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Jedediah Smith, a Protestant in Catholic California

By, Raymund F. Wood

Dr. Raymund Francis Wood, born in London, England, came to the USA to become a Catholic priest but instead became a university librarian and professor in California. His lifelong interest in history, especially western history, led him to the Jedediah Smith Society in 1957 as a founding member. Ray was one of the most diligent members of the Society, serving as president twice (1987 and 1988) and publishing two books about Monuments to Smith (1984 and 1999).

The adventures of Jedediah Strong Smith, both in the Rocky Mountains and on the West Coast, are probably well enough known that they need not be recounted at this time. However, since what follows will deal with only a small part of his life, the relatively short time that he spent in California, it might be well to give a brief account of the reasons that brought him twice to California.

The first occasion was in the winter of 1826. Smith was the leader of the "South West Expedition" out of Utah, and his ostensible object was to trap for beaver in the mountains of southern Utah - and in any other place beyond that seemed profitable. But it may well be that his real objective was to go around the south end of the high barrier of the Rockies, to find the mythical "Buenaventura" River, and eventually arrive at the Columbia. Beaver turned out to be rather scarce in Utah, so he pressed on towards the Mojave villages on the Colorado River, arriving there with his thirteen men tired and hungry. After resting there for a few days he started across the Mojave desert, guided by two Indians who were actually runaways from the California missions.

After crossing the desert Smith and his men were again exhausted, but soon recovered their spirits when they came out of the Cajon Pass and onto the San Bernardino plateau. They arrived at Mission San Gabriel on November 27, 1826, and were warmly welcomed by Fr. Jose Sanchez. Smith himself did not long remain there. Governor Echeandia sent for him to come to San Diego, where he kept Smith for nearly a month before issuing him a passport, and it was not until January 10 that Smith finally arrived back at San Gabriel and rejoined his men. After leaving San Gabriel a week later, Smith did not have any direct contact with Spanish authorities for nearly a year. He did, however, write a letter, in May of 1827, to the priest at Mission San Jose, Fr. Narciso Duran, explaining why he had left his men in camp on the Stanislaus River, while he himself went across the Sierra Nevada to bring back supplies from Utah, so that they could all continue on their way north.

This letter did have some repercussions; the military was aroused to take some action, and a sort of warrant was issued for the arrest of Smith, "the fisherman," as the Governor called him. But when a small detachment of soldiers reached the camp on the Stanislaus they found that Smith had already gone, and the trappers seemed peaceful enough, so the soldiers left without taking any further action.

Smith, meanwhile, was struggling, with only two of his compan ions, to cross the snow-covered Sierra, and then the vast, empty desert beyond. He did succeed, though he and his men were close to starvation most of the time, and he did meet with his partners at the Bear Lake Rendezvous about July 4, 1827.[1]

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With a new group of eighteen men Smith started south again on July 13, retracing generally the same route as before as far as the Needles. Here again the group rested as before, and the Mojave Indians seemed friendly enough. But, though Smith did not know it, a party of American trappers led by Ewing Young had, a short while before, moved along the Gila to its mouth, and then northwards towards the Needles. In a fight between Young's men and the Mojaves, several of the latter had been killed. This event turned the Indians against any sort of trapping party, and when Smith's men came among them the Mojaves decided this was an opportunity for revenge. As soon as the party was divided, during the river crossing, with ten of Smith's men and all of the horses remaining on the left bank, the Mojaves fell on them, killing all ten of the men and managing to wound one or two of the others who were in the act of crossing the river. All nine of these men, however, including Smith, did make it across the river, but they found themselves without any horses or mules, and with only fifteen pounds of dried meat, and a few salvaged items of trade.

Smith now had no choice but to go again to the Spanish settlements, and again ask for supplies, even though the permit Echeandia had issued the year before did not allow this. After a terrible crossing of the desert, on foot and without guides, Smith and his men reached Rancho San Bernardino, an outpost of Mission San Gabriel, where the majordomo let the men slaughter some cattle and dry the meat, and also let them have some horses in exchange for the meagre supplies they had managed to salvage from their misfortune at the Colorado River. Smith wrote a letter of thanks to the padre at Mission San Gabriel, and then set off north, across the Tehachapis and up the Central Valley to rejoin his men on the Stanislaus.[2]

Once again he found misfortune. His men, instead of drying meat and making other preparations for the long trip north, had spent the summer rather idly, shooting only enough game for themselves, and doing very little trapping. Under the circumstances there was nothing for Smith to do but to try his luck once more with the Spanish, and with three of his men he rode over to Mission San Jose, arriving there late in August, 1827.

He was not quite so warmly welcomed at San Jose as he had been at San Gabriel. In fact, just the contrary. He was at first kept under house confinement, but later released, and after two weeks was taken, with a military escort, to Monterey, there to face the Governor once again. He arrived about midnight of September 11. Next morning Echeandia came in person to release him from the calabozo, and gave him the freedom of the town of Monterey. But it was not until November 15 that Smith finally got another passport from the Governor, and was able to sail from Monterey for San Francisco. In a few more days he had transacted his business in that area, and moved his purchased horses down to Mission San Jose again, where he could assemble his men, dry some meat, load his animals, and get ready for the long trip to the Columbia. This time, since Smith had a passport from the Governor, Fr. Duran treated him as an honored guest, just as Fr. Sanchez had done at Mission San Gabriel the year before. Smith and his men left Mission San Jose, their final contact with Spanish civilization , on November 27, 1827, and he was rather glad to be finally away from the Spanish bureaucracy, the endless delays, and a way of life totally alien to his New England Protestantism.

