremont traversed the scene. This information was used with Dr. L. D. Wooster's "Precipitation Cycle" report.
In writing the account of his five expeditions through Kansas various sources were used. Of the first two Frémont wrote official reports; the third he described in full in his *Memoirs of My Life* (1886); the fourth and fifth he left without official record, although his letters and documents help reconstruct the expeditions. Bigelow's *Life of Colonel Frémont* (1856) and Upham's *Life, Explorations, and Public Services of John Charles Frémont* (1856) help, as secondary sources, to give us a graphic account of the fourth expedition. S. N. Carvalho in his *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West* gives the most complete and authentic account of the fifth expedition.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

AMERICAN CONCEPTS OF KANSAS BEFORE 1840

Influence of the Organized Expeditions Through Kansas and the Great American Desert

Three early official United States expeditions which later concerned Kansas explored the Trans-Mississippi West before John Charles-Freémont. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark penetrated the Far Northwest; Zebulon Montgomery Pike the Southwest, and Stephen Harriman Long the Middle West. Each of these expeditions went through Kansas. Even before these official expeditions the great western wilderness lying beyond the Missouri River had been open to the dugouts and pirogues of roving trappers and fur traders as well as a few adventurous travelers. It was, however, and continued to be, a land of uncertainties and mystery until after the 1840's.

Lewis and Clark's record was one of the first reliable accounts made in what is now Kansas, although they saw little of the state. The expedition ascended the Missouri River from the mouth of the Kansas to the Northwest and was more a water expedition than a plains venture. The later reports of Lewis and Clark lacked specific detail and scientific methods, nevertheless, in reporting on the Northern-plains they indicated they had crossed a dry country. They used the word "desert" occasionally, but the word "treeless" frequently appeared in their
journals and the soil was often mentioned as being sterile.\textsuperscript{1}

Zebulon M. Pike in his 1806-07 expedition through the South-west visited "Kansas" entering the state in early September, 1806, and crossing the present day western boundary on November 11, 1806.\textsuperscript{2} This journey of Pike's, while having for its main object the discovery of the course of the Arkansas River and the location of its headwaters, had other results. The boundary claim dispute with Spain and the later Spanish trade with the establishment of the Santa Fe Trail might be attributed to Pike's expedition were of immediate importance. Probably the most profound influence this expedition had was its influence upon the American mind. Pike's accounts of his expeditions were published in 1810, were widely read, and aided in shaping world opinion about the Trans-Mississippi West. Pike wrote the following of the general area:

In this western traverse of Louisiana, the following general observation may be made, viz.: that from the Missouri to the head of the Osage river, a distance in a straight line of probably 300 miles, the country will admit of a numerous,


extensive, and compact population; hence on the rivers of Kansas, La Platte, Arkansas, and their various branches. It appears to me to be only possible to introduce a limited population on their banks. The inhabitants would find it most to their advantage to pay attention to the multiplication of cattle, horses, sheep, and goats, all of which they can raise in abundance, the earth producing spontaneously sufficient for their support, both winter and summer, by which means their herds might become immensely numerous; but the wood now in the country would not be sufficient for a moderate share of population more than 15 years, and it would be out of the question to think of using any of it in manufactures; consequently, the houses would be built entirely of mud-brick, like those in New Spain, or of the brick manufactured with fire. 3

The plains were compared to the sandy deserts of Africa:

These vast plains of the western hemisphere may become in time as celebrated as the sandy deserts of Africa; for I saw in my route, in various places, tracts of many leagues where the wind had thrown up the sand in all the fanciful form of the ocean's rolling wave, and on which not a speck of vegetable matter existed. 4

In the geographical disadvantages of the plains Pike saw social advantage, he believed it would act as a barrier to the American population moving further westward and thus making united rule of the states impossible. In addition, if this area were left to the Indians alone, then, there would be an avoidance of clashes with the aborigines. 5

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3Sebulous Montgomery Pike, The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, to Headwaters of the Mississippi River, Through Louisiana Territory, and in New Spain, During the Years 1805-07 (New York: F. P. Harper, 1895), 11, 523, hereinafter cited as Pike, Expeditions.

4Ibid., 524.

5Ibid., 525.
The concept of the "Great American Desert" was beginning to develop. The international difficulties that culminated in the War of 1812 detracted attention from the scene, but after peace was restored in 1815 attention began to focus again upon the newly acquired Louisiana Territory. Pike's views of the "vast tract of untimbered country which lies between the waters of the Missouri, Mississippi and the Western Ocean, from the mouth of the Mississippi to 40 North Latitude" was and continued to be extolled only as a "terrestrial paradise" for Indians. The reports of travelers and traders who, subsequent to Pike's expedition, traversed the country along the Arkansas and across the sandy plains to Santa Fe, strengthened the general belief in a Great American Sahara. The plains area now comprising Kansas in particular, was one of mystery and misunderstanding. The general belief was that it was a vast belt of arid sand, without water, and incapable of sustaining more than nomadic life. No doubt the foundation for such a belief was first established by Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, Spanish explorer of the Southwest United States, in his expedition to the plains in 1540. He speaks of his journey in search of Quivira as over "mighty plains and sandy heaths so smooth and weari-some". When telling of the Indian menace, he said the Indians "wanted to persuade me to go there (Quivira) with the whole force, believing that as the way was through such uninhabited deserts, and from the lack of water, they would get us where we and our horses would die of hunger". Even DeSoto in approaching the eastern border
of the plains left a lasting impression by reporting the land as having "inhabitants wandering like Arabs".  

The next contribution to the "Great American Desert" myth was furnished by Major Stephen H. Long, of the Topographical Engineers, in the accounts of his assignment to explore the Louisians Territory. On August 12, 1819, he entered the Kansas River on the first steamboat to attempt to navigate that stream. The mud-choked waters permitted the vessel to penetrate only about a mile; and from there Long and his men took to foot travelling a short distance along the Kansas River, in what is now Wyandotte County, Kansas. From there they moved to the Missouri River. A secondary unit had also left Fort Osage on August 6 traveling overland east of the Big Blue River (Jackson County, Missouri) and westward along the high lands dividing the Kansas River from the streams to its mouth, passing through what were to become Johnson, Douglas, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, and Pottawatomie counties. Unfortunately the detachment was robbed of horses and baggage by a Pawnee war party, so they changed their route to cross Pottawatomie, Jackson, Jefferson, and Leavenworth counties, and return to the Missouri River. They then proceeded northward along the river through Leavenworth, Atchison, and Doniphan counties to rejoin Long.

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The United expedition then ascended the Missouri River in the steamboat. Arriving at Council Bluffs, they followed the Platte River westward to the Rocky Mountains. From there they followed the eastern slope of the mountains southward until reaching the headwaters of the Arkansas. The Arkansas River was followed eastward for four days and then the expedition separated into two detachments on the morning of July 24, 1820. Captain John R. Bell, the official journalist with Long's expedition, took one detachment and followed the Arkansas River and Major Long followed the Canadian River. Bell departed from Kansas on August 17, 1820. The parties were reunited at the mouth of the Canadian on September 13 of the same year.  

Major Long's accounts were recorded by Doctor Edwin James and were consequently published in 1823. The general description of the land indicated it was "sterile" and "the land of the cormorant" and bittern. Nomads could live there but no one else could; there was no timber and but little water, the soil was poisoned, there was just cactus, artemisia, and sand. The "Great American Desert" was officially born in the world's mind.

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8A large voracious bird of gregarious habits.

9In salt-manufacture, the waste liquor remaining after crystallization from brine.

Among Long's reports appeared a "Map of the Country Drained by the Mississippi," (See map on page 8 of this thesis) which has printed over the area south of the Platte River to the Spanish possessions and from the Rocky Mountains east to the junction of the Smoky Hill and Republican Rivers the words "Great Desert," "Deep Sandy Alluvion," and also, in smaller type, the following: "The Great Desert is frequented by roving bands of Indians, who have no fixed places of residence, but roam from place to place in quest of game." This last was undoubtedly an attempt to firmly establish the geographical doctrine and nature of the inhabitants of the area.\textsuperscript{11}

Pioneer View of the Trans-Mississippi West

Thus the misconceptions of the "barren" West were established. As the decade of the forties arrived it still remained a land of mystery with the eastern public possessing almost no accurate knowledge regarding this land of mountains, plains, canyon and forest.

Mythical rivers were believed to exist: a Rio Buenaventura, from the Rockies to the Pacific, a Rio Timpanagos, originating in a lake of that name which was also supposed to flow across the western half of the continent to the Pacific. But in spite of these, tales

\textsuperscript{11}This is found in Bell, \textit{Journal}, map following page 349.
Map of the Country

drained by the

MISSISSIPPI.

Profile on Vertical Section of the Country

on the Parallel of Latitude 35 Degrees North.

circulated relating to the dry and barren plains and also curiosity abounded concerning the icy peaks of the rugged Rockies, the deep river canyons, the strange habits and customs of western Indians, great and numerous animals like the buffalo herds and grizzly bears, and the tremendous storms, blizzards in the winter and tornadoes in the summer. Rumors, often unfounded or based on Indian myth or the exaggerations of fur trappers and other early voyagers, were nearly the whole warp and woof of the imagination's fabric of the West in 1840.12

The next decade was to improve the accuracy of its conception of the lands beyond the Mississippi, thanks largely to the new scientific exploring techniques of John C. Frémont. He was to map our destiny west in a decade of American expansion.

CHAPTER II

FREMONT'S PATH TO THE WEST

Early Life and Preparation for Explorations

John Charles Fremont was born on January 21, 1815, in Savannah, Georgia, of parents, Jean Charles Frémond and Mrs. Anne Whiting Pryor, who were not married. His father was a Frenchman, and his mother came from a distinguished Virginia family—the Whitings. Fremont died after five years, leaving her with three children in straitened circumstances in Norfolk, Virginia. They later moved to South Carolina. There a lawyer, John W. Mitchell, took an interest in the young Frémond and saw to it that he was given sufficient schooling to enter Charleston College in May, 1829, when he was sixteen years old. He remained there, with intervals of teaching in the country, until he was expelled for "habitual irregularity and incorrigible negligence" in 1831, a few months before his graduation. However Frémont appeared to be an outstanding scholar,

1Professor Nevins found that "Both family tradition and family researches made in France support the view that the name was actually Frémont. But it is to be noted (1) that the patronymic Fremon is by no means unknown in France, and has been borne by men of distinction; (2) that his fellow-tenant Lataste, a Frenchman, spells the name Fremon in a sworn deposition; and (3) that Girardin, his careful and scholarly employer, spells it Fremon in repeated notices and advertisements in the Richmond Press." Allan Nevins, Frémont, the West's Greatest Adventurer (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1928), 2, hereinafter cited as Nevins, Frémont.
when he applied himself, "well advanced in mathematics" and "held a high place among his classmates in the 'Scientific Department.'"

Thus ended the first phase of Frémont's preparation. His lifelong character--"ardor, imagination, ambition, quickness, endurance, and reckless impetuosity" had now been developed.2

In 1833 he was appointed a teacher of mathematics on the sloop of war Natchez which was to cruise in South American waters.

His major career began after he resigned from the Navy. Professor Allan Nevins found the second phase of his preparation "noteworthy chiefly in two respects; in that it threw Frémont into contact with distinguished men, who were able to give him powerful assistance, and in that, at the same time, it tended to strengthen his already marked nomadic tendencies."3

Frémont was blessed with influential friends who took a keen interest in him personally and in his exploits. The first, and one of the most influential, was Joel R. Poinsett, an American politician and diplomat of questionable abilities. It was Poinsett, a Democrat and Unionist, who launched him upon his future work as scientific explorer. The naval appointment, and the later Topographical Corps assignment were direct results of Poinsett's interest

2Ibid., 14.

3Ibid., 18.
in Fremont.

The navy experience strengthened Frémont's love of travel and adventure, but when the opportunity of the Topographical Corps position was presented he immediately exchanged "the monotony of a warship for the wilderness and the mountain range."\(^4\)

His first task was to help survey a projected railroad route between Charleston and Cincinnati; the work to be under the charge of Captain W. S. Williams of the United States Topographical Corps. The work of this survey carried through the winter of 1837 and Frémont developed a strong taste for wilderness exploration.

In the spring of 1838, Captain Williams, having finished the Charleston--Cincinnati survey, was ordered by Poinsett, now Secretary of War, to make military reconnaissance of the Cherokee Indian lands in Georgia. He chose Frémont as one of his assistants. After the end of this assignment (1838) Frémont was ordered to Washington after being commissioned a second lieutenant.\(^5\)

Frémont arrived in Washington at a most opportune moment. A new survey was being planned by the Topographical Corps. The plateau country between the upper Mississippi and Missouri Rivers

\(^4\)Ibid., 23.

\(^5\)He was appointed by President Martin Van Buren when the Topographical Corps was re-organized by General Andrew Jackson, who provided that the entire corps should be army men. Until that time Frémont had been assigned to the project as a civilian. John Bigelow, Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John Charles Frémont, (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1856), 33, hereinafter cited as Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont.
REMONT'S EXPLORATIONS, 1837-1839

was to be scientifically explored under the direction of Jean Nicholas Nicollet, a distinguished Frenchman and remarkable scientist. Poinsett was again responsible for getting Frémont the appointment as Nicollet's principal assistant.

During the years 1838 and 1839 Frémont accompanied Nicollet on two separate exploring expeditions investigating the major part of the region lying between the Missouri and the upper rivers as far north as the British line. After finishing their mission the two men with the aid of Mr. Ferdinand R. Hassler, then the head of the coast survey, wrote their complete reports. These reports were based upon scientific methods of exploration and brought immediate attention to the northern plains.

The close association of Frémont and Nicollet in this venture gave increased stature to Frémont as a scientific explorer. Also, most everyone interested or associated in western development studied carefully the work of these two men.6

First View of the West

Frémont was twenty-six years old at the start of the Nicollet expeditions. He was to serve his apprenticeship under one of the most

outstanding scientific explorers of his day, whose reputation and high purposes immediately influenced his future career.

The expeditions of 1838-39 also introduced Frémont to the West, an area he found fascinating and immediately appealing. The West was growing increasingly important as more and more men and their activities overflowed its bounds. He became acquainted with the frontier element: the soldier, fur trapper, Indian, and voyageurs. With this interest, and later on the "expansionists" urging his continued explorations, Frémont and the West became synonymous.

The expeditions with Nicollet had also introduced Frémont to that peculiar product of the West - the prairies. He and Nicollet found the beautiful rolling plain to be fertile land. The subsequent reports indicated the plain was not a desert, and singled out Long's report as being inaccurate and superficial. Frémont's writings of the time displayed an exuberant enthusiasm for the rolling plains, the beautiful grasses, and the clear wide expansive blue horizon.7

Work and Associations in Washington

As mentioned earlier, Joel Poinsett, the influential Secretary of War, was keenly interested in the career of his protege Frémont. His military commission and subsequent appointments were a direct

7Nevins, Frémont, 38-39; 42.
result of this interest by Poinsett. It was in his association with Nicollet that more attention focused upon the young explorer for Nicollet was recognized as an accomplished scientist and explorer. For Frémont to have his career and name associated with those of Nicollet and Hassler was most fortunate and helpful to the young Frémont.

The greatest turning point in Frémont's life came, however, with his acquaintance and rapidly growing friendship with Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri. The latter took Frémont into his immediate family circle and enlarged his vision of the possibilities of western exploration. Benton was the leader of the "expansionist senators" who were greatly interested in the West, and the expansion of the United States to the Pacific.⁸

In his frequent visits to the Benton home, Frémont became interested in the Senator's sixteen year old daughter, Jessie. After months of seeing each other, the two were secretly married in Washington, on October 19, 1841. Senator and Mrs. Benton were greatly

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⁸Benton, while interested in Oregon as early as 1838, was not particularly interested in extending the western boundary of the United States past the Rocky Mountains until later, when he changed his viewpoint in a most positive manner. "Senator Thomas H. Benton's Speech in Support of the Oregon Bill," 28 Congress, 1 Session, Congressional Globe (Washington: Globe Office, 1844), XIII, 678, hereinafter cited as "Benton's Speech in Support of the Oregon Bill," Congressional Globe.
opposed to the marriage because of Frémont's military profession, which would necessitate long absences from his family, and because of Jessie's extreme youth. Both had the highest personal regard for Frémont, but ordered him from the Benton home when they later learned of the marriage. Both parents relented when Jessie quoted the words of Ruth, "Whither thou goest, I will go." Thereafter, the Bentons found the marriage entirely agreeable to them in every respect. Frémont found in his father-in-law an invaluable adviser, patron, and protector.

The important stages of Frémont's career were falling into place one by one. Captain Williams and Hassler gave him confidence in his future work but above all, through his association with Nicollet, had taught him to systematically carry out scientific exploration of a new country. He had been taught to record accurately and map his progress both by the physical landscape and the astronomical guideposts, to carefully describe the flora, and to take particular note of weather conditions.9

Frémont had completed his training and preparation as an explorer and had obtained by marriage the support of the American statesman who was most interested in the mapping and colonization of the West as the decade of the forties opened. The forties were to

9 Nevins, Frémont, 43.
be pre-eminently the decade of American expansion, the decade in which Texas and the Southwest, California and Oregon, were all added to the Union.

Senator Benton and the Expansionists

At the beginning of the 1840's the entire country was becoming aware of its manifest destiny. On the frontier the tide of American emigration was ready to roll westward. The panic of 1837 had slowed the American economy and almost paralyzed the western emigration but with the restoration of a sound economy the expansive energies of the country were again pressing forward, this time to a much greater degree.

Despite the greatly accelerated flow of emigrants to the West there was as yet an almost complete lack of scientific knowledge of the trans-Missouri regions. As mentioned earlier, the official governmental expeditions before 1840 had not produced genuinely scientific results. The members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition were all ordinary soldiers and frontiersmen. Some members of the expedition had kept a record of their trip and their observations, but none had the training to report accurately the scientific aspects of their experiences. They did not know how to map the country accurately, take astronomical observations, collect or catalogue botany and geology specimens, or record meteorological data.
Pike's notes of his southwestern expedition were slightly more valuable than the Lewis and Clark Journals; but they were unfortunately taken from him by the Spaniards, and thus, were unavailable when he wrote of his experiences. The most scientific American explorer before Nicollet's time had been Henry R. Schoolcraft, whose books and experiences were well known to Fremont and Benton. He had accepted the challenge of the trans-Mississippi West to science, and had developed a reputation for doing outstanding work.  

Schoolcraft's, and later Nicollet's work really did not answer the questions of the westward immigrant nor provide the basic scientific knowledge of the West. Immigrant routes demanded a thorough mapping and there was certainly a need for geographical knowledge of the West. This latter need was one reason for Nicollet's study of the upper Mississippi and Missouri River regions and also the plateau country between these upper regions. It was Nicollet with "his careful methods, his incessant observations of latitudes and longitude, his topographical sketches of every object of interest, his compilations of geological and biological data", which had established new scientific methods of exploration. "Nothing of such well-rounded scientific value had been attempted in America before his arrival."  

10 Schoolcraft, graduate of Union College where he specialized in chemistry and mineralogy. He had been in Missouri and Arkansas as early as 1818, collecting geological specimens and making a special inquiry into mineral deposits. *Ibid.*, 83-84.  

There was in the early 1840's a need again for Nicollet's talents as a scientific explorer, but owing to ill health he was unable to respond and the job fell to his assistant and pupil, John C. Frémont.

The first demand for a scientific mapping of the Oregon Trail came from Senator Benton, who was Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee. Up to this time, only a few hundred Americans had crossed the Rocky Mountains, but Benton wished to see "thirty thousand American rifles" in Oregon, for use if the British pressed their claims there too far. Senator Benton had for more than twenty years, ever since the treaty of 1818 established a joint sovereignty of England and the United States over the Oregon country, been keenly interested in establishing Oregon as purely an American area.

Even though Benton strongly advocated the scientific mapping of the route to Oregon, his interest in the West was primarily political and only secondarily scientific. The Oregon question was now an important part of the American expansionist policy and was rapidly approaching a crisis with Great Britain. Senator Benton, as the

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12Senator Benton was a man of large and splendid physique, who wore his usual stiff top hat, satin vest, long blue cloak, pantaloons and low shoes with white stockings. He had piercing eyes which were set under a high, domelike forehead, and a large bony nose bent down over a small mouth. Darrell Garwood, Crossroads of America; The Story of Kansas City (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1948), 13-14.

leader of a small group of western congressmen, was resolved that the Oregon country up to the forty-ninth parallel must be a part of the United States. The promotion of a systematic occupation of the Willamette Valley of Oregon by American settlers was one of his prime interests. As early as 1825, he had fostered a bill to authorize the President to use the Army and Navy to protect American interests in Oregon. Benton's bill called for the establishment of a northwestern port which would serve the purposes of sheltering American naval, trading, and whaling vessels, the promotion of the fur trade, and the guarantee of a safe overland highway to the Pacific Coast. There were strong voices in opposition to this proposal. Senator Dickerson of New Jersey, for example, declared that "all the sea-otters we shall ever take upon the coast of Oregon Territory would not pay the expense of marching a single company across the Rocky Mountains." From this point of view, the chief value of the Far West of the United States could only be an Indian reserve. In the face of such extensive near-sightedness, Benton refused to curtail his westward visions.

By 1841 it was clear that Benton's persistence was taking effect. The expansionist element of the early forties was beginning to be heard and interest in the Oregon occupation was aroused throughout the Union. One of the political rallying cries in the presidential campaign of 1844 was "Fifty-forty or fight." Mission posts have been established in 1835-36 and were immediately followed by the inevitable

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11 Nevins, Fremont, 86.
pioneer. The combined political pressure by settlers in Oregon and expansionists at home forced the federal government to give its official sanction and encouragement to the Oregon immigration by appointing Dr. Elijah White to be Indian agent in that region. Frémont met this group in 1842 on the Oregon Trail at the beginning of his expedition.15

The Oregon Trail16 from the Missouri River to the Oregon Country through the South Pass of the Wind River Mountains did not need exploration in the strict sense of the word. The general route was fairly well known, due to its use by fur trappers and westward travelers. It was wise, however, for the continued encouragement of the Oregon migration to have the route scientifically mapped and to "examine the character of the Pass and ascertain its latitude and longitude with care, and to report upon the rivers, the fertility of the country, the best positions for forts, and the nature of the mountains which lie beyond the crest of the Rockies in Wyoming."17 Senator Benton, Senator Lewis Fields Linn, of Missouri, and the other westerners or "expansionists" discussed the desirability of such an expedition at great length. They wanted to do for the Oregon Trail what Nicollett had done for the Minnesota and Dakota territories. Those in Oregon would be reassured that the United States maintained an interest in

15 White set off for the northwest coast early that year, with a hundred and thirty persons and eighteen wagons while other parties, eager for free land in a mild climate, prepared to follow him. Frémont, Narratives, 93.

16See Appendix A, 117.

17Nevins, Frémont, 89.
their welfare and it would also increase eastern awareness of the Far West. Benton earnestly thought that America had two natural border frontiers and that both were made of water. He and Senator Linn, the leaders of the "expansionist senators," brought considerable pressure to bear upon the government for this study. 18

Benton also advocated the expansionist policy because he thought the west was the gateway to India. Years before, Benton had pointed out that the rivers and trails of the West offered the best possible route to the Orient. He found it to be safe, cheap, and exclusively American, in addition to being twenty thousand miles shorter than the traditional water route. His daughter stated that long before the words "Oregon occupation" and "India trade" became public catch-words, she was familiar with them at home. 19

Since Benton was Senator from Missouri, the future of western Missouri probably had some influence upon his thinking. The site of the future Kansas City appeared to be an excellent center for riverboats to transfer their cargoes into the wagons to be used in this

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18 Linn was a close friend of Benton's and an ardent believer in the expansion of the United States to the Pacific. While moderate in speech and actions, he was, nevertheless, intensely interested in Manifest Destiny. Fremont, Narratives, Editor's footnote 2, 85.

anticipated transcontinental trade and migration. 20

The "forceful council" of expansionists met "year after year" to carry on the planning for a "more energetic occupation" of Oregon. 21

In 1840, the expansionists found in Frémont the man to help their cause. By having a scientific and geographical survey of the West the Oregon occupation would be accelerated.

With the election of President Polk in 1844 the way was clear for a more forceful policy of westward expansion. Jessie Frémont Benton stated:

Then my father could say in that Senate where so long ago his voice had plead to dull ears for attention to our Pacific coast, "Now we own the country from sea to sea, -- from the Atlantic to the Pacific, -- and upon a breadth equal to the length of the Mississippi and embracing the whole temperate zone." From his own hearth had gone the one who carried his hopes to fullest execution and aided to make true his prophetic words, afterward cut into the pedestal of his statue in St. Louis, whose bronze hand points west——

THERE IS THE EAST,
THERE IS THE ROAD TO INDIA. 22

20 Boats from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, could cruise nine hundred and fifty miles down the Ohio River to the Mississippi. They could then switch up the Mississippi to St. Louis, and from there could proceed another two hundred and fifty miles westward by proceeding up the Missouri to the point of Kansas City. However, because the course up the Missouri turned northward here, there was no navigable river to carry the boats westward beyond the town of Kansas City. This geographical location made the town's site an ideal base to serve as a western terminal for frontier traffic.


22 Ibid., 770-771.
Planning The First Expedition to the Rocky Mountains

With the election of President William Henry Harrison in 1840, a new encouragement was given the "expansionist Senators." Harrison was a westerner and an army man and would, no doubt, have been in accord with a more aggressive immigration policy. Unfortunately, his untimely death brought to the presidency a southerner and conservative lawyer. President John Tyler was overly cautious to avoid any difficulties with England over the Oregon question. As a Southerner, he, no doubt, was opposed to an extension of settlements in northern lands. His secretary of war, John C. Spencer, was a rigid anti-expansionist, who later resigned his cabinet position, because of his "distaste for the acquisition of Texas."\(^{23}\)

Benton proceeded with plans for the proposed expedition. He and Senator Linn obtained a small appropriation, "which was not difficult for men of such parliamentary experience" but did need to proceed with extreme caution so as not to arouse the enmity of President Tyler or arouse "exciting opposition."\(^{24}\) Benton, with the backing of Poinsett and Nicollet, had to convince the War Department that Fremont was the man for the job. Since Fremont was a junior officer, the War Department hesitated to give him command of such an expedition.

\(^{23}\)Fremont, Narratives, 93.

\(^{24}\)Ibid.
Approval was finally received and Fremont was ready to leave for the West. His orders, in letter form, were received from Colonel J. J. Albert, Chief of the Corps of Topographical Engineers, on April 25, 1842. The orders stated:

You will report as soon as preclinical to Fort Leavenworth in order to make a survey of the Platte or Nebraska River, up to the head of the Sweet Water. Having been already employed on such duties, and being well acquainted with the kind of survey required, it is not necessary to enumerate the object to which your attention will be directed.

After having completed the survey of the Platte, should the season be favorable, you will make a similar survey of the Kansas. These duties being completed, you will return to this place in order to prepare the drawing and report.

You will submit without delay the requisite estimate for these duties.

Fremont left Washington on May 2, 1842, and arrived at St. Louis on May 22, 1842, going by way of New York, where he had purchased the necessary instruments. He proceeded by steamboat to Chouteau's Landing, which was near the mouth of the Kansas River and from there he traveled another twelve miles to Cyprian Chouteau's trading house where their final arrangements for the expedition were completed.


This was the first exploring expedition under John C. Frémont's charge, and the first U. S. Government expedition of the western country since Major Stephen H. Long's expedition in 1820. Frémont's objective was to explore and report upon the country between the frontiers of the Missouri and the South Pass in the Rocky Mountains, on the line of the Kansas and the Great Platte Rivers. Special attention was to be given to exploring the Rockies in the vicinity of the South Pass, which served as the principal route through the mountains for the migration from Missouri to California and the Oregon country. He wrote in his memoirs that the 1842 Expedition was intended to be auxiliary and an aid to the immigration of the lower Columbia. He also indicated that the expedition was to describe the "line of travel" and the best position for military posts, and to describe and fix in position the South Pass in the Rocky Mountains, "at which this initial expedition was to terminate."\(^1\)

At Chouteau's trading house, the Frémont expedition completed their final arrangements for the expedition. Instruments were tested and the first astronomical observations were taken. To provide the

astronomical positions and to make their observations, the expedition was provided with the necessary scientific instruments.²

Their starting position was on the right bank of the Kansas River, about ten miles above the river's mouth, and six miles beyond the western boundary of Missouri.³ The expedition left on June 10, after spending twenty days in outfitting the expedition's men and animals, and also in collecting the essentials for the nomadic life the group was to lead during the ensuing summer months. The party consisted of twenty-four men. It was made up, primarily, of men Fremont had obtained in and around the city of St. Louis. The majority of his men were Creole and Canadian voyageurs, who had become familiar with prairie and mountain life in the service of fur companies which operated in the Indian country. Mr. Charles Preuss,⁴ a native of Germany, was his assistant in the topographical part of

²See Appendix C, 121.

³Longitude 94°25' 46"; latitude 39°5' 51". Frémont recorded astronomical positions at campsites when the weather permitted. See Appendix C, 121.

⁴Born as John Brockman in Hamburg, Germany, in 1820; he came to this country about 1840, and under the name "Charles Preuss" (Preuss being his mother's name); was mustered into the United States service in 1842 as Topographical Engineer and assistant to Frémont. Unidentified and undated newspaper clipping in the Forsyth Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College.
the survey. Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell,\textsuperscript{5} of Kaskasia, Illinois, was engaged as a hunter, and Christopher Carson\textsuperscript{6} (more commonly known for his exploits as Kit Carson) was his guide. The other persons engaged for the expedition were Clement Lambert, J. B. L'Esperance, J. B. Lefevre, Benjamin Tessier, Benjamin Cadotte, Joseph Clement, Daniel Simonds, Leonard Benolt, Michel Morly, Baptiste Benier, Monroe Ayot, Francois Latulippe, Francois Badeau, Louis Menard, Joseph Kuelle, Noise Chardonnais, Auguste Janisse, and Raphael Froue.

In addition to these, Henry Brant, son of Colonel J. B. Grant, of St. Louis, a young man of nineteen years of age, and Randolph, a boy of twelve, son of Senator Benton, accompanied him "for the development of mind and body which such an expedition would give." Frémont's men were all well armed and mounted, with the exception of eight cart drivers. The carts they drove contained stores, baggage, instruments, and each were drawn by two mules. A few loose horses, and four oxen, which had been added to their stock of provisions, completed the expedition.

\textsuperscript{5}Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell (1813-1875) was of a Scottish-American father and a Franco-American mother. He was born at Kaskasia, Illinois. As a young man he traveled to Taos, where he met Kit Carson. Sometime around 1840 he worked at Fort St. Vrain on the South Platte. He gave excellent service to Fremont in his expeditions and also in the conquest of California. John Charles Frémont, Narratives of Exploration and Adventure, edited by Allan Nevins (New York: Longman's Green and Company, 1956), Editor's footnote 1, 128, hereinafter cited as Frémont, Narratives.

\textsuperscript{6}See Appendix B, 119.
train. Lieutenant Frémont owed his good fortune in procuring Carson's services to an accidental meeting on board the steamship from St. Louis to the upper Missouri. Carson had gone to "the states" to put his little daughter in a convent and to visit friends and acquaintances. He was returning to the frontier when he met Frémont.

Frémont had tried without success to obtain the services of one Captain Drips, who was an experienced mountaineer. Carson, in discussing the forthcoming expedition with Frémont, became interested in guiding the young lieutenant to the Wind River Mountains in the neighborhood of the South Pass of Wyoming. Carson told Frémont that he had spent considerable time in the mountains and on the plains and thought he could guide him "to any point he wished to go." Frémont, not quite fully impressed with Carson's background regarding his qualifications, investigated further and upon receiving satisfactory reports Carson was hired at a salary of one hundred dollars per month. Frémont, writing of their first meeting forty-five years later states that:

I was pleased with him and his manner of address at this first meeting. He was a man of medium height, broad shouldered and deep chested, with clear, steady, blue eyes and frank speech and address; quiet and unassuming.  


9Frémont, Memoirs, 74.
Both men had a keen enthusiasm for their assignment and talked almost continuously about the forthcoming survey. Carson spoke with mild confidence and "measured deliberation" about the "platte Country," the South Pass, and the areas of which Fremont inquired.

Mr. Cypran Chouteau accompanied the expedition for the first few miles. Before leaving Chouteau's post, Carson had sent two Delaware Indians, acting as runners, down the Santa Fe Trail to Taos with instructions for about fifteen of his own men to meet the expedition with equipment at Fort Laramie (Wyoming). The expedition proceeded west on the south side of the Kansas River from the belt of woods which borders the river past "several good-looking Indian farms" and on to the open prairie. After traveling ten miles the force reached the Santa Fe Road, along which they continued for eleven more miles; they encamped beside a small stream. 10

Security measures were established immediately and were typical of Frémont's procedures through five expeditions. It was the customary practice, "like all emigrant trains, freight caravans, and trapping bands," to encamp an hour or two before sunset, to "give them constant

protection against surprise attack." A good camping spot was often chosen before it became too dark. By sunset the camp would have the carts placed around a circle some eighty yards in diameter. Allan Nevins has graphically described life in a Fremont camp:

Within this effective barricade the tents were pitched, with a merry din of stake driving; saddles, blankets, and eating utensils were thrown down; four fires were kindled and kettles slung for as many different messes; and a homelike scene soon presented itself. Meanwhile, the horses and mules had been hobbled and turned loose, under a guard, to graze. While it was yet broad daylight, men ate supper, and the fires were let die down so that they would throw no dangerous illumination over the camp. When darkness fell, the animals were driven close to the wagons and picketed by a twenty or thirty-foot halter, which permitted them to get a little grass. Camp guard was mounted at eight, and the three sentries were relieved every two hours, the last or morning watch constituting the horse guard for the day.

By nine o'clock, the tired men were usually wrapped in slumber; by half past four, they were aroused. The horses and mules were again turned loose with hobbles, breakfast was eaten, and by six-thirty they were on the march again. At noon, they would halt for one, or sometimes two, hours, more to rest the animals than the men. Such was the regular daily procedure, disturbed only by accident or unexpected physical obstacles. A stormy night was at first their chief hardships, for it meant sleeping in muddy puddles. Twenty-eight miles over the open prairie seems to have been regarded as a hard day's march, and twenty-four miles was more usual.

The provisions of the camp were substantial and not altogether Spartanly simple. The men did not set out without sugar, and great were the lamentations of one of the messes when, in crossing the swollen Kansas at the usual ford, it lost its sweets in the muddy water. Greater still was the regret of the whole expedition when, at the same crossing, almost all its coffee disappeared under the swirling current. They purchased some twenty rounds from a half-breed, but this did not go far. Later, they fell back upon a kind of tea made from the roots of the wild cherry. On the early stages of their march, they were able to buy from the Indians vegetables - pumpkins, onions, beans, and lettuce. Later, when they came up with the far-spreading herds of buffalo, the men were jubilant over the supply of tender meat. Shouts and songs resounded
from every part of the line, and the evening camp fires signaled the beginnings of a feast which ended only with the break-up of the encampment the following morning; at any time of the night, men might be seen roasting the choicest bits - the hump, the tenderloin, the tongue, the sirloin steaks - en appolas (that is, on sticks) over the fire. There was never any scarcity of tobacco, and at first there was enough bread, but later it became a coveted luxury. Of course the garb of the men, as the journey lengthened, grew steadily more ragged and outlandish. A dozen days out, they met a party of trappers coming from a long sojourn in the interior; 'we laughed then at their forlorn and vagabond appearance,' says Frémont, 'and in our turn, a month or two afterward, furnished the same occasion for merriment to others.'

Frémont himself was busy from morning to midnight. He maintained discipline with an iron hand under a glove of unvarying tact. He occupied himself every evening and noon, when the weather permitted, in taking astronomical observations. He carefully observed the botanical and geological features of the country, and kept a daily journal of great detail. The map of the expedition was kept complete from day to day, and Preuss was assigned the task of sketching any scene or position of unusual importance. At various halts, the men were trained in firing at a mark and in repelling attacks.11

The next day the expedition traveled west, crossing present day Johnson and Douglas Counties, along the Santa Fe Road, which they left in the afternoon, and encamped late in the evening on a small creek the Indians called Mishmagwi.12

11 Nevins, Frémont, 107-110.

12 Probably one of the small creeks in Douglas County which flows into the Kansas River from the south. It is the belief of some historians that Frémont's first camp, after leaving Chouteau's trading house, was about where the town of Gardner (Johnson County) now stands. William E. Smith, "The Oregon Trail through Pottawatomie County," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, edited by William Elsey Connelley, (Topeka: State Printing Office), XVIII (1926-1928), 439, hereinafter cited as Smith, "The Oregon Trail through Pottawatomie County."
FRÉMONT IN KANSAS, 1842 AND 1843-1844
(AFTER A MAP BY FREMONT, U.S. ARMY)

Source: Captain J. C. Fremont, Map of An Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the Years, 1843-1844 (Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845).
TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP
OF THE
ROAD FROM MISSOURI TO OREGON
COMMENCING AT THE MOUTH OF THE KANSAS IN THE MISSOURI RIVER

In VII Sections

SECTION I

From the field notes and journal of Capt. J.C.Fremont, and from sketches and notes made on the ground by his assistant Charles Preuss, and from sketches and notes made on the ground by his assistant Charles Preuss.