In summary, then, Smith and his men made contact with Spanish authorities, either civil, military, or religious, on five separate occasions. First, at Mission San Gabriel, for about six weeks, though Smith himself was there only a few days. Second, at San Diego, for a period of about a month, while Harrison Rogers, Smith's second-in command, and the rest

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of the men stayed at San Gabriel. Third, briefly, at the San Bernardion rancho, though it is likely that his only personal contact there was with the majordomo. Fourth, at Mission San Jose, for a period, on and off, of about three months. Finally, at Monterey, for a period of about two months, coinciding, however, with the three-month period at San Jose. Altogether, then, Smith and his group of non-Catholic trappers were in contact with the Spanish for a total of no more than five months during the period from the late fall of 1826 to the end of 1827. Why, then, is this coming of a Protestant (or to be more exact a group of Protestants) to Catholic California of any special significance?

After all, there had been many Americans, Protestant Americans, in California before 1826. The names of Antonio Richardson, Joseph Chapman, John Gilroy, or William Hartnell, to cite but a few, were all well known to the civil authorities. These men lived at peace among the Spanish hidalgos and rancheros, transacted business with the military and civil authorities, and were accepted as equals by the "gente de razon," the descendants of the original Spanish, Catalonian, and Mexican settlers of the land. What then was the difference between these early Americans and Smith and his men? The difference was simply that all of the first group, as a condition of either settling in the land, or of acquiring Mexican citizenship, or of marrying into one of the native families – all three of which things most of the Americans wished to do – were required by law to take a series of instructions in the Catholic faith from one of the mission padres or presidial chaplains, and then be baptized (or rebaptized if appropriate) in the Catholic church. Most of the adventurers who came by sea to California during those early decades of the 19th century were not strongly religious, or had few if any definite ties with any church that they were unwilling to break.

But Jedediah Smith and Harrison Rogers were not the men lightly to forsake their Protestant upbringing. Nor, for that matter, were they ever asked to do so. It is interesting, therefore, to speculate on the impact that these two Protestant gentlemen had on their Catholic contemporaries in California, and what impact their enforced exposure to a totally Catholic way of life had on them.

First of all, there is no doubt that both of these men, but Rogers most of all, felt that they were not going to be taken in by any papist mumbo-jumbo. If, when they first ventured into the realm of popery at Mission San Gabriel, they anticipated that they might be captured and burnt at the stake as heretics, at least they would die as martyrs for their faith. Unfortunately, the warm welcome they received from Fr. Sanchez rather took the wind out of their sails (to change the metaphor a little), and by their second day at the mission Harrison Rogers wrote in his diary, as if somewhat to his own surprise, "Although they are Catholicks by profession, they allow us liberty of conscience..."

Smith and Rogers (and then Rogers alone after Smith went to San Diego) ate their meals daily at the padre's table, and one day the conversation turned to religion. Rogers says in his diary "I very frankly informed him that I was brought up under the Calvinist doctrine, and I did not believe that it was in the power of man to forgive sins.'' There followed quite a discussion on this subject, with the padre explaining that only when he was in his church, with his sacramental vestment on, did he have the power, given him by God, to forgive sins, Outside of the church, or without his special vestments on, he was just another human being. In other words, the power was not in himself but in God, whose agent he was. Rogers makes no further comment, or rebuttal, in his diary, so we cannot be sure whether he saw the logic of this reply or not.

It was some time, evidently, before Rogers could overcome his scruples and actually enter the mission church. He finally did so on January 15, nearly two months after his arrival. He says, "I went in their church today for the first time and saw their molten images; they have our Savior on the cross, his mother, and Mary the mother of James, and 4 of the apostles, all as large as life." (Actually Rogers was not quite correct in his guess about the four apostles, for the statues were, as we know today from inventories, those of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Joaquim, and St. Bonaventure - none of whom were among the Lord's twelve apostles.)

There is one other evidence of Rogers' religious interest, and it is his New Year's Day sermon, or "address" as he calls it, to Fr. Sanchez. It begins by recalling the dangers of life on earth, and the desirability of thanking God for sustaining all of them during the year just passed. Then he comes to the nub of his sermon. "Therefore my advice is, to all the human family, to be faithful, to be devoted to God, to be kind, be benevolent to their fellow sufferers, to act well their part, to live for eternity; for the everlasting destinies of their souls is suspended upon their probation, and this may close (in) the present year.''[3] The balance of Roger's address was concerned with Christ's admonition, just before He ascended into heaven, "to preach the Gospel to every creature." Rogers shows that this has been done, which was a rather neat way of expressing to Fr. Sanchez his sincere appreciation of the sacrifices that this good priest must have made, giving up his home land to travel half way across the world to fulfil the command to preach the Gospel to every creature.

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It is unfortunate that the journal of Smith himself, during these same months, has been lost. Smith, unlike Rogers, was not an enrolled member of any particular church or denomination. Brought up as a Methodist, he preferred to consider himself, and was thought of by his contemporaries and his later biographers, as a "true Christian," but not necessarily a practicing member of any one denomination. Even so, even with much of his journal lost, we see evidence that he too was a staunch Protestant. Later on, during a period for which his journal is extant, he rightly guessed why Fr. Duran, at Mission San Jose the following year, was so upset by his coming; the reason was simply that he, Fr. Duran, was "apprehensive of danger to the true faith" (these last two words being underlined in Smith's journal). This was in fact the real reason. Duran did feel that Smith's Protestantism, as mild a form as it might be, was nevertheless a threat to what he considered the one true faith.