Compiled by Charles Preuss, 1846

By order of the Senate of the United States

There, as Frémont wrote:

Just as we arrived at camp, one of the horses set off at full speed on his return, and was followed by others. Several men were sent in pursuit, and returned with the fugitives about midnight, with the exception of one man, who did not make his appearance until morning. He had lost his way in the darkness of the night, and slept on the prairie. Shortly after midnight it began to rain heavily, and, as our tents were of light and thin cloth, they offered but little obstruction to rain; we were all well soaked, and glad when morning came. We had a rainy march on the 12th, but the weather grew fine as the day advanced. We encamped in a remarkably beautiful situation on the Kansas bluffs, which commanded a fine view of the river valley, here from three to four miles wide. The central portion was occupied by a broad belt of heavy timber, and nearer the hills the prairies were of the richest verdure. One of the oxen was killed here for food. 13

Present day Shawnee County was crossed to a point a little west of Topeka. There they reached the ford of the Kansas River late in the afternoon of the fourteenth, "where the river was two hundred thirty yards wide." Frémont reported:

I had expected to find the river fordable; but it had been swollen by the late rains, and was sweeping by with an angry current, yellow and turbid as the Missouri. Up to this point, the road we had travelled was a remarkably fine one, well beaten, and level—the usual road of a prairie country. By our route, the ford was one hundred miles from the mouth of the Kansas river. Several mounted men led the way into the stream, to swim across. The animals were driven in after them, and in a few minutes all had reached the opposite bank in safety, with the exception of the oxen, which swam some distance down the river, and, returning to right bank, were not got over until the next morning. In the mean time, the carts had been unloaded and dismantled, and an India-

rubber boat, which I had brought with me for the survey of the Platte river, placed in the water. The boat was twenty feet long and five broad, and on it were placed the body and wheels of a cart, with the load belonging to it, and three men with paddles. The velocity of the current, and the inconvenient freight, rendering it difficult to be managed, Basil Lajeuennesse, one of our best swimmers, took in his teeth a line attached to the boat, and swam ahead in order to reach a footing as soon as possible, and assist in drawing her over. In this manner, six passages had been successfully made, and as many carts with their contents, and a greater portion of the party, deposited on the left bank; but night was drawing near, and, in our anxiety to have all over before the darkness closed in, I put upon the boat the remaining two carts, with their accompanying load. The man at the helm was timid on water, and, in his alarm, capsized the boat. Carts, barrels, boxes, and bales, were in a moment floating down the current; but all the men who were on shore jumped into the water, without stopping to think if they could swim, and almost everything—even heavy articles, such as guns and lead—was recovered.14

Two of the men, who could not swim, came near drowning. The expedition remained in camp on the north side of the Kansas river until June 16. Both Carson and Maxwell had taken ill from the experience of spending a considerable time in the water and was one reason for the two day rest. The second day of this period a group of Kansas Indians visited the camp, one of whom spoke French to the party, who were almost all of French origin.

Trémont continued his narrative:

On all sides was heard the strange language of his own people, wild, and harmonizing well with their appearance. I listened to him for some time with feelings of strange curiosity and interest. He was now apparently thirty-five years of age; and, on inquiry, I learned that he had been at St. Louis when a boy, and there had

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14 Ibid., 11.
learned the French language. From one of the Indian women I obtained a fine cow and calf in exchange for a yoke of oxen. Several of them brought us vegetables, pumpkins, onions, beans, and lettuce. One of them brought butter, and from a half-breed near the river I had the good fortune to obtain some twenty or thirty pounds of coffee. The dense timber in which we had encamped interfered with astronomical observations, and our wet and damaged stores required exposure to the sun. Accordingly, the tents were struck early the next morning, and, leaving camp at six o'clock, we moved about seven miles up the river, to a handsome, open prairie, some twenty feet above the water, where the fine grass afforded a luxurious repast to our horses.

During the day we occupied ourselves in making astronomical observations, in order to lay down the country to this place; it being our custom to keep up our map regularly in the field, which we found attended with many advantages. The men were kept busy in drying the provisions, painting the cart covers, and otherwise completing our equipage, until the afternoon, when powder was distributed to them, and they spent some hours in firing at a mark. We were now fairly in the Indian country, and it began to be time to prepare for the chances of the wilderness.

Friday, June 17.—The weather yesterday had not permitted us to make the observations I was desirous to obtain here, and I therefore did not move to-day. The people continued their target firing. In the steep bank of the river here, were nests of innumerable swallows, into one of which a large prairie snake had got about half his body, and was occupied in eating the young birds. The old ones were flying about in a great distress, darting at him, and vainly endeavoring to drive him off. A shot wounded him, and being killed, he was cut open, and eighteen young swallows were found in his body. A sudden storm, that burst upon us in the afternoon, cleared away in a brilliant sunset, followed by a clear night, which enabled us to determine our position in longitude 95° 38' 05", and in latitude 39° 06' 40".

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15Fremont stated in his report that possibly the "heaviest loss" in the crossing of the Kansas River ford was a bag of coffee.

16Between Indian Creek and Little Muddy Creek in Shawnee County, slightly northeast of Topeka.

17See Appendix C for astronomical observation readings, 121.

18Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 12.
It was at this point along the Oregon Trail that Frémont met Dr. Elijah White, and his party of emigrants bound for the Columbia River.

The expedition again resumed their march on a very unpleasant June 18. Frémont continues his report as follows:

A fine rain was falling, with cold wind from the north, and mists made the river hills look dark and gloomy. We left our camp at seven, journeying along the foot of the hills which border the Kansas valley, generally about three miles wide, and extremely rich. We halted for dinner, after a march of about thirteen miles, on the banks of one of the many little tributaries to the Kansas, which look like trenches in the prairie, and are usually well timbered. After crossing this stream,19 I rode off some miles to the left, attracted by the appearance of a cluster of huts near the mouth of the Vermillion. It was a large but deserted Kansas village,20 scattered in an open wood, along the margin of the stream, on a spot chosen with the customary Indian fondness for beauty of scenery. The Pawnees had attacked it in the early spring. Some of the houses were burnt, and others blackened with smoke, and weeds were already getting possession of the cleared places. Riding up the Vermillion River, I reached the ford21 in time to meet the carts, and crossing, encamped on its western side. The weather continued cool, the thermometer being this evening as low as 49 degrees; but the night was sufficiently clear for astronomical observations, which placed us in longitude 96° 04' 07", and latitude 39° 15' 19".22 At sunset the barometer was at 28.845, thermometer 64 degrees.

We breakfasted the next morning at half past five, and left our encampment early. The morning was cool, the thermometer being at 45 degrees. Quitting the river bottom, the road ran along the uplands, over a rolling country, generally in view of the Kansas, from eight to twelve miles distant. Many large boulders, of a very compact sandstone, of various shades of red, some of them four or

19Big Soldier Creek, Shawnee County.
20The Indian village referred to is located on the east side of the Vermillion river one mile north of U. S. Highway 40 in Pottawatomie County. Smith, "The Oregon Trail Through Pottawatomie County," 440.
21Louis Vieux ford.
22Just north of the present town of St. Mary, Pottawatomie County.
five tons in weight, were scattered along the hills; and many beautiful plants in flower, among which the _amorpha canescens_ (lead plant) was a characteristic, enlivened the green of the prairie. At the heads of the ravines I remarked, occasionally, thickets of _salix longifolia_, the most common willow of the country. We traveled nineteen miles, and pitched our tents at evening on the head waters of a small creek, now nearly dry, but having in its bed several fine springs. The barometer indicated a considerable rise in the country—here about fourteen hundred feet above the sea—and the increased elevation appeared already to have some slight influence upon the vegetation. The night was cold, with a heavy dew; the thermometer at 10 p.m. standing at 46°, barometer 28.483. Our position was in longitude 96° 11' 49'', and latitude 39° 30' 40''.

Their position was now in the northwest part of Pottawatomie County near Dutch Creek. With the astronomical observations for their campsite the Big Vermillion River would have been crossed several miles earlier in the march. If Fremont's astronomical observations are correct he did not follow the Oregon Trail from his St. Marys township campsite. The Trail passes the present city of Westmoreland in a northwesterly direction. His journal seems to bear this out.24

On the morning of the twentieth they continued the march. Frémont related:

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24 One historian thought his June 19 campsite was near Spring Creek, in Spring Creek township, Pottawatomie County, which would have been along the logical route if the expedition followed the Oregon Trail continuously.
The morning of the 20th was fine, with a southerly breeze and a bright sky; and at 7 o'clock we were on the march. The country today was rather more broken, rising still, and covered every where with fragments of siliceous limestone, particularly on the summits, where they were small, and thickly strewn as pebbles on the shore of the sea. In these exposed situations grew but few plants; though, whenever the soil was good and protected from the winds, in the creek bottoms and ravines, and on the slopes, they flourished abundantly; among them the amorpha, still retaining its characteristic place. We crossed, at 10 a.m., the Big Vermillion,\textsuperscript{25} which has a rich bottom of about one mile in breadth, one-third of which is occupied by timber. Making our usual halt at noon, after a day's march of twenty-four miles, we reached the Big Blue, and encamped on the uplands of the western side, near a small creek, where there was a fine large spring of very cold water. This is a clear and handsome stream, about one hundred and twenty feet wide, running, with a rapid current, through a well-timbered valley. To-day a telope were seen running over the hills, and at evening Carson brought us a fine deer. Longitude of the camp 96° 32' 35", latitude 39° 45' 08". Thermometer at sunset 75°.\textsuperscript{26}

The above paragraph from his journal seems to bear out the exactness of his latitude and longitude reading of June 19. By travelling northwesterly from present day Dutch Creek they would have crossed topography such as Frémont mentioned. The Black Vermillion closely fits the description Frémont gives, as well as the timing of the march. By travelling from Dutch Creek across the Black Vermillion, to the Big Blue River, the expedition would have covered almost exactly twenty-four miles which is mentioned in the report.

It is almost certain the small creek Frémont refers to is the Walnut Creek (Marshall County) which flows into the Little Blue River.

\textsuperscript{25}Black Vermillion.

The "clear and handsome stream, about one hundred and twenty feet wide" in the Little Blue River. 27

The next morning the expedition continued the march.

A pleasant southerly breeze and fine morning had given place to a gale, with indications of bad weather; when, after a march of ten miles, we halted to noon on a small creek, 28 where the water stood in deep pools. In the bank of the creek limestone made its appearance in a stratum about one foot thick. In the afternoon, the people seemed to suffer for want of water. The road led along a high dry ridge; dark lines of timber indicated the heads of streams in the plains below; but there was no water near, and the day was very oppressive, with a hot wind, and the thermometer at 90°. Along our route the amorphha has been in very abundant but variable bloom—in some places bending beneath the weight of purple clusters; in others without a flower. It seems to love best the sunny slopes, with a dark soil and southern exposure. Every where the rose is met with, and reminds us of cultivated gardens and civilization. It is scattered over the prairies in small bouquets, and, when glittering in the dews and waving in the pleasant breeze of the early morning, is the most beautiful of the prairie flowers. The artemisia, absinthe (wormwood), or prairie sage [Artemisia filifolia], as it is variously called, is increasing in size, and glitters like silver as the southern breeze turns up its leaves to the sun. All these plants have their insect inhabitants, variously colored; taking generally the hue of the flower on which they live. The artemisia has its small fly accompanying it through every change of elevation and latitude; and wherever I have seen the asclepias tuberosa (butterfly milkweed), I have always remarked, too, on the flower a large butterfly, so nearly resembling it in color as to be distinguishable at a little distance only by the motion of its wing. Travelling on the fresh traces of the Oregon emigrants relieves a little the loneliness of the road; and to-night, after a march of twenty-two miles, we halted on a small creek, which had been one of their encampments. 29

27 If this situation is correct the longitude reading of Fremont's astronomical observation of June 20 appears to be incorrect by twelve minutes.

28 Raemer or Mountain Creek, Marshall County

29 Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 14.
The expedition passed the fortieth parallel on June 22, 1842, from what is now Washington County, Kansas into the present State of Nebraska. This fortieth parallel was crossed a few miles to the east of the Little Blue River in a northwesterly direction toward the Platte River.

The "Great Platte" was followed to its source in the mountains, with the same type of observations and recordings being made as previously done along the Kansas River. In the mountains they followed the Sweetwater River (a head branch of the Platte) to the area of the South Pass. The Sweetwater was reached on August 1, and the Pass on August 6. They went through the Pass,\(^3^0\) and explored the head waters\(^3^1\) of the Colorado River, which flows to the Gulf of California. He remained in the mountains making many scientific observations until August 19. The Wind River Mountains (Wyoming) were of great interest, especially the peak we now know as Frémont's Peak.\(^3^2\) Frémont and four of his men climbed this peak on August 15, thinking it was the highest point in the Rockies.\(^3^3\)

To hasten their return the expedition decided to make as much use of the rivers and streams as possible. They followed the Sweetwater

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\(^{3^0}\) Frémont found the Pass a wide and low depression in the mountains with a slow and regular grade rather than a steep gorge as he had expected. *Ibid.*, 60.

\(^{3^1}\) Mainly the Green River.

\(^{3^2}\) 13,730 feet high, although not considered dangerous to the climber. Nevins, *Frémont*, 112.

and arrived at the north fork of the Platte on August 23. The party followed the Platte for the entire course of the river. From there they recrossed the fortieth parallel on October 7, 1842, by way of the Missouri River.

All equipage belonging to the expedition, including horses, carts, and the material of the camp had been sold at public auction at Bellevue (Nebraska). The expedition then followed the Missouri River by boat. Early on the morning of August 10, the expedition halted at the mouth of the Kansas River, exactly four months after leaving Chouteau's trading post. They remained at Chouteau's long enough to make some astronomical observations and also to survey and make some sketches of the Missouri River. These survey and sketching operations were continued on the boat to St. Louis. There the expedition broke up and the remaining effects sold. Fremont left St. Louis on the 18, and arrived in Washington D.C., on October 29. 

The first expedition under Frémont's charge was completed. He spent the winter preparing his report to Colonel J. J. Albert

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concerning the expedition. Charles Preuss was assigned the responsibility of doing the maps, and John Torrey, a distinguished botanist, was to catalog and give scientific descriptions of the plants, which were collected during the journey.

It was a difficult task for Frémont to write the report, since he was not a particularly fluent writer, by his own admission. Frémont dictated from his notes and his wife acted as secretary and amanuensis. The report was completed and in the office of the War Department the Spring of 1843. It was called for by the Senate, and then reported by Senator Linn, with a motion that extra copies of the report be printed.

The strong support the printing of the report received was due in part to the "expansionists" urging a more aggressive Oregon occupation policy. Frémont stated in his Memoirs that the printing of his report "was the first act done with the apparent support of the Government in aid to the Oregon immigration."

35 Frémont, Memoirs, 163.

36 Mrs. Frémont stated that while helping her husband she fully realized the national importance and large scope of his journey—"a knowledge as yet strickly confined to the few carrying out their aim" of American expansion. J. B. Frémont, "Origin of the Frémont Explorations," 768.

37 Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont, 65-66.

38 Frémont, Memoirs, 164.
President John Tyler was in favor of delaying the Oregon occupation, while the western congressmen thought this was playing directly into the hands of Great Britain. The President went as far as to suggest a division line be established in the Oregon Country along the north bank of the Columbia, which would have given up most of what is presently the state of Washington. Senators Benton and Linn headed the opposition to the President by asking that Frémont's report be published and extra copies printed; and introduced a bill providing that the President should erect a series of forts along the Columbia; and that every adult settler should be given 640 acres of Oregon land, with an additional quarter section for his wife and every child; and that an administration of justice be set up in the Oregon country, leaving British offenders to British jurisdiction. 39

The report contained not only the journal of their trip, but also sketches of the topographical features, astronomical observations and their explanation, 40 geological and botanical catalogues, 41 as well as meteorological observations. 42

39 The bill passed the Senate but was stifled in the House. Nevins, Frémont, 136-137. Frémont, Memoirs, 164-165.

40 See Appendix C, 121.

41 See Appendix D, 123.

42 See Appendix E, 131.
The results of Frémont's first expedition were extraordinary. The American people were fascinated with his exploits and enjoyed reading of the West. His fame was also to receive world wide attention. The London Athenaeum gave the following review of the report, which is quoted to show the impression it produced in the literary circles of the old world:

The government of the United States did well when in furtherance of the resolution to survey the road across the Great Western Prairie and the Rocky Mountains to the Oregon territory, it selected Lieut. Frémont for the execution of the work. We have rarely met with a production so perfect in its kind as the unpretending pamphlet containing this report. The narrative, clear, full and lively, occupies only 76 pages, to which are appended 130 pages, filled with the results of botanical researches, of astronomical and meteorological observations. What a contrast does this present to the voluminous emptiness and conceited rhodomontade so often brought forth by our costly expenditure. The country gone over by Lieut. Frémont is certainly not the most interesting in the world, nor is it quite new. Yet he is evidently not the man to travel 2,000 miles without observing much which is worthy of being recorded or to write a page which is likely to prove tedious in the reading. His points of view are so well chosen, his delineation has so much truth and spirit, and his general remarks are so accurate and comprehensive, that under his guidance we find the far west prairies nearly as fresh and tempting as the most favored Arcadian scenes, the hallowed groves of which were never trodden by the foot of squatting emigrant or fur trader.  

The most important results of Frémont's first expedition were the stimulation of the westward migration, the arousing of an increased interest in the West, and the establishment of scientific facts for the further study of the western frontier.

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47 Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont, 67-68. Frémont, Memoirs, 165.
Nevins found that the report had as its most important single lesson the demonstration that the plains between the Missouri and the foothills of the Rockies were not arid but fertile - "that the Great American Desert had no existence in this region." Frémont was pleased with the beauty of the prairies - "the sunflowers which yellowed the Kansas prairies, and the carpets of smaller flowers in the river bottoms farther west." He saw abundant grazing lands for live stock in a country "highly attractive in its alternations of woodland and prairie...."  

There had been no official report of the trans-Missouri since Major Long's army expedition, and Long's observations had been as mentioned earlier, "superficial and unfavorable." Long reported "I do not hesitate in giving the opinion, that it is almost wholly unfit for civilization, and of course uninhabitable by a people depending on agriculture for subsistence." The area of which Long spoke are now the great agricultural states of Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma. "Frémont's report was the first sharp sword thrust at the popular delusion that an American Sahara lay in regions which are now the very granary of the United States."  

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44 Frémont, Memoirs, 173.
46 Nevins, Frémont, 131, 135-137.
Colonel Albert wrote Frémont the following congratulatory letter on April 26, 1843:

It appears to me to be more than a just tribute to your exertions that I should pay my great personal as well as official satisfaction with your report which has now been printed, reflecting credit alike upon your good taste as well as intelligence. It is by efforts like these that officers elevate their own particular branch of service. Perseverance in the course you have commenced cannot fail to lead to distinction and to impute you with the gratifying reflection that while your labors being credit to yourself they also diffuse it to others.47

With widespread enthusiasm for the Frémont report, it was not difficult for those interested in American expansion to Oregon and California to arrange for a second expedition this time stretching to the farthest extreme of the Oregon Trail, almost immediately after the publication of the report.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND EXPEDITION, 1843-1844

The first expedition had been financed by a grant of thirty thousand dollars. On March 23, 1843, Congress appropriated $10,500, plus the amount secured through the sale of equipment from the first exposition, for the second exploration.1

The Topographical Bureau's "Sketch of Duties" for Lieutenant John C. Frémont's second expedition as per Colonel J. J. Albert's instructions (March 10, 1843) indicated he should:

proceed to the main forks of the Kansas River, determine their position and thence survey the main stream to its head. From the head of the Kansas to fall directly on to the Arkansas and survey it to its head crossing the mountains by that prong which forms the boundary between the United States and Mexico, continuing along the western base of the mountains and crossing the heads of all the streams which take their rise in that portion of the mountains, join on to your positions of 1842 on the Colorado of the Gulf of California. Thence continuing northwesterly across the waters of the Columbia, turn westwardly across the waters of the Columbia, turn westwardly into the Flat-head Country and join on to Lt. Wilke's survey. From that point to return by the Oregon road, and on again reaching the mountains diverge a little and make a circuit of the Wind River chain, which is about eighty miles long. This circuit would embrace within its limits the heads of the Colorado, the Columbia, some of the heads of the Missouri proper, the Yellowstone, and the Platte.2


The second expedition was to start in the spring of 1843, and was to be an extension of the first. Both expeditions were to connect with the surveys of Commander Charles Wilkes\(^3\) on the Pacific coast, so as to give a connected survey of the interior of the continent.

The expedition had not only been planned by Albert, Frémont's immediate commander, but also by Senators Thomas Benton and Lewis Fields Linn. Colonel Albert was interested in the expeditions only as geographical surveys to determine lines of travel, while Benton and Linn looked to the second expedition as a project to give fresh impetus to the Oregon emigration, which had already been swelled by Frémont's recent report and the publicity Oregon received.

Frémont left Washington, with his wife, in the spring of 1843, and proceeded to St. Louis, where the second expedition was partially equipped. Mrs. Frémont remained and her husband proceeded to the frontier. He arrived on May 17 at what is now present day Kansas City to gather animals and additional men. His group again consisted principally of American Creoles and French Canadians, amounting in all to forty-one men; six among whom had been with him during his first expedition. Frémont describes the make-up of his party:

Mr. Thomas Fitzpatrick,\(^4\) whom many years of hardship and exposure in the western territories had rendered familiar with a portion

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\(^3\)Charles Wilkes, like Frémont, had studied under Ferdinand Hassler. From 1838-42 he headed a navy exploring expedition which, among other things, surveyed the northwestern coast of the United States, Frémont, Narratives, Editor's footnote 2, 254.

\(^4\)Called the "Bad Hand". He was one of the most experienced trappers and hunters of the Rocky Mountains region. Frémont, Narratives, 187.
of the country it was designed to explore, had been selected as our guide; and Mr. Charles Preuss, who had been my assistant in the previous journey, was again associated with me in the same capacity on the present expedition. Mr. Theodore Talbot, of Washington City, had been attached to the party, with a view to advancement in his profession; and at St. Louis I had been joined by Mr. Frederick Dwight, a gentleman of Springfield, Massachusetts, who availed himself of our overland journey to visit the Sandwich Islands and China, by way of Fort Vancouver.

The men engaged for the service were:

Alexis Ayot, Louis Menard,
Francois Badeau, Louis Montreuil,
Oliver Beaulieu, Sameul Neal,
Baptiste Bernier, Alexis Pera,
John A. Campbell, Francois Pera,
John G. Campbell, James Power,
Manuel Chapman, Raphael Proue,
Ransom Clark, Oscar Sarpy,
Philbert Courteau, Baptiste Tabeau,
Michel Crelis, Charles Taplin,
William Creuss, Baptiste Tesson,
Clinton Deforest, Auguste Vasquez,
Baptiste DeRosier, Joseph Verrot,
Basil Lajeunesse, Patrick White,
Francois Lajeunesse, Tiery Wright,
Henry Lee, Louis Zindel, and

Jacob Dodson, a free young colored man of Washington City, who volunteered to accompany the expedition, and performed his duty manfully throughout the voyage. Two Delaware Indians—a fine-looking old man and his son—were engaged to accompany the expedition as hunters, through the kindness of Major Cummins, the excellent Indian agent. L. Maxwell, who had accompanied the expedition as one of the hunters in 1842, being on his way to Taos, in New Mexico, also joined us at this place.

Three men were especially detailed for the management of this piece, under the charge of Louis Zindel, a native of Germany, who had been 18 years a noncommissioned officer of artillery in the Russian army, and regularly instructed in the duties of his profession. The camp equipage and provisions were transported in twelve carts, drawn each by two mules; and a light covered wagon, mounted on good springs, had been provided for the safer carriage of the instruments.  

5 Captain J. C. Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842 and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843-45 (Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845), 105-106, hereinafter cited as Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains. In general the scientific equipment was similar to that of the first expedition.
The members of the expedition were individually armed with carbines, which, with a twelve pound brass howitzer, had been checked out to Frémont from the U. S. arsenal at St. Louis, "agreeably to the orders of Colonel S. W. Kearney," commander of the Third Division. The howitzer was to cause Frémont some difficulty with his immediate superior, Colonel Albert. When Albert heard of the requisition of a howitzer he immediately sent a letter to Frémont in St. Louis, with a duplicate copy to Fort Leavenworth. The letter stated:

From the reports which have reached the Bureau in reference to the arrangements which you are making for the expedition to the Rocky Mountains, I fear that the discretion and thought which marked your first expedition will be found much wanting in the second.

The limit placed upon your expenditures by the orders of this office sufficiently indicates the kind of expedition which the Department was willing to authorize. But if the reports be true you will much exceed this amount, the consequences of which to involve yourself in the most serious difficulty.

I hear also that among other things, you have been calling upon the Ordinance Department for a howitzer. Now Sir what authority had you to make any such requisition, and of what use can such a piece be in the execution of your duties. Where is your right to increase your party in the numbers and expense, which the management and preservation of such a piece require. If the condition of the Indians in the mountains is such as to require your party to be so warlike in its equipment it is clear that the only objects of your expedition geographical information cannot be obtained.

6Kearney later was to play a significant role in Frémont's life. "Stephen Watts Kearney (1794-1848) was a brave, devoted, and skillful frontier officer. He had gone from Columbia College to fight in the War of 1812, had remained in the army, and in 1819 had been sent to Camp Missouri, north of present day Omaha. Thereafter he served at a number of western posts including the Third Military Department, with head quarters in St. Louis. "His energy and ability were great, but he was an excessively strict disciplinarian, harsh and domineering of temper." J. C. Frémont, Narratives, 254.
The object of the Department was a peaceable expedition, similar to the one of last year, an expedition to gather scientific knowledge. If there is reason to believe that the condition of the country will not admit of the safe management of such an expedition, and of course will not admit the only object, for the accomplishment of which the expedition was planned, you will immediately assist in its further projection and report to this office.7

Mrs. Fremont opened the letter upon receipt in St. Louis, and instead of forwarding it to his camp on the Kansas, sent a message with Basil Lajeunessse, who was on his way to join the expedition, that "she could not explain why but the expedition must start at once, ready or not ready."8 She thought there was "a hidden hand at work" in Albert's order recalling Fremont to Washington and saw how such an order might cause delays and "overthrow great plans." After receiving a reply from her husband, she wrote Albert that a delay would have broken up the expedition and added:

I had not sent forward the order because it was given on insufficient knowledge, and to obey it would break up the expedition; that the journeys to and from Washington, with indefinite delays there, would lose to the animals the best season for grass and throw them, under-fed, into the mountains in winter; that the country of the Blackfeet and other fierce tribes had to be crossed, and that Indians knew nothing of the rights of science, but fought all whites; that these tribes were in number and the party not fifty men; therefore the howitzer was necessary; that as I knew a military order must be obeyed, I had not let it be known to any one, but had hurried off the party.9

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8Jessie Benton Fremont, "The Origin of the Fremont Explorations," Century Magazine, XLI, No. 5 (March, 1891), 768, hereinafter cited as J. B. Fremont, "The Origin of the Fremont Explorations."

9Ibid., 769.
The letter from Mrs. Fremont relieved the fears of Albert, but it took considerable effort by Senator Benton to handle the situation in Washington. The Secretary of War disapproved of the act until after hearing from Senator Benton that he would be responsible for Fremont's wisdom in "arming sufficiently." 10

The expedition left the mouth of the Kansas River on May 29, 1843, immediately after receiving Mrs. Fremont's letter though it allowed only twelve days for final preparations. They proceeded westward along the river but four miles, due to cool weather and incessant rain. There was a day's delay at this point while a small party was sent back to the mouth of the Kansas to obtain additional needs for their nomadic life ahead. The direction of the expedition was almost the same as they had taken in 1842, though more through the center of present day Kansas and Colorado. The purpose of this more southerly route was to find a new road to Oregon and California in a milder climate. 11

10 Ibid.

The second day's march terminated at Elm Grove where they were joined by several wagons headed for California. The next day they met many other emigrant wagons as they moved westward along the Santa Fe Trail. Trains of wagons were almost constantly in sight; giving to the road a populous and animated appearance. There could be little doubt in Fremont's mind that he was playing an important role in the increasing western migration.

The party continued to follow the Oregon Trail, as they had done in 1842, until reaching the ford of the Kansas River, immediately east of Topeka. There they departed from the trail, and traveled westward along the southern bank of the Kansas, where their progress slowed due to the numerous stream crossings. On the morning of the fourth, they crossed Otter Creek, which was at that particular time, one hundred and thirty feet wide. At this location they met a small party of Kansas and Delaware Indians, who had returned from a hunting and trapping expedition on the upper Kansas. On the afternoon of the sixth more Indians were encountered. An Osage Indian war party, "with gay red blankets, and heads shaved to the scalp lock," raided their camp and drove off a number of their horses; but Fremont in a determined pursuit of seven miles, succeeded in recovering the animals. The raid was an experience the party was not soon to forget.

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12 Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 106.

13 Most likely Mill Creek in northern Wabaunsee County.
Frémont maintained the accident which occasioned delay and trouble, and threatened danger and loss, and broke down some good horses at the start, and actually endangered the expedition, was a first fruit of having gentlemen in company—very estimable, to be sure, but who are not trained to the care and vigilance and self-dependence which such an expedition required, and who are not subject to the orders which enforce attention and exertion.14

Early on the eighth the mouth of the Smoky Hill River15 was reached. They were situated in what is now Davis County close to present day Fort Riley, where the Smoky Hill joins with the Republican River, or northern branch, to form the Kansas river. The expedition was unable to ford the river at this point and was forced to construct a raft for the crossing. Along with inclement weather, this delayed them for three days.

On June 11 their march was continued in a northwest direction along the left bank of the Republican fork, which they continued to travel for several days.16 Frémont reported it was "country beautifully watered with numerous streams, handsomely timbered."

Rarely an incident occurred to vary the monotonous resemblance which one day on the prairies here bears to another, and which scarcely require a particular description. Now and then, we


15Principal southern branch of the Kansas. Frémont's astronomical reading for their camp is latitude thirty-nine degrees, eight minutes, twenty-four seconds; longitude ninety-six degrees, six minutes, and two seconds. This reading is incorrect since it would have placed them twenty miles east of the junction of the two rivers.

16Through Geary, Clay, and Cloud counties.
caught a glimpse of a small herd of elk; and occasionally a band of antelopes, whose curiosity sometimes brought them within rifle range, would circle round us, and then scurry off into the prairies. As we advanced on our road, these became more frequent; but as we journeyed on the line usually followed by the trapping and hunting parties of the Kansas and Delaware Indians game of every kind continued very shy and wild. The bottoms which form the immediate valley of the main river were generally about three miles wide; having a rich soil of black vegetable mould, and, for a prairie country, well interspersed with wood. The country was everywhere covered with a considerable variety of grasses--occasionally poor and thin, but far more frequently luxuriant and rich.17

A small creek in the valley of the Republican was their camp-site June 14, some two hundred and sixty-five miles distance from the mouth of the Kansas.18 The higher altitude westward was recorded along with the meteorological observations.19 Fremont, finding the carts unable to make sufficient time20 due to the "unusually wet spring and constant rain having so saturated the whole country that it was necessary to budge every water-course," divided the party into two groups on the morning of the 16. This was necessary in order to comply with the instructions of Colonel Albert in the determined length of time allowed for the expedition. Fitzpatrick was placed in charge of


18The area in which they camped was called by the Indians "Big Timber", appears to be Buffalo Creek in Cloud County.

19See Appendix E, 131.

20The expedition at this time was averaging five to six miles daily.
the supply wagons, which contained most of the provisions and the heavier baggage of the party, and with twenty-four men proceeded directly to St. Vrain's Fort in northeastern Colorado, on the upper waters of the Platte. Frémont, with fifteen men, the instrument wagon, and howitzer, rode in a northwesternly direction from the Republican to the Solomon River, with Fremont continuing his scientific exploration in what is now Jewell and Smith counties. Frémont reported:

After a few hours' travel over somewhat broken ground, we entered upon an extensive and high level prairie, on which we encamped towards evening at a little stream, where a single dry cottonwood afforded the necessary fuel for preparing supper. Among a variety of grasses which today made their first appearance, I noticed bunch grass, (festuca, [Vicia]) and buffalo grass, (sesleria dactyloides.) Amorpha canescens (lead plant) continued the characteristic plant of the country, and a narrow-leaved lathyrus [Sweetpea] occurred during the morning in beautiful patches. Sida coccinea [Salmon-colored mallow (Malvastrum coccineum)] occurred frequently, with a psoralia near [Soralea floribunda] [Scurfpea], and a number of plants not hitherto met, just verging into bloom. The water on which we had encamped belonged to Solomon's fork of the Smokyhill river, along whose tributaries we continued to travel for several days.

The country afforded us an excellent road, the route being generally over high and very level prairies; and we met with no other delay than being frequently obliged to bridge one of the numerous streams, which were well timbered with ash, elm, cottonwood, and a very large oak—the latter being, occasionally, five and six feet in diameter, with a spreading summit. Sida coccinea is very frequent in vermilion-colored patches on the high and low prairie; and I remarked that it had a very pleasant perfume.

The wild sensitive plant (schrankia angustata) [Sensitive briar (Schrankia microphylla)] occurs frequently, generally on the dry prairies, in valleys of streams, and frequently on the broken prairie bank. I remark that the leaflets close instantly to a very light touch. Amorpha, with the same psoralea [Wild Alfalfa or Scurfpea], and a dwarf species of lapinus [Lupine], are the characteristic plants.21

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In the afternoon of the nineteenth the expedition crossed the Pawnee Road that led to the Arkansas River, and continued their march across the prairies of what is now Phillips County. That evening they camped on a tributary of the Solomon fork of the Republic.22 They proceeded in a northwest direction to present day Norton County.

...the monotony of the prairies was suddenly dispelled by the appearance of five or six buffalo bulls, forming a vanguard of immense herds, among which we were travelling a few days afterwards. Prairie dogs were seen for the first time during the day; and we had the good fortune to obtain an antelope for supper. Our elevation had now increased to 1,900 feet. Sida coccinea was a characteristic on the creek bottoms, and buffalo grass is becoming abundant on the higher parts of the ridges.

June 21,—During the forenoon we travelled up a branch of the creek23 in which we had encamped, in a broken country, where, however, the dividing ridges almost afforded a good road. Plants were few; and with the short sward of the buffalo grass, which now prevailed everywhere, giving to the prairie a smooth and mossy appearance, were mingled frequent patches of a beautiful red grass, (aristada palleas,) which had made its appearance only within the last few days.

We halted to noon at a solitary cottonwood in a hollow, near which was killed the first buffalo, a large old bull. Antelope appeared in bands during the day. Crossing here to the affluents of the Republican, we encamped on a fork, about forty feet wide and one foot deep, flowing with a swift current over a sandy bed, and well wooded with ash-leaved maple, (negundo fraxinifolium,) elm, cottonwood, and a few white oaks. We were visited in the evening by a very violent storm, accompanied by wind, lightning, and thunder; a cold rain falling in torrents. According to the barometer, our elevation was 2,130 feet above the gulf.

At noon, on the 23rd, we descended into the valley of a principal fork of the Republican,24 a beautiful stream with a

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22 See Appendix G for astronomical readings, 138.

23 Tributary that joins the Republican in Nebraska.

dense border of wood, consisting principally of varieties of ash, forty feet wide and four feet deep. It was musical with the notes of many birds, which, from the vast expanse of silent prairie around, seemed all to have collected here. We continued during the afternoon our route along the river, which was populous with prairie dogs, (the bottoms being entirely occupied with their villages,) and late in the evening encamped on its banks. The prevailing timber is a blue-foliaged ash, (Fraxinus, near F. Americana,) and ash-leaved maple. With these were Fraxinus Americana, cottonwood, and long-leaved willow. 25

On June 24, after their Prairie Dog River camp, they proceeded into what is now Nebraska. Frémont proceeded by way of the Platte to Fort St. Vrain, which he reached on the Fourth of July. From the fort the united expedition followed a more southern route than they had taken in 1842. Instead of going north to Fort Laramie and the South Pass, Frémont headed for the head waters of the Arkansas. It was his hope that a new pass could be found through the Rockies far to the south of the South Pass. On July 14, while on the Arkansas River, Frémont was met by Kit Carson who was again employed as guide and hunter to the expedition. After failing to find a new pass, the party continued their journey westward on the regular Oregon Trail. They stopped to explore the Great Salt Lake; and continued on past Fort Hall and Fort Boise to Marcus Whitman's mission on the Columbia. The Dalles were reached on November 5, and Fort Vancouver shortly thereafter.

According to Albert's instructions to Frémont the expedition was to terminate at the Pacific coast, and Frémont and his men were to

return to St. Louis via the Oregon Trail. But under Benton's influence and determination that the entire West should be American, Fremont proceeded south and explored the Great Basin between the Rockies and Sierras. His path followed a route through present day Oregon to Pyramid Lake, which he named, into Nevada. He reached the Carson River on January 18, 1844, and from a point about where the present site of Virginia City is now located, proceeded to cross the Sierras into the Mexican territory of California. This was a daring, yet foolhardy feat, which was accomplished despite the dangers of extreme cold and heavy snows. The Sacramento Valley was reached in early March, with the expedition proceeding south until it reached the "Spanish Trail" from Los Angeles to Santa Fe. They turned on to the trail for some distance, then proceeded northeast through the southern tip of the present day Nevada into what is now Utah, then reentered what is now Colorado at its northwest corner. Bent's Fort on the upper Arkansas was reached, by way of Pueblo, on July 2, 1844. The expedition halted there for two days. Here Kit Carson, as after the first expedition, took his leave along with three other men.

On July 5, the expedition resumed their journey down the Arkansas River and again entered present day Kansas. To carry out

Albert's instructions to survey the Kansas River as far as practicable, the expedition left the Arkansas River, proceeded in a northeasterly direction to the extreme head branches of the Smoky Hill River along which they proceeded eastward. The stream was about forty yards wide, and one or two feet deep, flowing with a lively current on a sandy bed. The discolored and muddy appearance of the water indicated that it proceeded from recent rains.\textsuperscript{27} Beyond this stream we traveled over high and level prairies, halting at small ponds and holes of water, and using for our fires the bois de vache, the country being without timber. On the evening of the 8th we camped in a cottonwood grove on the banks of a sandy stream bed, where there was water in holes sufficient for the camp. Here several hollows, or dry creeks with sandy beds, met together, forming the head of a stream which afterwards proved to be the Smoky Hill fork of the Kansas River.\textsuperscript{28}

They traveled partly in the valley of the Smoky Hill and also along the level prairies bordering the river. Frémont remarked about the numerous cottonwoods bordering the river, and the buffalo grass covering the prairies. They continued their march traversing Wallace County. On July 10 an area covered abundantly with buffalos was entered, where they halted for a day to adequately supply their stores with meat for the remainder of the expedition to the border of Missouri. They passed out of present day Wallace County into Gove County where the expedition met with a violent thunderstorm. During the night, the expedition camped along side a stream less than one hundred yards

\textsuperscript{27}Could have been one of many streams leading into the Smoky Hill (Wallace County).