It might be mentioned here that Smith evidently had less scruples than Rogers about participating in Catholic services. Twice, on Sunday the 9th of December and again on the 16th, Smith writes in his journal "I attended Mass." But he makes no comment about the service, other than the music, which he describes in some detail - ''The Music consisted of 12 or 15 violins, 5 base vials, and one flute.'' He also mentions the sermon. "The father spoke in Latin and in Spanish, and a part of his discourse was then translated for the Indians in their own tongue.'' But no word from Smith about "molten images.''

What then was this Catholicism of Spanish California, this one "true faith" that might be endangered by contact with even a mild form or Protestantism? Was it very different from the Catholicism of the twentieth century, the Catholicism of Catholic Californians of today?

Yes, as a matter of fact it was. It was different, not so much in doctrine as in interpretation. Just as among the various denomina tions of Protestantism there are different doctrines and practices, so also within the fold of Catholicism there have always been differences of opinion, different "schools of thought," as they are termed. For example, in the realm of morals, there have at sundry historic times been two schools of thought. the school of Probabiliorists, and the school of the Probabilists.[4] The former contended that of two opinions one must accept only that which is the more probable, while the latter school held that one could accept any opinion as long as it was solidly probable. The repercussions that such doctrines could have in the law courts are obvious. If, in the absence of true certainty, it is solidly probable that a defendant is innocent, must he then be condemned merely because it is slightly more probable that he is guilty? Fortunately for our modern civil procedures, the Probabilists won out in the end, and nowadays we do not condemn a man solely because he is probably guilty.

These and other schools of thought have been present within Catholicism for many centuries, some Catholic teachers leaning towards a more liberal interpretation, others holding our for a more strict, or fundamentalist, point of view. And in many respects the Californian of the early 19th century, under the spiritual direction of the Franciscan friars, was about as fundamentalist as a Catholic can be. So it is rather ironic that these two trappers, Smith and Rogers, both schooled to accept the Bible as the fundamental source of their religious knowledge, should have been felt by the padres as such a threat to their own fundamentalism. For Catholic California, situated as it was on what had been earlier termed ''the rim of Christendom,'' was perhaps the last bastion of Catholic medievalism to be left in the world. This adherence to the old doctrines, this reliance on a strict interpretation of the Bible in cases of doubt, is best shown in the area of cosmology, and specifically in the difficult question as to whether the earth moves around the sun, or the sun moves around the earth.

The ancient Greek world, particularly as represented by Ptolemy, as well as by all the early Fathers of the Church, both Latin and Greek, accepted without question that the sun, the moon, and all the planets, as well as the so-called "fixed stars," all rotated about the earth, in varying orbits and obviously at varying speeds. This doctrine was accepted by the early church, since it well accounted for the biblical narrative of the formation of the universe, as given in Genesis, as well as for such biblical incidents as the sun standing still for Joshua. Besides, it was plain common sense. Anyone could see for himself that the sun "rose," the moon "set," and the stars moved across the sky each night.

It was not until the great renaissance of scientific learning in Italy, about the beginning of the 16th century, that this geocentric theory of the universe was seriously questioned. A young Pole by the name of Kopperlingk, better known in Italy and to the world at large as Copernicus, spent his· rather short life in producing a secretly published book, in 1543, called "On the Revolution of the Heavenly Bodies," which was the beginning of the end of the geocentric theory.[5] It took the later work of Kepler and of Galileo to give the finishing blows, but finally, despite ecclesiastical anathemas and excommunications, and a last-ditch effort to defend the literal interpretation of the Bible, the geocentric theory had to give way before the heliocentric theory of Copernicus; and today all scientists, and presumably all Christian religious bodies, accept the heliocentric doctrine and do their best to reconcile it with Scripture in their own way.

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It was not so in the 18th or early 19th century, and least of all was it so in Hispanic California. Let us regress in history for a moment. During the High Middle Ages there has existed two outstanding Franciscan philosophers and theologians, Cardinal Bonaventure (for whom the city of Ventura is named), and John Duns Scotus, both of whom taught a system of philosophy which, while greatly influenced by the prevailing Aristotelianism of the times, still retained some of the traditional, Platonic-Augustinian cosmology. After 1274, the year in which St. Bonaventure died, it was primarily Duns Scotus who continued the Bonaventure school, so much so that Spanish Franciscan thought has become known as Scotism. In 1633 the Franciscans of Spain decreed that their professors were to teach in their classes of philosophy no other doctrine than that of Scotism, ''under pain of irremissible removal from office."[6]

Did this have any effect on California? Yes, according to a member of the faculty of UCLA, Mr. James Nolan, it did have a considerable effect. Mr. Nolan points out, in a series of articles in the 1976 issues of the *Southern California Quarterly*, that Professor Junipero Serra, later to become the Padre Presidente of the Franciscan missionaries of Alta California, and founder of their first nine missions, had previously been a professor of philosophy at the Lullian University at Palma. Professor Serra must have taught Scotistic cosmology to his Franciscan students, Frs. Crespi and Palou among them, as this was an absolute requirement of his religious superiors, as was mentioned earlier. Do we have any positive proof that Professor Serra did indeed teach Scotistic cosmology? Yes, we do; because another one of his students, a certain Francisco Noguera, who attended the full three-year course of philosophy, carefully took down, perhaps word for word in some cases, a series of full notes of Serra's lectures, and Noguera's entire 808-page manuscript of these notes has been recently found.[8] To cite but one example of this Scotistic fundamentalism, we have the following words of Professor Serra, as jotted down by his attentive student Noguera during the spring semester of 1742, and as here translated by Mr. Nolan: "Contrary to Copernicus" (contrary to Copernicus, says Fr. Serra), "I suppose it absolutely manifest that the earth remains immovable, and that all the heavens ... are moved in a circle (around it)." If this be not true Fundamentalism, one would find it difficult to invent any other term for it.

Now for the final point in his brief survey of Catholicism in early California. The Franciscans were, primarily, missionaries. Their leader, Junipero Serra, had previously spent at least eight successful years at missionary work in the Sierra Gorda of Central Mexico, where he had learned at first hand the essentials of missionary work to primitive peoples. He knew, among other things, the truth of the old adage that a picture is worth a thousand words. He therefore took pains to see to it that the adornments of the mission churches in California were such as to carry out the Scotistic cosmology that he was under obedience to teach, whether he taught it to students of philosophy in a university, or to untutored aborigines in far-off California. And the cosmology that he taught was the cosmology of Ptolemy, as modified somewhat through the centuries by Erigena, Dante, Duns Scotus and others. This cosmology places the earth at the center, with the sun, the moon, the planets, and the fixed stars revolving around it. As a means of teaching this complicated system to the Indians, certain statues and paintings were selected and deliberately placed behind the main altar and up to the ceiling of the mission churches, so that a hierarchy of values and influences could be logically discerned.

At Mission San Antonio in particular, as Mr. Nolan points out, there exists photographic evidence of how this iconographic hierarchy actually existed, from a photograph taken in 1889, before that mission had experienced any strong Anglo-American influence, and before its roof had collapsed.[9]

Mr. Nolan advances and substantiates the position that the statues and paintings on the walls and ceiling in Mission San Antonio do in fact represent the Ptolmaic cosmos, with the Virgin, "the woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon at her feet," as told in the 12th chapter of the Book of Revelations (also sometimes called the Apocalypse), with this Virgin, then, placed at the center of a series of concentric circles – representing the planets – reaching finally to the highest part of the ceiling, upon which was painted a decoration of a hundred or more stars, representing the outermost circle of the celestial bodies that revolve around the earth.[10]

But why the Virgin at the center? Modern Catholic churches generally place a large crucifix as the center of pious attention in a place of prominence on or behind the main altar. But

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this was not the custom in the 18th century, or at least it was not the custom in the Spanish Franciscan churches where Scotistic influence was dominant.

Before answering the above question – why was the Virgin placed in the center? – there is one other point of medieval teaching to be discussed. It concerns the angels. We know from Scripture that angels exist. They are mentioned dozens of times in the Bible. They were heard by the shepherds at the time of the Nativity; angels came and ministered to Christ after His fasting in the desert; and certain angels are mentioned by name in the Bible - Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, all of whom had missions in California named for them. But what, besides being messengers, as their name "angel" implies, was the principal function of the angels? When not engaged in delivering messages what did they do? The answer is simple. Their function was to move the stars and the planets along in their courses! Nearly all of the great theologians agreed with this teaching, Scotus among them, and Junipero Serra likewise inserted this doctrine into his university lecture notes, as is witnessed by the following sentence, translated once more from Noguera's notes: "I say, moreover," says Professor Serra, "that the Spheres are not moved by themselves but by certain Intelligences or Angels ..."

Nor was this opinion as to the movement of the planets and stars by angels merely the result of simple devotion, but was a deduction from the natural science of the times, and was in accordance with the principles of Aristotelian physics. Specific angels were assigned to specific planets, while others moved the stars. But if Mary, the Theotokos, as she was called by the Greeks, the Queen of the Angels, as the Spaniards called her, or, in the words of the beautiful prayer that is still recited every Sunday in the Orthodox Church, "more honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim," [11] then surely she must be at the center of the universe of these angelic hosts. And so she has been depicted from time immemorial, a crown of stars about her head, and with the crescent moon beneath her feet; and she was placed in the most honorable position behind the main altar, with the archangel Michael often poised. above her, with a drawn sword ready to defend her from the dragon which, in the Apocalyptic vision, is trying to destroy her newborn child.

Thus did the designer of Mission San Antonio, who was certainly one of Serra's own disciples, make medieval Scotistic cosmology accessible and understandable to the mentality of the aborigines of California.

All of this was naturally a little bit foreign to the average Protestant mind. And this is quite understandable. It seems to have been equally foreign to the mind of the German-American Catholic historian, Zephyrin Engelhardt, when he came, a century later, to write and illustrate the histories of the separate missions. He "corrected" one of the early photographs of the main altar at Mission San Carlos, by drawing a central crucifix onto the photograph, because to his German-American mind that was what ought to have been there.[12] But to the 18th century Franciscans it was more logical that the Virgin, not the crucifix, should be in the center of their iconography. It was consonant with their medieval philosophy; it was consistent with the Scriptures, both as regards the angels, and as regards the Apocalyptic vision of John the Evangelist, when he saw the Virgin "clothed with the sun and with the moon beneath her feet." And if it was Fundamentalism, the padres did not know it. They only knew it as their tradition, their way of teaching, their contribution to the bettering of the lives of their Indian charges, their way of elevating their minds, of providing them with lofty thoughts, with beautiful artistic images, and, for the few among them who might be able to comprehend the mathematical logic contained in it, a whole system of cosmology and astronomy that was valid both for this world and for the world to come.