\textsuperscript{28}Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expeditions to the Rocky Mountains, 268.
wide, a heavy and continuous rain fell. The stream rose over the banks and engulfed the camp. The darkness concealed the rapid rise of the water, which partially ruined both baggage and provisions. The greatest loss was over half the 1,400 species of plants which had been collected. It was a bitter blow for Fremont who had seen many months of work destroyed in a few minutes.

The march resumed through present day Trego County, along the Smoky Hill, to the southwest corner of Ellis County. There, too, the expedition encountered difficulties, but this time with the Pawnee Indians. The party came across an Indian village on July 17 at the mouth of a small stream on the north bank of the Smoky Hill. Thinking the Indians would be friendly, they proceeded to give them the trading items they had salvaged from the flood. Owing to a prolonged journey and losses, such as the flood, there was little to give and evidently insufficient to satisfy "their greedy rapacity." After precarious moments, characterized by "unfriendly rudeness and characteristic insolence" on the part of the Pawnee, the party succeeded in leaving peacefully from the village and proceeded to set up camp some fifteen miles further downstream. In a later report, which was sent to the war department by one Major Wharton, who had visited the same camp with a military expedition some months after Fremont's visit, it was stated that the Pawnees had intended to attack his camp, the evening of the seventeenth, but failed to do so "by the interposition
Since leaving the Arkansas and arriving in what is now Russell County the expedition travelled some 260 miles. Fremont's observations found "only a succession of far-stretching green prairies" covered beautifully with buffalo grass with trees being found along the stream beds. As he continued, the country of the high plains gave way to a more broken landscape with additional species of trees, grasses, and plants. More streams were encountered, and the character of the land was described as more fertile, wooded, and beautiful. The exposition followed the Smoky Hill through present day Russell, Ellsworth, and McPherson Counties. In McPherson County, where the Smoky Hill suddenly turns in a northeasterly direction, towards its junction with the Republican River, a distance of about sixty miles, the Fremont party proceeded in an easterly course to the Santa Fe Trail, a distance of about twenty miles. The Trail was then followed to present day Kansas City. As Fremont proceeded eastward he recorded in his journal that the land was, as mentioned earlier, fertile, well watered by numerous small streams, and quite beautiful. As he approached the country drained by the lower Kansas, a comparison was immediately drawn between the appearance of its terrain and that of Northwestern Missouri. The expedition arrived July 31, 1844, at the frontier, with the land journey of the expedition ending. The day following their arrival in Missouri, Fremont and his men, proceeded by steamboat to St. Louis.

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29 Ibid., 289.
with the animals being pastured on the frontier for an anticipated third expedition. The expedition officially disbanded, August 6, with their arrival in St. Louis, with Fremont who was met by his wife, proceeding to Washington.

The expedition was absent fourteen months, whereas its intended length had been eight months. The Mexican territory explorations without doubt, caused the extention, which was not authorized by Colonel Albert's instructions. The delay caused some anxiety in Washington, with the Secretary of War almost sending a military party in search of the overdue expedition.

The results of the second expedition are many. The fact that two different forces, one official and the other unofficial, planned the expedition, does not detract from its successes. Colonel Albert's instructions were more than carried out, with the results being given to him in a report, which was again written with the aid of Mrs. Frémont.

The report was completed and given to Colonel Albert on March 1, 1845, with Congress ordering ten thousand extra copies, together with the report of his first expedition. The second report was three times as long as the first, and again covered meteorological and astronomical observations, geological and botanical information, as well as descriptions of natural scenes, findings on fertility.

30 See Appendix G, 138.
31 See Appendix H, 140.
of the land, military post recommendations, sketches of most everything including animals and natural scenes, and a most human account of their travels and experiences. A map, drawn by Charles Preuss, was included with almost every campsite and place of an astronomical observation being marked. The map covered the entire area between the frontiers of Missouri and the shores of the Pacific, covering an area traversed by ten thousand miles of actual traveling. The report and map offered the missing link to Captain Wilkes' survey of the northwest Pacific coast, and Fremont's first survey to the Wind River Mountains. Fremont maintained the report presented a connected and accurate view of the American continent.

In the areas of geological and botanical science, Fremont employed the finest men in the field to classify and arrange those specimens he was able to save from various accidents and mishaps. The astronomical observations were verified as they had been after the first expedition, by a three-fold computation of outstanding scientists to substantiate the correctness of the longitude and latitude readings. In all the report satisfied the need for a connecting survey and satisfied Albert's official orders. The unofficial aspects of the journey had more far reaching aspects.

Fremont's second expedition had been planned, as mentioned earlier, with the aid of "expansionists" to give migration a boast. It was the object of this forceful group of "expansionists" to map out the route to Oregon and do away with any concept that the trail to Oregon was terrifyingly difficult. Fremont's decision to enter California, march through the very heart of the country, as far south
as Los Angeles, left little doubt that the expansionists had designs on California. They wanted to be ready if and when war developed between the United States and Mexico. The fact that Britain was interested in California, even promoted faster action on the part of the "expansionists." Professor Allan Nevins found in his study of the situation that both Senators Benton and Linn had reached an understanding with Frémont that he was to enter California and "spy out the land." Nevins also maintained that both men knew California "was like a ripe fruit, ready to fall in to the first hand that touched it." The fact that a Mexican decree prohibited any Americans from entering California without permission did not stop Frémont. The American "expansionists!" attitude is possibly indicative by the occurrence in 1842, when Commodore Thomas Jones, seized Monterey and raised the American flag when he heard the rumor that the United States and Mexico were at war over the Texas situation.32

The second expedition was to have one discrediting effect on Frémont's later career. His checking out a howitzer for a scientific expedition, with the subsequent defiance to Albert's letter of recall, led to the belief by staunch military men that Frémont lacked unquestioning obedience to orders. His unauthorized trek through California,

extending the expedition by four months, was also well remembered by those who later discredited him.

In 1844, after his return from the frontier, Fremont was the popular hero. His trip made California popular in the American mind, which led directly to a third expedition, with "no foes in the rear", as Mrs. Fremont stated. The election of 1844 brought to the executive and legislative branches of the government men dedicated to the "re-occupation" of Oregon and the annexation of Texas. James Polk was president and the western congressmen active advisors of the expansionist program. Fremont was their agent to explore the Southwest, which President Polk had hoped to obtain through purchase from Mexico, but would take by force if Mexico went to war over Texas. Fremont was given a double brevet of first lieutenant and captain and with the aid of his usual backers prepared for the third expedition.
CHAPTER V

THE THIRD EXPEDITION, 1845-1847

In the spring of 1845, a third expedition was planned, again with the backing of Senator Thomas H. Benton, the influential chairman of the Senate's Military Affairs Committee, and George Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy in President James Polk's cabinet. War with Mexico was now clearly imminent, with the Southwest, particularly California, at stake. Texas had revolted against Mexico, and California was breaking away due to its distance from Mexico and to the increasing number of American immigrants arriving there. It seemed apparent to those interested in the Mexican territories becoming a part of the United States that our government had to move rapidly. A geographical examination of the Mexican territory was needed for military reasons. The rapidly increasing American emigration, to both Oregon and California, was seeking a more southern route in a better climate. And above all, the United States had to take more positive

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1 Bancroft was now forty-six years old and already recognized as a historian by his contributions to the North American Review and the first volumes of his History of the United States. An expansionist and close friend of Senator Benton, he was, according to Fremont, one of the "prime agents in the plan for combining scientific with military objects". He was primarily interested in California because it was regarded as a likely area of conflict between the United States and British navies. John Charles Fremont, Memoirs of My Life (Chicago and New York: Belford, Clarke, and Company, 1887), I, 423, hereinafter cited as Fremont, Memoirs. Allan Nevins, Fremont, the West's Greatest Adventurer (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1928), 236, hereinafter cited as Nevins, Fremont.
action in preparing for a possible conflict with Great Britain. An American scientific expedition in Mexican territory could easily be transformed into a company of hard-fighting troops, in the eventuality of conflict with Mexico, England, or both. There was a fear in Washington that Mexico would seek English protection for California if the United States and Mexico went to war. The "expansionists" wanted protection against this possibility. Thus Bancroft, as Secretary of the Navy, wished to increase the size of the small fleet the United States had in the North Pacific area and also a contingency land force, for the California settlers to rally around. It was for this reason, primarily, that he supported John C. Frémont's scientific expedition.

The expedition, under the direction of the Department of War, was to proceed far into the Mexican territory, to the central Rocky Mountains where the Arkansas River, the Rio Grande del Norte of the Gulf of Mexico and the Colorado River of the Gulf of California have their sources. The expedition was then to move westward and complete the examination of the Great Salt Lake, which Frémont's second expedition had started to explore in 1844. The Great Salt Lake survey was then to extend west and southwest to the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountains, "so as to ascertain the lines of communications through the mountains to the ocean in that latitude." Frémont's orders, as stated by him in his Mémoirs, called for the expedition to "foil England by carrying the war now imminent with Mexico into the territory of California." These orders cannot be substantiated by
documentary evidence, but were "private instructions" given most likely by Benton and Bancroft. It was their expectation that American settlers would rally around such a force in the event of war with Mexico, and that this in turn would minimize the possibility of English intervention.\(^2\)

Leaving Washington, Frémont arrived once again on the frontier in late June or early July, 1845. Near present day Kansas City he organized a camp and proceeded to recruit men and obtain supplies and provisions for the journey ahead.

A large force of men were recruited due to the uncertain situation. The entire force was well armed, with Frémont purchasing twelve of the finest rifles available for the best marksmen; an indication, most likely, that the expedition anticipated more than scientific exploits. The party consisted of sixty men, many of whom had been with Frémont previously, and were experienced, self-reliant men equal to any emergency. The names of all the men cannot be found, although those he relied most heavily upon are known. Edward H. Kern took the place of Charles Preuss, who had accompanied Frémont as assistant and topographer on his first two expeditions. Kern was an accomplished artist skilled in drawing out-of-door scenes. He proved to be "a valuable accession to the expedition." Two lieutenants of the Topographical Corps were:

assigned to Frémont; J. W. Albert, a relative of Colonel J. J. Albert, and W. G. Peck. Others of the party were Jacob Dodson, the colored man who accompanied the second expedition, and a Chinock Indian, called "Chinock," had traveled with Frémont from Washington for the purpose of going with him on the third expedition. Many old comrades of Frémont made up the force. Joseph Walker, Alexander (Alexis) Godey, Basil Lajeunesse, Theodore Talbot, and Thomas Fitzpatrick, were all experienced. Fitzpatrick again served as guide, with a man now known only as Hatcher acting as lead hunter. Later at Bent's Fort they were joined by Kit Carson\(^3\) and Richard Owens, men who along with Alexis Godey, Frémont remarked "could have been marshals under Napoleon" due to their "cool courage, keenness, and resolution."\(^4\) The expedition also included twelve Delaware Indians, among which were two chiefs named Swanok and Sagundai. Frémont found the Delawares to be excellent hunters and brave members of his party. Another member of the expedition, was James McDowell, a nephew of Mrs. Frémont.\(^5\)


\(^4\)Frémont, Memoirs, 124.

The animals, left on pasture lands at the end of the second expedition, were again gathered, with additional stock being added for the increased size of the expedition. Frémont found the pastured animals in fine condition, "hardened by the previous journey and thoroughly rested." When both animals and men were properly outfitted the expedition headed westward.

As the principal object of the expedition was to explore an area west of the plains and as the season was growing late, it was decided to take the most expedient route, with no time being allowed for an examination of the prairie regions.

Frémont and his company proceeded from the Missouri River along the Santa Fe Trail to present day McPherson County, then to the Smoky Hill River where the southern bend of that river crosses the northwest corner of the same county. They traveled directly westward along the Smoky Hill until reaching its headwaters, and then across the high plains to the valley of the Arkansas River, following that river to Bent's Fort. This route had been used by Frémont on his return from Bent's Fort to Missouri in 1844 and was again followed due to its direct approach to the Central Rockies and because Frémont was acquainted with the area, which he knew "would afford good camping.

Ibid.

grounds, where water and grass, and wood and abundant game, would best contribute to maintain the health of the men and the strength of the animals." 8

In traversing what is now Kansas, Fremont wrote the following interesting account:

...we met the usual prairie incidents of Indians and large game, which furnished always wholesome excitement. In those days these broke pleasantly in upon the silence and uniformity of the prairie and made a good school of the men. On the high plains we encountered a Cheyenne village which was on a hunt. The men came to meet us on the plain, riding abreast and their drums sounding. They were all in their bravery, and the formidable line was imposing, and looked threatening to those of our people who were without experience in an Indian country. Men tried and fearless in accustomed dangers are often at the first encounter nervous in those that are unfamiliar. But the Cheyennes were friendly, and we on our side were too strong for any exhibition of hostility or rudeness; and so we gave the usual presents in exchange for friendly conduct and good wishes. 9

Fremont didn't encounter any serious difficulties while traveling through what is now the state of Kansas. Two humorous incidents occurred which he recorded in his journals:

We had lost an animal which in the night had strayed off from the band, and early on the march next morning Basil, with a companion had been sent out to look for it. He did not get it at night nor in the morning. I therefore remained encamped and with a small party went in turn to look for him. After a search of an hour or two we discovered them halted, and apparently scanning the horizon around, in some uncertainty where to look for us. We were down in a swale in the ground about three hundred yards away, and so out of sight that we had not been seen. We thought to try

8Fremont, Memoirs, 425. Fremont, Narratives, 437.
9Fremont, Narratives, 437.
them, and quickly throwing off the greater part of our clothes we raised an Indian yell and charged. But there was no hesitation with them. They were off their horses in an instant and their leveled pieces brought us to an abrupt halt and a hearty laugh which we all enjoyed in having found them safe and well.

Returning to camp, our first experiment suggested another. The camp lay in a sort of broad gully below the level of the prairie. It was midday and the people were careless and more occupied by getting the dinner than with Indians. Riding quietly down to the hollow which gave an easy approach, we charged them with the usual yell. Our charge gave them a good lesson, though it lasted but a moment. It was like charging into a beehive; there were so many men in the camp ready with their rifles that it was very unsafe to keep up our Indian character beyond the moment of the charge. Still, like all excitement, it stirred the blood pleasantly for the moment.10

On August 2, 1845, Bent's Fort on the upper Arkansas River, was reached. Frémont, finding it desirable to make a survey of the prairie region to the south (embracing the Canadian and other rivers which were situated in Mexican territory), placed Lieutenants Albert and Peck in charge of a detachment of twenty-three men to undertake the survey. This expeditionary force left Bent's Fort on August 14, with Frémont and the other forty-seven men remaining for two additional days.

On August 16, after securing the services of Carson and Owens, Frémont proceeded to survey the headwaters of the principal rivers which had their source in the Central Rocky Mountains. After traveling from the headwaters of the Arkansas, the entire time in Mexican territory, the expedition reached the Salt Lake Valley on October 2, and proceeded

10 Ibid., 437-438.
to explore the area known as the Great Basin. They continued across the Great Basin, and on December 9, 1845, after establishing a new trail across present day Nevada, and the Sierra Nevadas, arrived at Sutter's Fort in California. Under the pretext of wanting animals and supplies, which he couldn't obtain in the amount desired at Sutter's Fort, he proceeded with his expedition to Monterey, and established contact there with the American consul, Thomas Larkin, who was to assist Frémont in his expansionist endeavors. Frémont's sizeable force in the heart of California caused greater excitement on the part of the Mexican government than his journey through California had caused during the second expedition.

John A. Sutter, head of the Fort settlement in the Sacramento Valley notified General Marino Guadelupe Vallejo, a Mexican authority, that Frémont was there "merely to refit for further scientific labors." Later, in February, 1846, while camped near the present city of San Jose, Frémont informed the Mexican Commanding General of California, Don Jose Castro, he was there engaged in surveying the nearest route from the United States to the Pacific Ocean. I informed them farther that the object of the survey was geographical, being under the direction of the Bureau of Topographical Engineers, to which corps I belonged, and that it was made in the interests of science and of commerce.\[11\]

A two day stay near present day San Jose was requested and granted by General Castro. During this same period the two branches of the expedition were united, thus giving Frémont his full force once again.

\[11\]Ibid., 466.
On March 3, after Frémont had moved about at will, the Mexican authorities became suspicious of his motives and ordered him out of the country. Frémont, greeted warmly by the American settlers in the province, refused to comply with the order as he was aware of the political unrest in California and the unsoldierly condition of the Mexican army stationed there. He wrote General Castro that he was "surprised at the message and the terms in which it was worded," and expressed his "astonishment at General Castro's breach of good faith, and the rudeness with which he acted," and stated it was unworthy of an officer in Castro's position. Hastily, Frémont erected a fort of solid logs upon a hill in the San Juan Valley and hoisted the American flag in defiance of the Mexican authorities. Frémont remained three days in this location, but hearing of a sizeable force being gathered by Castro, he found it better to retreat northward into Oregon.12

Playing for time, Frémont camped at Klamath Lake, where on May 8, he was brought a message from Washington delivered by Marine Corps Lieutenant Archibald H. Gillespie. The Lieutenant arrived in California by boat, with instructions for both Larkin and Frémont. What Frémont's instructions contained is a matter of controversy, although it is generally believed that Gillespie was given secret instructions by Benton and Buchanan to relay to Frémont which would justify

12 Frémont, Narratives, 470-472.
aggressive action in California.\textsuperscript{13}

Frémont was also given the information that both Larkin and Commander John B. Montgomery, of the United States sloop of war Portsmouth in San Francisco expected war to begin almost any day. Frémont, with this knowledge, and a degree of backing from Washington, and some assurance of augmenting his strength with English and American settlers felt justified in returning to California.\textsuperscript{14}

Thus he came to play a major part in the Bear Flag revolt which resulted in the conquest of California. Almost immediately after the Mexican surrender, Frémont became involved in a bitter quarrel between Navy Commodore R. F. Stockton and Brigadier-General S. W. Kearney over their respective authorities, which was caused by the confused situation in California, as well as the lack of proper communications from Washington. Frémont, who had fought with Stockton, recognized his claim as Military Governor of California, and was in turn rewarded by being appointed civil governor of the captured territory. At the end of two months final orders from Washington established Kearney's supremacy. Frémont was thoroughly discredited and humiliated for siding with the Naval Commodore. Kearney ordered Frémont, a virtual

\textsuperscript{13}"Apparently the one really official document he carried was a copy of Secretary of State Buchanan's despatch of October 17, 1845, to Consol Larkin, which instructed him to carry on a peaceful intrigue for the separation of California from Mexico, and to be sleeplessly active in countering British and French machinations in that province, but he also brought private letters and oral information." Frémont, Narratives, Editor's footnote 11, 508.