This was only one aspect of the Catholicism of Alta California when Smith and Rogers visited there, but it was perhaps the most tangible. It is unfortunate that these two men could not have become better acquainted with the Franciscan padres and their religion. Then perhaps Rogers would not have lightly dismissed the statues that he saw in the church at San Gabriel as "molten images," and Jedediah Smith, in the church at San Jose, might have come away with something more than an estimate of the number of violins in the choir loft. But they, and the padres alike, were children of their age. They knew nothing of modern-day ecumenism; they firmly believed, each in turn, that the other's religion was false. Yet each, in his own way, followed the same line of reasoning. Each defended the Bible; each believed that it was the fundamental, though perhaps not the only, source of right doctrine, of salvation, and even of scientific, cosmological teaching.

So, in summary, when the Protestants, Smith and Rogers, met with Catholic Spaniards in California, and remained among them for nearly half a year, they touched and abraded each other at many points, and had many differences of opinion. Yet basically they were in agreement, and if they could have laid aside their prejudices they might have found, as most of us in this 20th century have found, that there are many roads to the heavenly kingdom, and a person is not compelled to arrive there by one path alone.

In this present century we have come a long way on the road to ecumenism, and we have left behind us the bigotry and

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religious hatred that in times past has cast a shadow over the history of our nation. Today, if a man wishes to take up residence in California no one asks him to what denomination he belongs, or requires that before he may do business here he must undergo a series of religious instructions. Yet all of us who read or subscribe to the *Pacific Historian*, the journal that is dedicated, in part at least, to honoring the name of Jedediah Smith, would consider ourselves, like Smith himself, to be "true Christians"; and we are all aware that we do not have on this earth a lasting dwelling place. Perhaps it is not too much, then, for us who honor the memory of Jedediah Smith to express our combined hope that when we too arrive at the heavenly kingdom, by whatever road we have individually taken on our journey, we shall find there none other than the Franciscan padre Narciso Duran and the Protestant trapper Jedediah Smith, standing together arm in arm, to welcome us.

Credit ~ Pacific Historian for this reprinted article

Notes:

1. The above.and some of the following. information about Smith's journeyings is taken from three sources:

   Harrison Clifford Dale. *The Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific 1822-1829* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1918

   Maurice S. Sullivan. *The Travels of Jedediah Smith* (Santa Ana: Fine Arts Press, 1934)

   Dale L. Morgan. *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953).

   Of these, the first contains no actual journal of Smith, but only his summary letter to General Clark. dated July 17. 1827, running to about eight pages, and summarizing his activities from August 1826 to July 1827.

   The next (Sullivan) contains a copy of Smith's original journal, from June 22, 1827 (when he was crossing the inland basin on his way from the camp on the Stanislaus to the rendezvous at Bear Lake), to July 3, 1828, 11 days before the massacre on the Umpqua.

   The third work (Morgan) is more of a biography, covering all of Smith's life, with sometimes long excerpts from various journals and diaries and letters, but with no attempt to reproduce any of them in full, except in the Appendix, where many personal letters of Smith are given in full.

2. The author is aware that this name of Stanislaus was not applied to this river until sometime later, probably in or after 1828. Smith himself calls the river the Appelaminy. Since this latter name has completely died out of current use, the name by which the river is now known has been used throughout.
3. The full text of this "address" is given by Dale (above), pp. 213-216. The sermon, for such it really is, is well written, and includes such scholarly words as "minatory," and such well-turned phrases as "visitations of sickness, "untiring benevolence." and "dawn of an immortal existence."
4. A fuller account of these two schools may be read in the appropriate volume of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, 1914).
5. Issac Azimov, *The Kingdom of the Sun* (New York: Abelard -Schuman, 1960), p. 49ff.
6. See Colman J. Majchrzak, O.F.M. *A Brief History of Bonaventurianism* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1957) for the relationship between the doctrines of Bonaventure and Scotus. With regard to the 1633 regulation, this book merely states that at that time there was no mention of Bonaventure himself, but only of Scotus.
7. James L. Nolan, "Anglo-American Myopia and California Mission Art," *Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. 58, nos. 1-3 (Spring-Winter, 1976). This series of articles examines in great detail the iconography of the missions, the significance of the Christmas plays, the meaning of the placement of the statues, the theology of the Franciscans as shown by the contents of books in the Iibrary at Carmel, and other aspects of early California art and life.
8. Nolan, opt. cit., p. 182.
9. Nolan, op. cit., p. 26. 143- 185.
10. Nolan, op. cit., p. 184, where a copy of the original 1889 photograph has been given an overlay showing the concentric circles which can logically be drawn from the placement of the statues and paintings appearing in the photograph.
11. *The Devine Liturgy according to St. John Chrysostom* (New York: the Russian Orothodox Greek Catholic Church of America, 1957), p. 62.
12. Nolan. op. cit., p. 8-9.

President/Editor's Comments - Kevin Kucera

Kevin Kucera
President/Editor

Moving forward your JSS Board of Directors is busy planning next year's Annual Meeting at the University of Pacific in April. At that time the membership will have voted and we will announce the next leadership team serving on the Board. Succession of leadership in the Board of Directors is critical for the future success of any non-profit including our Jedediah Smith Historical Society at the University of Pacific. New leadership brings new energy and ideas which keep the train moving and on the tracks.

The Annual Meeting will also have paper presentations, etc. and it will certainly be a great time! We need some fun as we stumble through a Pandemic that has killed over 700,000 of our fellow Americans. We continue to be in an uncertain environment and era, yet, the Jedediah Smith Historical Society has thrived over the last few years.

Membership numbers are up and stabilized at 80 members, whereas last decade they had significantly dropped. It is also rewarding to advise our membership that we are up to date on our reporting financials, and, we have made money over the last year with significant sales of our new Jedediah Smith Bibliography that replaced a grouping of Smith Bibliographies that were decades old. We will continue moving forward with new material in the Castor Canadensis and broaden our scope with more focus on the early fur trade in general.

Our challenges remain as we move forward, yet I am confident in our Board of Directors that we have, and in our ability to reach new heights in the future. We will continue to focus on our Mission as we move forward in taking on new opportunities. We are now in the decade of 200 year celebrations of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade starting with Ashley and Smith going west in 1822. As part of our Mission we will continue teaming with other non-profit organizations as it becomes apparent that this may be the best way to convene in person and enjoy a productive event with good attendance and cross-pollination of the respective organizations.

Happy Trails and I look forward to seeing you next April in Sunny Stockton at the JSS Annual Meeting.

Kevin Kucera
Duck Lake, Indiana
October 2021

Castor Canadensis Newsletter Guidelines

The editor welcomes articles for publication.
Please review the following guidelines:

1. Prospective authors should send their articles or questions to Kevin Kucera at kckucera@msn.com
2. Submit in MS Word.
3. End notes should be numbered consecutively.
4. Photographs, maps or illustrations should be sent as an attachment and not embedded into the article. They should also be numbered i.e. Fig 1. A separate list with Fig. No. should be attached with a short title of the photograph etc.
5. After receipt the article will be reviewed by a technical editor. Once this is completed the author will be notified and an approximate date for publication will be provided.
6. Please note the *Castor Canadensis* is not responsible for either the research or the opinions of the writer.

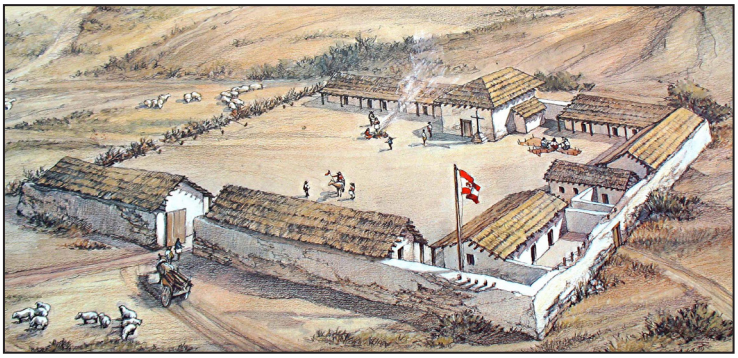
El Polin Spring

By Joe J. Molter

This active, year-round spring is located within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Presidio of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA at the heart of the Tennessee Hollow Watershed. It offers visitors a chance to connect with the Presidio's earliest history, experience some of the park's best birdwatching and enjoy the blooms and wildlife made possible by its waters. Its the history and its association with Jedediah Strong Smith which really piques the interest of us members Jedediah Smith Society.

El Polin Spring as it looks today.

It was here that Harrison Rogers, second in command of Jedediah's Southwest Expedition, spent approximately three weeks in mid-November, 1827, camping-out after coming in from their Stanislaus River Camp. It was at this spring that Rogers and Jedediah would reunite on the 17th of this month after being separated for two-months while Jed dealt with the Mexican Government's indecisiveness and antiquated procedures.



Artist's conception of Presidio of San Francisco about 1800

This is the same spring that Rogers was referring to when he wrote a letter to Jedediah around the 7th of November of that same year, stating: "got permission to remove to a spring not far distance from the Presidio." Rogers was correct when he said the spring was "not far" from the Presidio, it being only three quarters of mile southeast of that early structure. This Presidio was original an adobe fortification built by the Spanish in 1776 and later utilized by Mexico when they occupied this territory in 1822. Having been renovated several times over the years due to neglect and earthquakes, it basically sat on the same footprint. Both Rogers and Jedediah were both required to report to this garrison upon their arrival at San Francisco.

Adobe walls within the Presidio Officers Club.

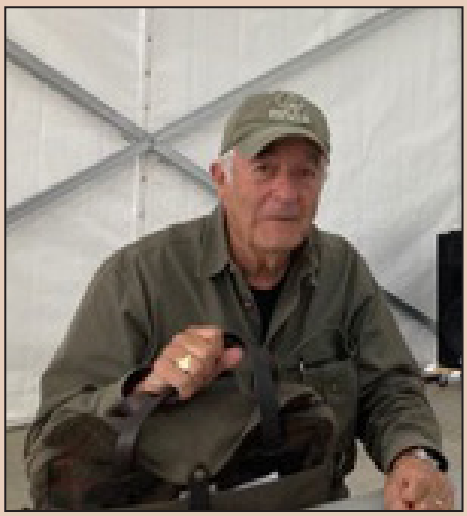
Original foundations for the exterior adobe walls being excavated in 2016.