\textsuperscript{14}Frémont, Narratives, Editor's footnote 1, 476.
prisoner, back to Fort Leavenworth, where he was arrested\textsuperscript{15} upon charges of mutiny and insubordination.\textsuperscript{16}

He was court martialed in Washington after a trial lasting from November 2, 1847, to January 31, 1848. By a court of thirteen regular officers he was found guilty of mutiny, disobedience, and conduct prejudicial to order and sentenced to be dismissed from the service. President Polk refused to confirm the verdict of the court, and remitted the penalty. Frémont, however, resigned from the army with his rank of Lieutenant-Colonel on May 15, 1848, a commission he received while fighting in California. He was now thirty-four years old, indignant toward the army and with public sentiment on his side.\textsuperscript{17}

The third expedition had far reaching effects for the United States, both scientifically and militarily. Frémont's expedition partly aided the United States in receiving the Southwest portion of the country. The southwest corner of that which was to be the state of Kansas was a part of the surrendered territories.

Scientifically, Frémont's third expedition was to increase American knowledge of the West. The plains were not included in his latest survey, but profited from the renewed interest given to the

\textsuperscript{15}August 22, 1847 at Fort Leavenworth, Bigelow, \textit{Life and Services of Frémont}, 214.


\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Tbid.}, 217-318.
entire area from the Missouri to the Pacific. Glowing reports of his exploits in the West were now common both on the intellectual level of the scientist and also in the average person's conversation, an important factor in stimulating the westward migration. As the emigrants increased, and the more favorable land of the Pacific coast occupied, there developed a clamor on the part of the pioneer to open the prairies for settlement.
CHAPTER VI

FOURTH AND FIFTH EXPEDITIONS,
1848-1849 and 1853-1854

The first three expeditions of John Charles Fremont were made under the direction and at the expense of the United States Government, and of these there thus have been rather complete reports. Far less is known of the fourth and fifth expeditions which were made at private expense in the years 1848-49, and 1853-54, respectively.

On October 19, 1848, Fremont set out on his fourth expedition, a private venture financed by himself and Senator Thomas H. Benton. Fremont had with him thirty-three men mostly composed of old companions, all of whom were provided with good rifles. One hundred and twenty of the finest mules he could obtain were also taken. Their preparations for the journey were mostly made at a small government post over the borders of the Missouri River in present day Kansas. Mrs. Fremont accompanied him to this point, and remained there the six weeks required to outfit the expedition. His purpose in the fourth expedition were to again enter California to establish a home and prepare for the arrival of his family, who were to join him in the spring, and to find a more southerly route through the mountains that could serve as a principle highway to the west coast.¹

¹John Bigelow, Memoirs of the Life and Public Services of John C. Fremont (New York: Derby and Jackson, Company, 1856), 358, hereinafter cited as Bigelow, Life and Services of Fremont.
Fre'mont chose the winter for the journey as the season best adapted to present the most serious difficulties to those who were interested in constructing a railroad to the Pacific, an objective he was to concern himself with during the last two expeditions.\(^2\)

The expedition, as above stated left October 19, 1848, and proceeded westward along the Kansas River to the Santa Fe Trail. This beginning was over the same route he had taken in his return from the second expedition, and during the third. South of the two forks of the Kansas the expedition proceeded to follow the Smoky Hill River, or southern fork to its upper branches. It then crossed in a south-westerly direction to the Arkansas River and followed that stream to Bent's Fort in present day Colorado.

Fre'mont kept no journal on the fourth expedition. Thus the most complete accounts are furnished by Fre'mont's private correspondence to his wife and to Senator Benton.\(^3\) One member of his party, C. G. McGehee, kept a diary which was later published in part in the Century Magazine. This article offers little aid in the study of his expeditions through Kansas since the article stated:

\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)M.N.O., "Resume' of Frémont's Expeditions," Century Magazine, XLI, No. 5 (March, 1891), 764, hereinafter cited as M.N.O., Resume' of Frémont's Expeditions."
As far as Pueblo on the Arkansas River, at the entrance to the Rocky Mountains, this party followed very nearly the same line taken by the expedition in 1844. The experiences of the party in their slow progress over the plains—their encounters with the Indians, buffalo, elk, antelopes, and wild horses—are not unique, and will therefore, be omitted. 4

While at Bent's Fort, Fremont wrote Senator Benton of their experiences while crossing the plains. He reported they had followed the course of the Kansas and Smoky Hill Rivers rather than the "Arkansas Road," or Santa Fe Trail, so as "to avoid the chance of snow storms upon the more exposed Arkansas Road." He reported their travels in the present state of Kansas as follows:

For a distance of 400 miles our route led through a country affording abundant timber, game, and excellent grass. We find that the Valley of the Kansas affords by far the most eligible approach to the Mountains. The whole valley soil is of very superior quality, well timbered, abundant grasses, and the route very direct. This line would afford continuous and good settlements certainly for 400 miles, and is therefore worthy of consideration in any plan of approach to the Mountains. 5

After spending several days at Bent's Fort making specific plans for the winter journey ahead, it was reported to Fremont, while at Bent's Fort, by both Indians and trappers that the snows in the


5 Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont, 357-360.
mountains were very deep for that early in the winter and they predicted severe months ahead. This did not discourage Fremont, for on November 25, 1848, the party left the fort and proceeded to cross the San Juan Mountains, which were part of the Rocky Mountains in present day Colorado.

It was Fremont's plan to "ascend the Del Norte to its head, descend on the Colorado, and go across the Wahsatch Mountains and the basin country somewhere near the 37th parallel, reaching the settled parts of California, near Monterey." He wanted to examine a particular pass in the Sierra Nevada Mountains between the 37th and the 38th parallels.

Overall, the expedition was much like that of the first three with the exception that Fremont no longer was enthusiastic in such transcontinental exploits. In his letter to Senator Benton of November 17, 1848, from Bent's Fort, he indicated that he thought he would "never cross the continent again, except at Panama." He reported: "I do not feel the pleasure that I used to have in those labors, as they remain inseparably connected with painful circumstances." The party left Bent's Fort as mentioned, in "good spirits" and "good health", amply supplied and properly organized, with a severe winter approaching.6

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6Ibid.
The party arrived at Pueblo on the upper Arkansas, the last
of November, and engaged as a guide, Bill Williams, a well known
mountaineer who had spent twenty-five years trapping throughout the
Rocky Mountains. Fremont states that the major error of his journey
was the hiring of Williams. Instead of finding the pass they were
seeking, he led them over the highest ridges in the Rockies, where
there was no pasturage for the animals, and where the men were exposed
to extremely cold temperatures and deep snows. As a result one-third
of the men, and every mule and horse, perished from either starvation
or freezing. The conditions were so severe the men resorted to
cannabalism. The members of the expedition made their way to Taos
and regrouped and resupplied at the home of Kit Carson. After a
considerable delay, Fremont resolved to continue on to California.
The main objective of the remainder of his trip being to avoid any
dangers and proceed as rapidly as possible. He no longer had his
trusted mountain men, due to one-third being dead and many other
crippled by frozen limbs. With a relatively new force he proceeded
with caution to California, passing the lands of the Navahoes and
Apaches, along the Gila River through the Mexican province of Senora
without loss of man, animals, or supplies.

Fremont arrived in California in March, 1849, with the
intention of making it his home. By an investment made of about $3,000
in 1847, he had become the owner of the Mariposas Estate, one of the
finest tracts in the entire territory. Fremont immediately concerned
himself with developing the agricultural and mineral resources of his land, as well as fighting a long and expensive battle to clear its title.

The Mariposas Estate was situated about 225 miles north of San Francisco, in the basin east of the Sierra Nevadas, covering an area of about seventy square miles.  

On December 21, 1849, the California Territorial Legislature, meeting at San Jose, then the seat of government, elected Fremont Senator, at the age of thirty-seven. He went to Washington via the Isthmus of Panama.

While in Washington Fremont was invited to attend a meeting on a transcontinental railroad. He took a keen interest in this project since he strongly favored a central, national railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean. Before he was elected Senator from California Fremont was asked his views on many problems confronting the territory, one of which concerned the railroad. He answered that his last journey across the continent "was solely directed to an examination of the country in reference to the railroad." Fremont supported the "immediate location and speediest possible construction" of a national railroad from St. Louis to San Francisco, which would basically be between the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth parallels. Such a railroad, according to Fremont, would be central to the

Mississippi River Valley, as well as to the states east of the Mississippi. By such a location it would, from a business standpoint, unite the greatest commercial center of the Mississippi with the greatest point on the Pacific Coast.

Fremont went on to list the advantages of such a route:

3rd. It combines the advantages for making and preserving the road, wood, water, and soil, for inhabitation and cultivation.

4th. It is a healthy route. No diseases of any kind upon it; and the valetudinarian might travel it in his own vehicle, on horse, or even on foot, for the mere restoration of health and recovery of spirits.

It is not only fulfilling all the conditions of a national route, but it is preferable to any other. It is preferable to the South Pass from being nearly four degrees further south, more free from open plains, and from crossing of great rivers. Its course is parallel with the rivers, there being but one (the Upper Colorado), directly crossing its line. There are passes at the head of Arkansas, in the Three Parks, and north of them, but none equal to this by the Rio del Norte. There is no route north of it that is comparable to it; I believe there is no practicable route south of it in the United States. The disaster which turned me south from the head of the Del Norte and sent me down that river, and to the mountains around the Upper Gila, enabled me to satisfy myself on that point.... [In]
am satisfied that no route for a road can be had on that line, except going through Mexico, then crossing the Great Colorado of the West, near the mouth of the Gila, to cross the desert to arrive at San Diego... 8

He was convinced and encouraged by the railroad conference of the practicality of such a central route. The results of his fourth expedition had not been laid before the public until the meeting for a national railroad. As the last expedition had been undertaken avowedly for the purpose of finding a suitable route for such a

8 Ibid., 406-407.
project, Frémont's views were received with great interest. His report to the Philadelphia conference, had been refreshing and most informative, and it gave to the plains another favorable boost in the American mind. Frémont served as Senator from California for six weeks, the short term being a result of the Senate procedure to ascertain by lot the class and length of the senatorial term of new senators. The short term, which expired in three weeks (March 3, 1851), was drawn by Frémont. At the end of that Congress Frémont again returned to California by boat via Panama, and took up matters involving his Mariposas Estate. Due to a change in the California legislature, and a loss of the majority with whom Frémont was associated, he was not re-elected. The next two years were therefore devoted to handling the affairs of Mariposas, with a prolonged trip to Europe being made in the years 1852-1853 to obtain capital for developing the mineral resources on his property. He returned to the United States in August, 1853, and proceeded to organize a fifth trans-continental expedition.

Congress had, at its close, in March, 1852, appropriated funds for a survey of three routes from the Mississippi valley to the Pacific ocean for the purpose of gathering information needed for drafting proper legislation for a national highway or transcontinental railroad. Frémont heard of this proposed plan, while in Paris, and immediately returned to the United States, determined to substantiate his claim that the central railroad route was the most feasible and practical.
Fremont arrived at the mouth of the Kansas, via steamboat from St. Louis, on September 15, 1853, with four men who were to accompany the expedition, S. W. Carvalho, the artist of the expedition, Oliver Fuller of St. Louis, one "Mr. Bomar", who served as "photographer", and one "Mr. Egloffstien" the topographical engineer. Later a Max Strobel joined the party as assistant topographer. Along with these men were ten additional white men. Each person of the expedition was issued a rifle and colt revolver. Ten Delaware Indians were to join the expedition further west on the Kansas.9

It was Fremont's purpose to proceed directly to the spot where the guide of the fourth expedition led them astray. From that point he would follow a course described by mountain men as "good country" with "safe and easy passes all the way to California," an area between the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth parallels of the continent.10

The expedition left Westport September 21, 1853, and proceeded four miles to a Methodist Indian mission on the Kansas. Finding need for additional supplies, Fremont and Strobel returned to Westport, with the expedition proceeding on to Shawnee Mission, south of the Kansas River in the northeast corner of present day Johnson County. The morning of the next day the expedition, with complete equipage,

10 Ibid.
left Shawnee Mission to proceed across the continent on a proposed
line of 38 degrees parallel. Frémont was interested in making the
journey as rapidly as possible, but his taking ill created a second
delay. He was sent back to Westport for medical advice, and the
expedition, which had camped fifteen miles west of Shawnee Mission,
proceeded westward to where the ten Delawares joined the party.

On September 27, "at the principal town of the Pottawatomies"
in what is now Pottawatomie County,11 remaining there three days
awaiting the return of Frémont. The Indians were under the command
of a "Big Indian" who called himself "Captain Wolff." The small
band included four additional chiefs with names of "Washington,"
"Welluchas," "Solomon," and "Moses." All were well armed with most
of them understanding English. Carvalho, who kept a journal of the
expedition, reported they were "a noble set of Indians...most of
them six feet high...who were later to become very much attached to
Colonel Frémont and every one of them would have ventured his life
for him."12

Frémont's illness continued, forcing him to return to St.
Louis for treatment. He sent a note by Strobel asking the expedition
to proceed to the Smoky Hills on the Saline fork of the Kansas River,

11Probably the same Indian village referred to in his first
expedition.

12S. N. Carvalho, Incidents of Travel and Adventures in the
Far West, with Colonel Frémont's Last Expedition Across the Rocky
Mountains: Including Three Months' Residence in Utah and a Perilous
Trip Across the Great American Desert to the Pacific (New York: Derby
and Jackson Company, 1857), 31, hereinafter cited as Carvalho,
Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West.
and await his return. There, Fremont indicated, they would find plenty of buffalo and fine camping conditions. Palmer, honoring Fremont's instructions, led the force south along the Kansas, crossing the river at its junction with the Republican, within a half mile of present day Fort Riley. The party continued westward across the Solomon River to the Saline. They then set up camp on Salt Creek, four miles from the mouth of the Saline in present day Saline County. The group remained situated in this location for three weeks during October and November, during which time the discipline of the camp was relaxed with the commissarist allowing the stores to be "wantonly and shamefully destroyed" by being "lavishly expended and surreptitiously purloined." The hunters brought in an abundant amount of game (buffalo, antelope, deer, turkey, ducks, rabbit, and prairie hen), but it was the staples that needed replenishing. Upon Fremont's return, in early November, two trips were made to Fort Riley for additional supplies.

While stationed at their camp on Salt Creek the expedition encountered many varied experiences of life on the prairie. Carvalho, in reporting of their experiences in his diary, found the country well watered by numerous streams. The river bottoms were mentioned as being very fertile with a covering of black alluvial soil from one to two feet deep, with the river bottoms varying from four to seven miles. Along the rivers the expedition found large trees of many varieties, including "various kinds of oak, maple, elm, red-flowered maple, black walnut, locust, beech, box elder, wild cherry, and cotton-wood", which
were found to attain a large size, in quantities along the Kansas River and its tributaries. Above the river valleys they reported an "immense undulating prairie, teeming with buffalo, blacktail deer, antelope, sage, and prairie chickens." There was also an abundance of wolves, wild turkeys, and ducks. Grasses of a "hundred" varieties, "some of them rank and high," were found to be "possessing highly nutritive qualities." The expedition, during its three week stay on the Saline River, encountered many experiences such as a wolf hunt, buffalo hunt, with 6,000 bufaloes as game, and prairie fire. The Delaware Indians also brought to their camp interesting games, traditions, and methods of doing things on the prairie.

The fifth expedition was very dependent upon Frémont. During his absence the group displayed lazy habits, dangerous to their very existence. He was their leader and respected. Carvalho wrote:

...the character of Col. Frémont as a gentleman of high literary attainments," "great mental capacity," and "solid scientific knowledge," is firmly established in my own mind.

These personal observations, added to the knowledge I gained of him from report, has brought me to the conclusion that he is not only a "man of education," but a "man of genius and a gentleman." One would suppose that the "conqueror of California," "the successful commander and governor," would have a little to say about himself--some deeds to vaunt of--some battle to describe. I found him reserved, almost to taciturnity, yet perfectly amiable withal. No one, to see him, would ever imagine that a man of great deeds was before him.13

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13 Carvalho, Incidents of Travel and Adventures in the Far West, 38.
After replenishing its supplies the party proceeded for several days in a southwesterly direction to the Arkansas River by way of the Smoky Hill, passing through present day Saline, Ellsworth, and Barton Counties. While camped on Walnut Creek, a tributary of the Arkansas, Fremont found that one of his men had left his guard near the animals without being relieved. The next morning the expedition found five horses missing. They later discovered that Cheyenne Indians had watched the camp and stole the horses when the "guard" left his watch for a short time. All the animals would have been taken if Fremont had not spotted the guard by the fire. The negligent guard was reprimanded and told, by Fremont, to walk for several days for his punishment.

Thus the lives of the whole party were jeopardized by the inconsiderate conduct of this sentinel. We were about four hundred miles from the frontiers, at the commencement of a most inclement winter. Had we lost our animals, we must have perished, exposed as we were on those vast prairies to bands of Pawnee, Comanche, and other hostile Indians.14

After camping at Walnut Creek the party continued in a southwesterly direction crossing the north branch of the Pawnee Fort to the Arkansas. On the divide between the Walnut Creek and the Arkansas River, they rode among immense herds of buffalo.

All around us, as far as the eye could reach, the prairie was completely black with them; they at times impeded our progress. We stopped for more than an hour to allow a single herd to gallop,

14 Ibid., 62-64.
at full speed, across our path, while the whole party amused themselves with singling out particular ones, and killing them.15

While camped on this divide which was reported to be covered with buffalo grass, near Pawnee Fork, the temperature dropped below freezing. With a scarcity of wood, the party had to rely on "dried buffalo chips" to build a fire. It served their purpose very well both for cooking and keeping warm.

After reaching the Arkansas, the party followed that stream to Bent's Fort. Their path, from the Walnut Creek in present day Barton County, was to lead them through present day Pawnee, Edwards, Hodgen, Ford, Foote, Sequoyah, Kearney, and Hamilton counties.

The expedition followed a straight course westward from Bent's Fort, hoping to again find a suitable route through the mountains. The winter was again extremely severe with unusually cold temperatures and deep snows. They entered the mountainous regions on the Huerfano River December 3, 1853. Nothing was heard of or about the party until February 8, 1854. At that time they were found east of Salt Lake in very poor condition. They had lived fifty days on horse-flesh and entrails, burning the bones of their horses for fuel, in severe winter conditions. When discovered they had been two days without food.

While in the mountains, when it appeared the fifth expedition would be much like the fourth, Fremont had his men give their solemn

15 Ibid., 64-65.
oath they would not resort to cannibalism, no matter what extremities they might reach. Frémont assumed a dynamic leadership in forcing his way out of the snow covered mountains. The party, when found had no animals, one less number (Fuller), and were mostly barefooted and in poor physical condition. They accepted immediate aid and supplies but refused to give up the survey. On May 1, 1854, Frémont and party entered San Francisco, having completed their task. He immediately left for Washington to report upon the results of his exploration. Frémont, even though the fifth expedition had an almost disastrous ending, felt as if the journey proved the feasibility of a central trans-continental route.16

In a letter to the Editors of the National Intelligencer, Frémont gave the results of his fifth expedition as it applied to the promotion of a central railroad route to the Pacific. He continued to maintain the most suitable route was between the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth parallels. In speaking of the area, now known as Kansas, Frémont stated the prairies offered "wood, coal, building stone, water and fertile land."

...about two hundred miles, as you approach the mountains, is continuously well adapted to settlements as well as to roads. Numerous well-watered and fertile valleys--broad and level--open up among the mountain, which present themselves in detached

16Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont, 445.
blocks--outliers--gradually closing in around the heads of the streams, but leaving open approaches to the central ridges. The whole of the inter-mountain region is abundant in grasses, wood, coal, and fertile soil.  

Later when nominated for the Presidency of the United States, his platform called for a "railroad to the Pacific Ocean, by the most central and practicable route."

17 Ibid., 473-474.
CHAPTER VII

RESULTS OF THE FIVE EXPEDITIONS

At the conclusion of John C. Frémont's fifth exploring expedition through Kansas in 1854, he was but forty-three years of age. His work being recorded in historical, geographical, scientific and political history. From the ashes of his campfires sprang a fuller understanding of the Middle and Far West, which was to culminate in a democratic nation stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Reports of his expeditions, stretching from the Missouri River to Oregon and California, were received around the world as scientifically remarkable accomplishments. The exuberant pride he took in writing his first two expeditions gave him an enviable reputation in the world of science, being honored not only in the United States, but also in Europe.¹ Although his training was in surveying and engineering, his reports display a scholarly knowledge of botany, astronomy, mineralogy, meteorology, and geology. He showed extraordinary ability and great energy in carrying out his five exploring exploits.

¹John Bigelow, Memoir of the Life, Explorations, and Public Services of John C. Frémont (New York: Derry and Jackson Company, 1856), 467, hereinafter cited as Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont.
Plants of the west were identified and classified, many receiving their nomenclature for the first time. Geographical knowledge was immensely aided by his travels and scientific approach, giving an accurate description to the West. He persisted in his belief that the entire area traversed was of value to the United States, particularly Oregon and California. He separated facts from fables in such instances as the Buenaventura River legend.

The knowledge acquired by Fremont revealed the almost complete lack of geographical information of which prevailed among Americans concerning the areas he traversed. Tales of fabulous rivers, mountains, and lakes were generally found to be non-existent except in the imagination of pioneer story tellers and their all too credulous listeners. Maps were redrawn with his findings replacing the old. The trans-Missouri area, as well as the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, was to receive favorable reports, which counteracted the "Great American Desert" concept of the plains.

Fremont's reports, with their detailed descriptions, their maps, and their scientific data were widely circulated and read. His

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2 As late as 1846, a general map of the United States in the Congressional Library at Washington, regarded and quoted as an authority by the President himself with entire confidence, presented the Great Salt Lake as discharging itself by three great rivers into the Pacific Ocean—from its southern extremity into the Gulf of California—from its western side through the Sierra Nevada range into the bay of San Francisco, and from its western extremity into the embouchure of the Columbia River. Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont, 35.

3 Bigelow, Life and Services of Frémont, 35-36.
accomplishments made him a figure of importance and created an extraordinary demand for more information on the west. People couldn't hear enough of his narratives on the natural beauty, the splendid scenery, the fertile soil, and remarkable climates encountered. After his second expedition Congress ordered an increase in the number of copies of his first two reports from the original 5,000 authorized to 10,000 to meet the demand. Publishers turned out commercial copies of the reports, newspapers carried long extracts, with Senator Thomas Benton promoting the extensive printing and wide distribution in the interests of the "expansionists." Frémont was a hero on the American scene, the "Pathfinder of the West." The same reports, lauding Frémont, also introduced Kit Carson to the public mind. Carson's deeds were related and magnified in the "paper-backs" of that time making him a popular hero. Frémont profited from his association with this assistant and guide of the first three expeditions. The disastrous aspects of the fourth and fifth expeditions possibly would not have occurred if Frémont had been able to obtain his services. Carson also benefited from his associations with Frémont, becoming a national idol as a result of that relationship.

Frémont was identified as the "deliverer" of California, saving that state from British domination. From his expeditions came glowing reports of the northwest which stimulated the Oregon migration, with 3,000 families going west in 1846. These glowing reports to Congress also introduced the Western slope of the Rockies to the
American mind, the southwest part of which including the southwest corner of the state of Kansas was added at the close of the war with Mexico.

Up to the summer of 1834 Kansas had no civilized residents other than soldiers to keep the various Indians in order, and the missionaries sent to convert them. There were also those traders and travelers who passed through the area, leaving an impression in many places that the plains constituted a barren vast belt of arid sand, without water, incapable of sustaining more than nomadic life. The official reports of Lieutenant Stephen H. Long and Major Zebulon M. Pike, among others, aided in this conclusion, which remained until the time Kansas was organized into a territory. Frémont, in his explorations, along with the subsequent reports of Benjamin Bonneville, William H. Emory, Francis Parkman, John W. Gunnison, and others, each successively reducing areas into their respective individual conditions, instead of "Great American Desert" being applied generally to the central portion of North America. There can be little doubt that Frémont, in his continually favorable writings toward what is now Kansas, narrowed the proportions of the "desert" until it no longer existed, except in early geographies and in the minds of those few who are never persuaded otherwise. Not only has actual survey and settlement reduced the uninhabitable area, and shown the errors of explorers before Frémont, arising from their limited training and narrow scope of making observations, but scientific methods, such as irrigation, are constantly being
carried on, and has changed unfavorable features which originally misled them in their conclusions.

In June, 1856, Fremont received his highest honor by being nominated, by the new Republican Party, for President of the United States. His platform called for the immediate admission of Kansas to the Union as a free state, urging an end to the "civil strife now raging in her territory" and securing for her citizens "the enjoyment of the rights and privileges to which they are entitled." The platform also called for a central railroad route which would have gone directly through Kansas.4

The explorer abandoned the profession through which he had become prominent, but continued his service and devotion to his country by again serving, as a general, in the Federal army during the Civil War, and as a leader of the "radical" Republicans. After the election of 1864, Fremont confined his efforts to his estate in California, until being appointed Territorial Governor of Arizona (1878-83). After that assignment he returned to California. However, his death came in New York City, where he was temporarily visiting, on July 13, 1890.

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4Bigelow, Life and Services of Fremont, 454-455.
I. PRIMARY SOURCES

A. Reports


Daily and official account of S. H. Long's expedition through Kansas. Long and Bell separated into separate detachments at the headwaters of the Arkansas River, Bell following the Arkansas and Long the Canadian. Bell's account covers both expeditions until the separation of forces, and then he only records his own travels. The account contains an excellent map of Long's expedition as well as journey through the great plains.

Carvalho, S. N., Incidents of Travel and Adventures in the Far West, with Colonel Fremont's Last Expedition Across the Rocky Mountains: Including Three Months Residence in Utah, and a Perilous Trip Across the Great American Desert to the Pacific. New York: Derby and Jackson Company, 1857.

Carvalho went as an artist with Fremont's expedition of 1853. Contains most complete and authentic account of the 1853-1854 expedition.


Fremont, J. C. Captain, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44. Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845. Book combines Fremont's accounts of his first two Far Western expeditions. The reports were both published as a Congressional document and also a book, per se. Here it is published in book form from the official Congressional document.


Expedition concerns trip in the winter of 1853-54. The route followed Frémont's 1848 expedition as far as the San Luis Valley in Colorado. Also in 33 Congress, 2nd Session, House of Representatives Misc. Document No. 5 (December 27, 1854).


Contains reports of Frémont's first two expeditions including a map and relief profile of the area covered by the exploring expeditions.

Also printed by order of the House of Representatives, by Flair and Rives, in 563 pages with same plates and maps, the astronomical observations being omitted.


Different plates and no catalog of plants, or appendices.

This work was the source for a large number of pamphlets.


Contains the diary of Richard H. Kern, Artist with the Frémont Expedition of 1848-1849.

"Letter to the National Intelligences, June 13, 1854, Communicating Some General Results of a Recent Winter Expedition across the Rocky Mountains for the Survey of a Route for a Railroad to the Pacific," 33 Congress, 1 Session, Senate Miscellaneus Document No. 67 (June 15, 1854).

Frémont's exploration of the Central Railroad Route to the Pacific.


Report of February 16, 1841, by Mr. Nicollet while in the employ of the Bureau of the Corps of Topographical Engineers. Contains a map of the hydrographical basin of the upper Mississippi River, which was made in the years 1836, '37, '38, '39, and '40 by Lieut. J. C. Fremont.

Pike, Zebulon Montgomery, The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, to Headwaters of the Mississippi River, Through Louisiana Territory, and in New Spain, During the Years 1805-6-7. New York: F. P. Harper, 1895.


Pike, Zebulon Montgomery, An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi, and Through the Western Parts of Louisiana, to the Sources of the Arkansas, Kansas, La Platte and Pierre Juan Rivers; Performed by Order of the Government of the United States During the 1805, 1806, and 1807. And a tour through the Interior Parts of New Spain, When Conducted Through These Provinces, by Order of the Captain-General, in the year 1807. Philadelphia: Published by C. & A. Conrad, & Company, 1810.

Illustrated by maps and charts. The account gives Pike's route and views on the plains.

Talbot, Theodore, Journals of Theodore Talbot, 1843 and 1849-52, with the Fremont Expedition of 1843 and with the First Military Expedition in the Oregon Territory. Portland (Oregon): Metropolitan Press, 1931.
B. Autobiography


Includes in the narrative five journeys of western exploration during the years of 1842, 1843-4, 1845-6-7, 1848-9, 1853-4.

Included biographical sketch of Senator Benton, in connection with western expansion, by Jessie Benton Frémont.

C. Maps


Illustrated by a general map and sectional maps. This account includes directions to travelers. Includes Frémont's reports of his exploring expedition in 1843-44 with copies of Frémont's maps of 1845-48.

Frémont, J. C. Captain, *Map of an Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44*. Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845.

The official Frémont map as reproduced in the Congressional documents. Shows his routes for the first two trans-Missouri expeditions.

"Map of an Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44 by Brevet Captain J. C. Frémont of the Corporation of Topographical Engineers under the orders of Col. J. S. Albert, Chief of the Topographical Bureau, 28 Congress, 2 Session, Senate Documents, No. 174 (December, 1845). Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1847.


Map shows main routes through Kansas. Of importance to this paper were routes by Lewis and Clark (1804-05), Z. H. Pike (1806), S. H. Long (1819-20), and J. C. Frémont 1842 and 1843-44.

A detailed oblong folio map in seven sections, compiled from field sketches and observations made by Charles Preuss, who accompanied Fremont. The maps show the overland route from Westport to Fort Walla Walla in great detail; also gives tables of meteorological observations, extracts from Fremont's report, and remarks concerning water, grass, fuel, game and Indians.

Maps showing Fremont's route on his second expedition through Kansas.

Important in that it shows the routes of Long, Ricollet, and Fremont.

II. SECONDARY

A. General References


A very complete source for general reference work on people, places, events, etc., connected with the History of Kansas. To be used only as a preliminary reference.


An excellent bibliography.
B. Historical Materials


Concerns the conquest of the Southwest United States. Contains information on Kit Carson, Robert P. Stockton, Sam Houston, Stephen W. Kearny, George Crozer and John C. Fremont.


Explanations of Fremont.


Interesting for the background on Zebulon Montgomery Pike and his expeditions, the Santa Fe Trail, and the Oregon Trail. Fremont's expeditions not mentioned.


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Hebart, Grace Raymond, The Pathbreakers from River to Ocean:
   The Story of the Great West from the Time of Coronado to the Present.


Isley, Jeter Allen, Horace Greeley and the Republican Party, 1853-1861.
   Important for Fremont's views concerning the Republican
   platform as it affected Kansas.

Mann, Bonite H. and Clair V., The History of Missouri School of Mines
   and Metallurgy, edited and published by the Phelps County Historical
   The Scientific Contributions of Lieut. James W. Abert who was
   associated with J. C. Fremont in 1845. First Professor of Engineering
   at Missouri School of Mines.

Monaghan, Jay, The Overland Trail of the American Trails Series.

Parrish, Randall, The Great Plains. Chicago: A. C. McClurg and
   Company, 1907.

Paxton, Frederic Logan, The Last American Frontier. New York:

Pike, Zebulon Montgomery, Papers of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, 1806-1807,
   contributed by Herbert E. Bolton. New York: The Macmillan
   Company, 1908.
Pike, Zebulon Montgomery, *Pike's Expedition of 1805-07*. Boston: Director of the Old South Work, 1816. Diary of an expedition made under the orders of the War Department by Captain Z. M. Pike in the years 1806--07, to explore the internal parts of Louisiana.


Van Tramp, John C., *Prairie and Rocky Mountain Adventures or Life in the West*. To which will be added a view of the states and territorial regions of our western empire: Embracing History, statistics and geography, and descriptions of the chief cities of the west. Columbus, Ohio: J. and H. Miller, 1856. A book made up from "clippings" from various sources including Fremont's first and second expeditions.


C. Biographies

Bigelow, John, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John Charles Fremont.* New York: Derby and Jackson, 1856. Includes an account of his explorations, discoveries and adventures of five successive expeditions across the North American continent, voluminous selections from his private and public correspondence; his defense before the court martial, and full reports of his principal speeches in the Senate of the United States.


The Daring Adventures of Kit Carson and Fremont Among Buffaloes, Grizzlies and Indians, Being a Spirited Diary of the Most Difficult and Wonderful Explorations Ever Made, Opening Through Yawning Chasms and Over Perilous Peaks, the Great Pathway to the Pacific. New York: R. Worthington, 1885. Includes a narrative on the life of Kit Carson and also the complete narrative of Fremont's first two expeditions. The author or editor of the book is not listed.


Includes a short history of Frémont's life and his reports on the first two expeditions. The history is rather short and prejudiced.


Comprises an account of Frémont's fourth expedition, mostly contained in letters from Frémont to Benton, Bent's Fort, November 17, 1848; to Mrs. Frémont, Iaos, January 27, 1849; to Mrs. Frémont, Iaos, February 8, 1849; to Benton, Secor, February 21, 1849. Also contains a short account of the fifth expedition of 1853-54, including a letter from Frémont to Benton dated Parowan (Utah), February 9, 1854.

D. Periodicals and Newspapers


Contains map of Frémont's route.


Contains reminiscences by General John Bidwell.


Francois Des Montaines (Pseud.), (Cooper, Isaac), "The Plains, Being a Collection of Veracious Memoranda, Taken During the Expedition of Explorations in the Year 1845, from the Western Settlements of Missouri to the Mexican Border, and from Bent's Fort on the Arkansas to Fort Gibson via South Fork of Canadian-North Mexico and North Western Texas," *Western Journal and Civilian (St. Louis)* T4 No. 1 through X, No. 6, 1852-53, and T5, No. 4, March, 1856.

An amusing account of Frémont's third expedition from the standpoint of an amateur. He says Frémont forbade anyone to keep a journal of memoranda.

Guckle, Erwin C., "Frémont-Press and Western Names," Names, V, No. 3 (September, 1957), 169-151.

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- "John C. Frémont, Adventurer and Misadventurer," California History Nugget, III, No. 7 (February-March, 1931), 123-129, 139-145.


Leroux, Antoine, "Extracts from a Letter by Antoine to the Missouri Democrat in 1853," Western Journal and Civilian (St. Louis), April, 1853.

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Carvalho, the first official photographer, accompanied Colonel John C. Frémont's fifth exploring expedition in the West in 1853-54.


McGehee, Micajah, "Rough Times in Rough Places, a Personal Narrative of the Terrible Experiences of Frémont's Fourth Expedition," The Century Magazine, XLI, No. 5 (March, 1891), 771-780.

The above article is made up of the records and diary of a member of the party, left at his death, and never before published. The part printed, records only the experiences of the party after entering the mountains, November 26, 1848.


"John C. Frémont never succeeded in living up to his fame, yet he was one of America's great explorers."
"Old stone is lost in the fence, was marked with name of Fremont," Topeka Capital, October 26, 1905.
Concerns the trail taken by Fremont.


The scientific aspects of the S. A. Long expedition of 1819-20.


E. Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

Clippings, Kansas State Historical Society Library


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Weilman, Paul I., "John C. Fremont Left This Settlement to Open the West 100 Years Ago To-Day," from the Kansas City Star, May 29, 1943, John C. Fremont Clippings I, 15-18.
Miscellaneous Collections


F. Speeches

Benton, Thomas Hart, Discourse of Mr. Benton, of Missouri, before the Boston Mercantile Library Association, on the Physical Geography of the Country Between the State of Missouri and California, with a View to Show its Adaptation to Settlement, and to the Construction of a Railroad, Speech delivered in the Tremont Temple, December 20, 1854. Washington: printed by J. T. and Isaac Towle, 1854.

APPENDIX A

THE OREGON TRAIL

The Oregon Trail, as the one well-established route to the beautiful Columbia River country was known, ran northwest from the town of Independence on the Missouri to near Grand Island on the Platte, and thence turned westward along the Platte Valley to the Rockies, the road being level all the way to a point near the present town of Julesburg, Colorado. From this spot at the fork of the Platte, the country grew hilly; and after the emigrants reached the junction of the Laramie River and the North Platte, they found it mountainous, offering many difficulties to loaded wagons. The ordinary procedure of the Oregon emigrants was to follow the Platte Valley and the Sweetwater River, in a general westward line, to what was known as South Pass, in the south-western part of present-day Wyoming. After crossing the broad, easy pass, the travelers found themselves in the valley of the Green River, down which they moved to the famous trapping post called Fort Bridger, and thence continued northwest to the Bear and the Snake at Fort Hall. The tortuous course of the Snake was followed to a point beyond Fort Boise (which, like Fort Hall, was a post of the Hudson's Bay Company), whence the trail cut across the Blue Mountains to Walla Walla, the Columbia valley, and the goal of the emigrants. Here and there were variations from the established route, like the Sublette cut-off beyond South Pass, which the bolder travelers might take. The whole journey
from the Missouri to the Willamette was about 2,000 miles; and of this, 1,000 miles was a rocky, steep, Indian-menaced trail, with fierce alternations of heat and cold, which tested the courage of the emigrants with stern rigor.

The Idaho country beyond South Pass was especially harsh and dangerous, with rapid torrents, an ill-marked route which might easily be lost, and brackish or alkaline streams, whose water men and animals both found repugnant. By 1842, the wayfarer met at every difficult point with signs of the hardships others had suffered; the roughly marked gravestones, the bones of oxen and horses, and the discarded furniture of "movers" who had lightened their wagons. The heavy dust, the burning sun, the thirst, and the long hours exhausted the woman and children. It was a land of sagebrush, hunger, Indian peril, fever, and utter fatigue and discouragement.  

1Allan Nevins, Frémont, the West's Greatest Adventurer (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1926), 87-89.
Appendix B

Christopher (Kit) Carson

Christopher (Kit) Carson was born in Madison County, Kentucky, December 24, 1809. His father, Lindsay Carson, a veteran of the American Revolution and also a noted hunter and Indian fighter, moved the year following Kit's birth to the territory of Missouri, to what is now Howard County. He remained on the frontier, "bred to border life", until the age of fifteen.

In 1825, after the death of his father, he was apprenticed to a saddler in Franklin, Missouri, but in the next year ran away to join a trading party bound for Santa Fe. Instead of returning, Carson found his way by various adventures south through New Mexico to the copper mines of Chihuahue (Mexico), where he spent nine months working as a teamster.