Today not much of this original Presidio exists. One extant colonial structure remains at the presidio – the Officers Club, though covered by several post-period layers and a U.S. Army restoration attempt in the 1930's. Originally it was quarters that houses soldiers and who knows, it might have housed Jedediah also! Since the discovery of archaeological remains in 1993, field investigations have been carried out to the present and the original location of the Presidio walls have been determined, as well as many interesting finds which have benefited in filling-in the gaps of this interesting fortification.

These sites described above are all open to the public to see and enjoy being part of the National Park System. When visiting El Polin Spring, be sure to listen intently, you might hear ghostly neighing of Jed's and Rogers' horses!

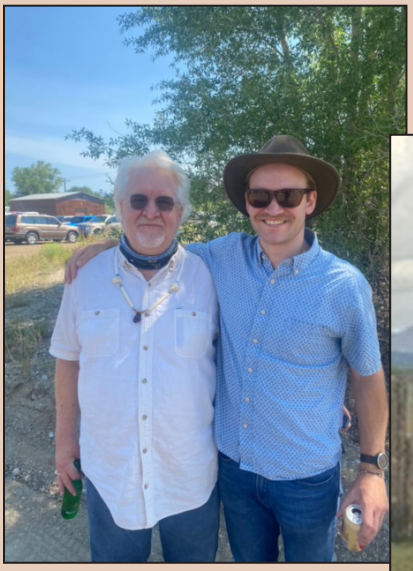
Green River Rendezvous 2021

Museum of the Mountain Man • Sublette County Historical Society, Inc.
Pinedale, WY
Report by, Jim Smith



Jedediah Smith Society Secretary /Treasurer
Milton von Damm

Jim Smith and Sheri Wysong.
On the banks of the Green River.



Jedediah Smith Society Board Members
(l) Sheri Wysong
(r) Luke and Kevin Kucera.

Jedediah Smith is part of the
Rendezvous Pageant
during Green River Days

On the Trail

Michael Bad Hand's lectures on the customs of the Plains Indians is always a highlight at Green River Days and the Museum of the Mountain Man.

Another highlight of this years' Annual Meeting was a new sculpture by Mark Kelly entitled "Michael E. Immel. A Host within Himself." Readers will recall that Mark Kelly, a JSS member from Leavenworth Kansas, is the sculptor who created 'Jed's Bear' back in 2019.

We are looking to fill our entire 15 member Board of Directors!

Will you join us?

There are many different types of positions to include a variety of interests.

Many hands make light work.

Nominating Committee
Chairperson: Jim Smith: jim@smithandmcgowan.com
Rich Cimino: rscimino@gmail.com
Sheri Wysong: swysong@frontier.com

Upcoming Events

The UOP John Muir Symposium
will be held at
the University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA
on April 22-24, 2022

JSS Annual Meeting
Friday, April 22, 2022
in the UOP Library at 9:30am

Mark your Calendars!

More details to follow.

Special request to all members:

Please check your files for any papers, presenter ideas, posters, maps or photos of earlier Rendezvous & Annual Meetings. Please let us know. Photos can be emailed to:
Rich Cimino - Rscimino@gmail.com
We would like to have them available for the meeting.

Archives Corner

Petalsharo

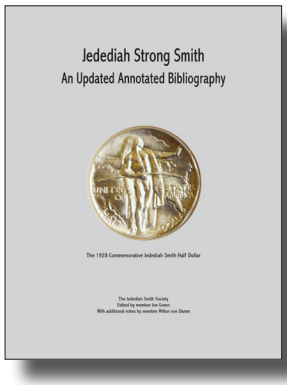
**Petalsharo Painting,
Washington D.C., Charles Bird King, 1821.**

**Petalsharo II Photograph,
Washington D.C., Schindler, 1858.**

In 1821 Petalsharo, a Skidi Pawnee Indian from central Nebraska, traveled to Washington D.C. as a member of the O'Fallon Delegation. Other Pawnee leaders (Republican, etc.) were also part of this delegation. While in Washington, Charles Bird King made this painting of Petalsharo. It is notable that this is the first Indian painting to show a war bonnet. Previously Petalsharo was made famous on a national basis in the newspapers when he saved an Indian girl from human sacrifice as part of the Skidi Pawnee Morning Star Ceremony. The Skidi were the last Pawnee clan to practice human sacrifice. While in Washington, Petalsharo, was given a medal "Bravest of the Brave" for his rescue of the girl. This medal was later dug up in 1883 not far from the headwaters of the Blue River, Nebraska. Based on his two trips to this immediate area of Nebraska, Jedediah Smith, may have in fact met Petalsharo. Certainly Robert Campbell and William Sublette most likely knew Petalsharo based on their lucrative Indian Trade business with the Pawnee and other tribes in the 1830s.

This early photograph from the Editor's private collection, is of the third Petalsharo, who was referred to as Petalsharo II. He was the Grand Pawnee Head Chief. By this late time the Republican and Grand Pawnee had continued to move east, and their main village was located at Leshara (Pawnee name) on the big bend of the Platte River, between Omaha and Fremont. As late as the 1970s you could still see this Pawnee Village located on the western shore of the Platte. Having seen this village many times the Editor still thinks of this as a dreary and hot location. In fact it was the last location of the Grand Pawnee and Republican Pawnee before their disheartening and unnecessary US Government relocation to Pawnee, Oklahoma.

JSS An Updated Annotated Bibliography



Jedediah Strong Smith
An Updated Annotated Bibliography

HAS BEEN PUBLISHED
by the Jedediah Smith Society!