In August, 1829, he left Taos (New Mexico) with a trapping party for California. He returned to Taos in April, 1831, as an experienced and successful trapper and hunter. Soon afterward he joined another trapping expedition which went to the headwaters of the Arkansas River, then Northwest to the region of the Rocky Mountains which gives rise to the Columbia and Snake Rivers. He remained in this region almost continuously for the next eight years, trapping, hunting, and, when the occasion required, joining in warfare against the Indians. He was, at times, also employed as a buffalo hunter for Bent's Fort near present day La Junta, Colorado.
He was noted throughout the region as "a successful trapper, an unerring shot, an unerring guide, and for his bravery, sagacity, and steadiness in all circumstances."\(^1\)

ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATIONS

The astronomical observations of Lieutenant John C. Fremont's first expedition through Kansas were taken with the following instruments:

One telescope, magnifying power 120.
One circle, by Banney, Paris.
One sextant, by Gambey, Paris.
One sextant, by Troughton.
One box chronometer, No. 7,810, by French.
One Brookbank pocket chronometer.
One small watch with a light chronometer balance, No. 4,532, by Arnold & Dent.

These instruments were tested by a three-fold computation: one by a Professor Walter, of Philadelphia, who had an outstanding astronomical reputation; another by Mr. Joseph F. Hubbard, a mathematician from Connecticut; and the third by Fremont. The reason for the three-fold computation was to substantiate the correctness of the longitudes and latitudes. The longitudes are referred to the meridian of Greenwich.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Deg. min. sec.</td>
<td>Deg. min. sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>St. Louis, residence of</td>
<td>36 37 34</td>
<td>94 25 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colonel Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>Chouteau's lower trading</td>
<td>39 05 57</td>
<td>95 30 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>post, Kansas River</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 16</td>
<td>Left bank of the Kansas</td>
<td>39 06 40</td>
<td>95 04 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>river, seven miles above</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the ford</td>
<td>39 15 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vermillion creek</td>
<td>39 30 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cold Springs, near the road</td>
<td>40 26 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to Laramie</td>
<td>96 14 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Big Blue River</td>
<td>98 22 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Station</td>
<td>Latitude</td>
<td>Longitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deg. min. sec.</td>
<td>Deg. min. sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>Missouri River</td>
<td>40 34 00</td>
<td>95 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bertielet's Island, noon salt</td>
<td>40 27 03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missouri river, north</td>
<td>40 16 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missouri river, left bank</td>
<td>39 36 02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Missouri river, north of the Kansas river</td>
<td>39 08 03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Captain J. C. Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44 (Washington: Gale and Seaton, Printers, 1845), 101-101.
APPENDIX D

CATALOGUE OF PLANTS COLLECTED BY LT. COL. JOHN C. FRÉMONT IN HIS FIRST EXPEDITION THROUGH KANSAS, 1842.

Frémont brought back from his first expedition (to the Rocky Mountains) many botanical specimens. Those found by Frémont in what is now the present state of Kansas are classified in this appendix. The expedition, after leaving the mouth of the Kansas, mainly followed along the flood plain of that river, and along the "bottoms of the Kansas tributaries", but sometimes traveled over the upper prairies. The soil, from which the specimen came, was described as follows:

The soil of the river bottoms is always rich, and generally well tintered; though the whole region is what is called prairie country. The upper prairies are an immense deposit of sand and gravel, covered with a good, and, very generally, a rich soil. . . . The rock of this region are limestone and sandstone. ¹

Frémont felt his knowledge of botanical science was too limited to classify the specimens and left the classifying and describing to Professor John Torrey,² a distinguished botanist from Princeton University.

The plants are listed first by the nomenclature given by Torrey, then secondly by their present scientific classification. The common name, description, and location and date found follows.


²Mr. Torrey gave the new plants under the name Chenopodium for Frémont "as a well-merited compliment for the services he has rendered to North American botany." John Charles Fremont, Narratives of Exploration and Adventure, edited by Allan Nevins (New York: Longman's Green and Company, 1956), Editor's footnote 1, 20.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Locality and Date Found</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talinum pariflorum Hutt.¹</td>
<td>Flower</td>
<td>Perennial, numerous basal leaves, petals rose or whitish, 1 dm. high</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the Kansas. June 26.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxlalis stricta Linn.</td>
<td>Sheep sorrel</td>
<td>Perennial, small (0.5 dm.), petals pale yellow.</td>
<td>On the Kansas. June.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sida coccinea DC. (Malvastrum Coccineum)</td>
<td>Salmon colored mallow</td>
<td>Perennial, wood base, several stems, 1-3 dm. high, petals usually brick red.</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the south fork of the Platte. June 22, July 4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹In the original publication Torrey placed all the authorities for the binomials in parenthesis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENTIFIC NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>LOCALITY AND DATE FOUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RUAMNACEAE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceanothus mollissimus</td>
<td>New Jersey Tea</td>
<td>A small woody shrub with white flowers.</td>
<td>Near the Kansas River. June 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEGUMINOSAE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glycyrrhiza lepidota Pursh.</td>
<td>Wild licorice</td>
<td>Perennial, tall, 3-10 dm. high, yellowish-white flowers.</td>
<td>Near the Kansas River to the Black Hills of the Platte. June 21, July 23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psoralea argophylla Pursh.</td>
<td>Silver-leaf scurf-pea</td>
<td>Silvery silky-white throughout, perennial, 2.5-6 dm. high, flower bluish or purple.</td>
<td>Little Blue River. June 23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petalostemon violaceum Michx. (Petalostemon purpureus) Vent</td>
<td>Purple prairie clover</td>
<td>Perennial, 3-10 dm. high, flower violet or purple.</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the Kansas. June 21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxytropis Lambertii Pursh.</td>
<td>Lambert's locoweed</td>
<td>Perennial, 1.5-2 dm. high, flower dark bluish-purple.</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the Kansas to the forks of the Platte. June 20, July 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptisia leucantha Torr. and Gr. (Baptisia leucantha) T. &amp; G.</td>
<td>Atlantic Wildcups</td>
<td>Perennial, wildly branching with stem 4-10 dm. high, bluish.</td>
<td>Kansas River.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schrankia uncinata Willd. (Morongia uncinata) Britton</td>
<td>Sensitive briar</td>
<td>Perennial, grows in dry sandy soil, stems have recurved prickles, pink flowers.</td>
<td>Kansas and Platte Rivers, June 19, September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC NAME</td>
<td>COMMON NAME</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>LOCALITY AND DATE FOUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geum virginianum Linn.</td>
<td>Avens</td>
<td>Perennial, stems 3-10 dm. high, flower yellow or ochroleucus.</td>
<td>Kansas River. June 20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Oenothera missouriensis) Sims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>On the Kansas and Platte. June, July 14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Oenothera Serrulata) Nutt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Little Blue River of the Kansas, and south fork of the Platte. June 24, July 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oenothera speciosa Nutt.</td>
<td>Primrose</td>
<td>Perennial, flowers white to rosette.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC NAME</td>
<td>COMMON NAME</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>LOCALITY AND DATE FOUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lepachys columnaris Torr. and Gr. (Ratibida columnifera) Woot. &amp; Standl.</td>
<td>Prairie cone</td>
<td>Perennial, 3-6 dm. high,</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAMPAULACEAE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specularia amplexicaulis DC. (Specularia Perfoliata) L.</td>
<td>Venus-looking</td>
<td>Annual, stems 20-50 dm. tall,</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>glass</td>
<td>flowers bluish-lavender.</td>
<td>Kansas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LAMIACEAE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvia azurea L. (Salvia pitcheri) Torr.</td>
<td>Pitcher's sage</td>
<td>Perennial, 2-12 dm. high,</td>
<td>Kansas River and Forks of the Platte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yellow, blue, or white.</td>
<td>June 10-25, July 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HRAPHTHACEAE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erechtites comosa Michx.</td>
<td>Drumwells</td>
<td>Perennial, stem 1-6 dm. high,</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLEMONIACEAS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phlox pilosa Nutt. (Phlox pilosa) L.</td>
<td>Phlox</td>
<td>Perennial, 2-5 dm. high,</td>
<td>Little Blue River of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC NAME</td>
<td>COMMON NAME</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>LOCALITY AND DATE FOUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASCLEPIADACEAE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asclepias tuberosa Linn.</td>
<td>Butterfly milkweed</td>
<td>Perennial, 3-6 dm. high, flower bright orange or yellow.</td>
<td>Kansas River. June 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantherix viridis Nutt.</td>
<td>Strider milkweed</td>
<td>Perennial, 2-6 dm. high.</td>
<td>Big Blue River of the Kansas. June 20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Aslepiodora viridis) Walt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acerastes longifolia Ell.</td>
<td>Milkweed</td>
<td>Perennial, 2-6 dm. high, flowers of greenish and hood white.</td>
<td>With the preceding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Polyotus longifolia) Nutt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acerastes angustifolius Nutt.</td>
<td>Green milkweed</td>
<td>Perennial, 1-3 dm. high, flowers of greenish and hood white.</td>
<td>With the preceding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Polyotus angustifolius) Nutt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLANTAGINACEAE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Plantago purshii) R. &amp; S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NYCTAGINACEAE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Calymenia nymphaeæ) Nutt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Allonia nymphaeæ) Hick.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC NAME</td>
<td>COMMON NAME</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>LOCALITY AND DATE FOUND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tithymalops corollata) Kl. &amp; Garcke</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class II.--Endogenous Plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALISMACEAE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sagittaria sagittifolia Linn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldworld arrow head marsh plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perennial, leaves arrow shaped, white flowers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5 dm. high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Kansas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNELYNAEACEAE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tradescantia virginica Linn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tradescantia virginiana) L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiderwort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perennial, 2-4 dm. high, flower dark blue, purple,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or white, a narrow leaved variety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas and Platte.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CYPERACEAE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carex festucacea Schk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Carex brevior) Dewey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perennial, 3-12 dm. high, Inconspicuous flower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Kansas. June.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carex aurea Hutt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden sedge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perennial, 3-4 dm. high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Blue River of the Kansas. June 22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC NAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spartina cynosuroides Wilid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Spartina pectinata) Bosc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrostis michauxii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festuca nutans Wilid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Festuca Obtusa) Spreng.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poa laxa Haeke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Poa fernaldiana) Mannf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poa crocata Michx.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poa nervata Willd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glyceria striata (LAM.) Hitchc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koeleria cristata Pers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elymus virginicus Linn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elymus canadensis Linn.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 80-90.
The barometrical and meteorological observations were made with the best scientific instruments available. The barometrical observations were made with Troughton and Cary barometers, and are designated by the letters T. and C. respectively in the following report. To check against error, Dr. George Engelmann, a leading St. Louis physician, ably trained in meteorology (as well as botany) made observations during the same period as Frémont. The observations by both men were compared upon Frémont's return.1

1Captain J. C. Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year, 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44 (Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845), 673.
Barometrical and Meteorological Observations Made During Lieutenant John C. Fremont's First Westward Exploring Expedition Through the Present State of Kansas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Hour</th>
<th>T.</th>
<th>Attached thermometer</th>
<th>C.</th>
<th>Attached Temperature of</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camp of June 8-10</td>
<td>830 A.M.</td>
<td>29.172</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>29.160</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>930</td>
<td>29.154</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>29.140</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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<td>1030</td>
<td>29.220</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>29.205</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>59.2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1130</td>
<td>29.195</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>29.150</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>73.0</td>
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<td>1230</td>
<td>29.471</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>29.130</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>72.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 P.M.</td>
<td>29.272</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>29.250</td>
<td>79.25</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2 P.M.</td>
<td>29.283</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>29.294</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 P.M.</td>
<td>29.211</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>29.237</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
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<td>Hour</td>
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<td>C.</td>
<td>Attached temperature</td>
<td>Attached temperature</td>
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<td>1 P.M.</td>
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<td>73.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Bright sun; slight breeze at intervals from W. Calm and cloudy.</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
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<td>7 30</td>
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<th>Hour</th>
<th>T.</th>
<th>Temperature of the air</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</tr>
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<td>63.7</td>
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<td>10 30 P.M.</td>
<td>28.363</td>
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<tr>
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<td>28.471</td>
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<td>69.5</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Hour</td>
<td>T.</td>
<td>Attached thermometer</td>
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</tr>
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<td>------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
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<td>A.M.</td>
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<td>65.2</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon until June 25</td>
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</tr>
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<td>28.111</td>
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<td>68.0</td>
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</table>

²This day, 67th-501.
### APPENDIX F

**TABLE OF Distances ALONG THE ROAD TRAVELLED**

THROUGH PRESENT DAY DATES BY THE EXPEDITION IN 1843 AND 1844.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Distance travelled to &amp; from Middle of Kansas, etc.</th>
<th>Junction of Sound Hill and Republican forks.</th>
<th>Crossing of the Republican.</th>
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<td>May 29</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tr>
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<td>10</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>21</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>14</td>
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1 Captain J. C. Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, 4th to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-45 (Washington: Sales and Session, 1845), 251.
Eastward Journey.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Distance travelled each day</th>
<th>Distance from the Dalles</th>
<th>Localities</th>
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<td>Head water of Smoky Hill (\text{form of the Kansas.})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>31</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3,278</td>
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<td>Aug.</td>
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\(2^{nd} \text{hid.}, 29t.\)
Table of latitudes and longitudes deduced from the azimuth observations made during J. C. Fremont’s second expedition through present day Kansas, 1843-44.

Westward Journey

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<th>Localities</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 30</td>
<td>38° 49' 41&quot;</td>
<td>94° 25' 31&quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>39° 01' 15&quot;</td>
<td>95° 11' 00&quot;</td>
<td>Small tributary to the Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>95° 55' 30&quot;</td>
<td>Buck creek, tributary of the Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>39° 03' 24&quot;</td>
<td>96° 06' 02&quot;</td>
<td>Elk creek, tributary of the Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>39° 03' 38&quot;</td>
<td>96° 24' 55&quot;</td>
<td>Emigrant on the Emery Hill fork, half a mile from its junction with the Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>39° 22' 12&quot;</td>
<td>97° 05' 32&quot;</td>
<td>Tributary to the Republican fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>39° 32' 54&quot;</td>
<td>98° 11' 41&quot;</td>
<td>Tributary to the Republican fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>39° 37' 33&quot;</td>
<td>98° 43' 50&quot;</td>
<td>Tributary to Solomon’s fork of the Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>39° 42' 35&quot;</td>
<td>99° 22' 03&quot;</td>
<td>Tributary to Solomon’s fork of the Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>39° 53' 52&quot;</td>
<td>100° 31' 30&quot;</td>
<td>Tributary to the Republican fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>39° 59' 28&quot;</td>
<td>100° 52' 00&quot;</td>
<td>Prairie Dog river, Republican fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>40° 05' 03&quot;</td>
<td>101° 39' 21&quot;</td>
<td>Small tributary to the Republican</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Captain J. C. Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-44 (Washington: Gales and Seaton, Printers, 1845), 381-322.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Latitudes</th>
<th>Longitudes</th>
<th>Localities</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Smoky Hill river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 9</td>
<td>38° 51' 15&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Smoky Hill river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>38° 52' 22&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Smoky Hill river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>38° 45' 57&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Smoky Hill river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>35° 42' 33&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Smoky Hill river, below Pawnoa village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>38° 43' 32&quot;</td>
<td>98° 17' 31&quot;</td>
<td>Smoky Hill river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>38° 20' 38&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Three miles south of Smoky Hill ford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>38° 31' 36&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Between Smoky Hill ford and the Santa Fe trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>38° 33' 22&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Santa Fe road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>38° 46' 50&quot;</td>
<td>98° 04' 24&quot;</td>
<td>Black Jack on the Santa Fe road.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2Thid., 327.
APPENDIX II

REPORT ON GEOLOGICAL SPECIMENS COLLECTED BY LIEUTENANT J. C. FRÉMONT IN HIS SECOND EXPEDITION THROUGH KANSAS, 1843-44.

Dr. James Hall, the palaeontologist to the state of New York, studied and reported upon rock and mineral specimens which Lieutenant John C. Frémont brought back from his second expedition. Few specimens concerning Kansas were collected, but those that were offered information on the fertility of the soil and agricultural capabilities of the region.\(^1\) Frémont (with the assistance of Dr. Hall) reported the following finds for Kansas:

Longitude 96\(^{1/2}\)°, latitude 39 3/4°; OTTAH CREEK—The single specimen from this locality is a yellowish, impure limestone, apparently containing organic remains, whose structure is obliterated by crystallization. From its position relatively to the formations farther east, I am inclined to refer it to the cretaceous formation.

Longitude 96°, latitude 39°; SMOKY HILL RIVER—The specimens from this locality are numbered 26, 29, 33, and 88. They all bear a similar character, and the fossils are alike in each. The rock is an impure limestone, pretty compact, varying in color from dull yellowish to ashy brown, and abounding in shells of a species of inoceramus.

This rock probably belongs to the cretaceous formation; the lower part of which has been indicated by Dr. Barton as extending into Louisiana, Arkansas, and Missouri.

\(^1\) Captain J. C. Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the year 1842, and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843-44 (Washington: Sales and Seaton, Printers, 1845), 295, hereinafter cited as Frémont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains.

\(^2\) Flows into Walnut Creek slightly east of Rush Center in southern Rush County.
Although the specimens from this locality bear a more close resemblance to the upper part of the formation, I do not feel justified in referring them to any other period. This formation evidently underlies large tracts of country, and extends far towards the base of the Rocky Mountains. 3

Dr. Hall gave the following description:

Unequivalved, depressed, and elongated; surface marked by numerous waved lines and ridges; convex towards the beaks; beaks short and obtuse, somewhat obsolete in old specimens; hinge line oblique.

In the old specimens, the shell appears much flattened, except towards the beaks; while in the younger specimens it is more convex, and particularly so towards the beaks. The youngest specimens are finely lined, and the whole surface of one valve quite convex.

This fossil apparently exists in great numbers, as in the specimens examined there were individuals in all stages of growth, though mostly broken or separated valves. The same species was collected by the late Mr. Nicolet, near the Great Bend of the Missouri.

Locality, Rocky Hill river, longitude 98°, latitude 38°, in yellowish and gray limestone of the Cretaceous formation. 4

A specimen collected just west of present day Kansas was listed by Fremont as follows:

Longitude 105°, latitude 39°. The specimens from this locality are a somewhat porous, light-colored limestone, tough and fine grained. One or two fragments of fossils from this locality still indicate the Cretaceous period; but the absence of any perfect specimens must deter a positive opinion upon the precise age of the formation. The specimen, however, from its form, markings, and fibrous structure, I have referred to the genus Inoceramus.

It is evident, from the facts presented, that little or important geological change is observed in travelling over this distance of 7 degrees of longitude. But at what depths beneath

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3Fremont, Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 295.
4Ibid., 310.
the surface the country is underlaid by this formation, I have no date for deciding. Its importance, however, must not be overlooked. A calcareous formation of this extent is of the greatest advantage to a country; and the economical facilities hence afforded in agriculture, and the uses of civilized life, cannot be overstated.

The whole formation of this region is probably, with some variations, an extension of that which prevails through Louisiana, Arkansas, and Missouri.