A limited printing of this 112-page book contains primary, secondary and map sources, updated and painstakingly edited by member Joe Green. There is also a two-page spread of the latest Jed Smith trail map prepared by our Map Committee, and a special report about Jed Smith related sources in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives prepared under the direction of lifetime member David Malaher by HBCA Research Consultant Kenton Storey. Milton von Damm coordinated the project.

One copy at a special discount below cost has been offered to members with their 2021 Dues request.

Member price $30. Non-member price $40.

Interactive Maps and Maps for Your Wall

Please remember to go to our website: www.JedediahSmithSociety.org to check out the interactive maps that have been created by our map team. They're unbelievable!

Also please consider purchasing a map for your wall.

They come in 2 sizes:
24" x 36"
and 16" x 20".
You may order the historic style or one with modern highways added. You will find the order sheet on-line with instructions.

Members' Section

Donor List

The Society wishes to thank the sponsors and patrons and all members for the investment in the future of our society.

Special thanks to:

- Philip Berolzheimer for his generous $1000 donation.
- David Malaher, a lifetime member, was very happy with the bibliography and donated $1,000.
- Members Clint Gilcrest and Marlene Smith Baranzini for their noteworthy donations in addition to their dues and bibliography book purchases!
- Member, Dino Pappas made a generous donation of $100 when paying his initial dues making him a JSS Patron.

We Thank you!

New Members

Please welcome our new members to the Society. We welcome you to our events and participation on various committees. If you'd like to write an article please see the guidelines under the editor column.

James Smith
5609 I-80 Service Rd.
Pine Bluffs
Wyoming 82082
307 245-3420
mechyone@live.com

Joe G. Sublett
10725 Chantel Lane
Stockton
CA 95212-9221
209 509-7745
joe.g@sublett.org

In Memoriam

Our heartfelt condolences go out to the family of members Wayne and Elden Knauf on the loss of their wife/mother.

Your Officers & Board Members

President
Kevin Kucera

Vice President
Jim Smith

Secretary/Treasurer
Milton von Damm

Board of Directors
Kevin Kucera
Jim Smith
Milton von Damm
Rich Cimino
Joe Green
Wayne Knauf
Luke Kucera
Sheri Wysong

Executive Committee
Kevin Kucera
Jim Smith
Milton von Damm

Interesting Links

Museum of the Mountain Man
Pinedale, Wyoming
www.museumofthemountainman.com

Museum of the Fur Trade
Chadron, Nebraska
www.furtrade.org

The Campbell House Museum
St. Louis, MO
www.campbellhousemuseum.org

University of Pacific Holt - Atherton
Special Collections and Archives
Sacramento, CA
https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu

INVITE A FRIEND TO JOIN

Jedediah Smith Society membership is open to all who wish to join in support of research, preservation and information about the 1st American arriving overland 1826 and other California pioneers of the 18th & 19th centuries.

Student	$10.00	Individual	$30.00
Sponsor	$50.00	Patron	$100.00

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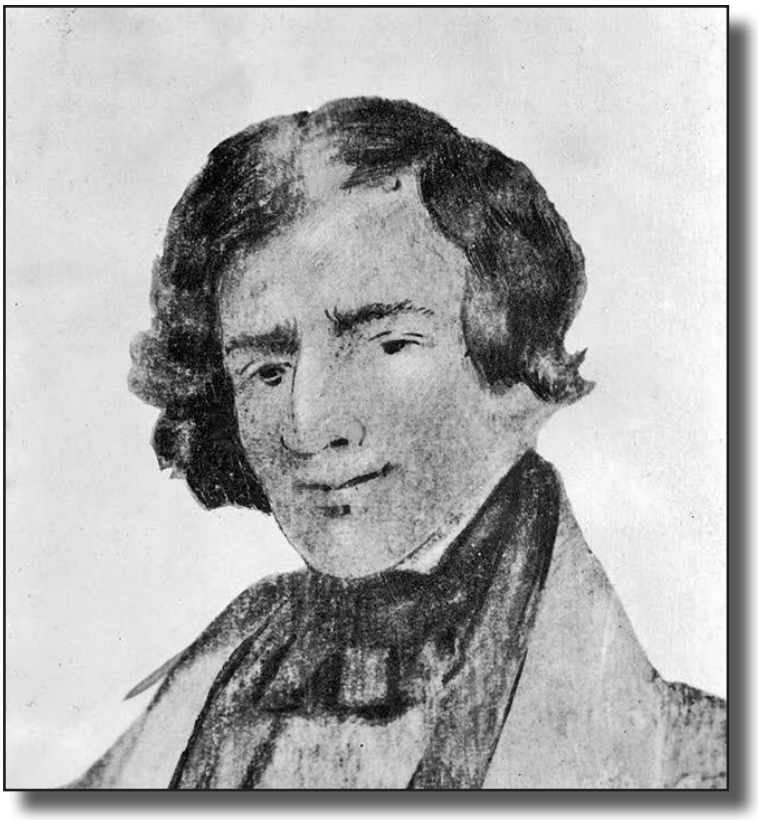
Please make check payable to: JEDEDIAH SMITH SOCIETY

Mail to Treasurer: 1322 Shattuck Ave. Apt. 401, Berkeley, CA 94709

Need a Membership Application?

See website: www.jedediahsmithsociety.org Go to Membership then click "Application"



Jedediah Smith Society
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Berkeley, CA 94709